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# #GetInvolved

## State of the Art Report [ITALY]

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## 1. Data about democracy and discrimination in VET

- **Are there studies about discrimination in VET and on the labour market?**
- **Are there policy initiatives regarding the topic of supporting/compromising democracy?**

Education against all types of discrimination and to promote respect for differences is essential in the areas of skills that pupils must acquire as an essential part of citizenship education. Such education does not have a defined space and time within school's curriculum, but is connected to the contents of all disciplines, with the consequence that each teacher contributes to the relational and affective growth of students through their active involvement, and making the most of their role in all stages of the educational process.

According to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of and the Fight against Violence (Istanbul Convention), Italy has ratified with L. 77/2013 the need of cultural actions, such as those to be carried out in schools.

The paragraph 16 of Art.1 of the 2015 L.107 (La Buona Scuola – The Good School) reiterates: "The three-year plan of training provides the implementation of the principles of equal opportunities in schools of all levels promoting education to gender equality, the prevention of gender violence and all discrimination to inform and to raise awareness among students, teachers and parents on the issue indicated by article 5, paragraph 2, of Decree-Law August 14, 2013, n. 93, converted, with modifications, by law October 15, 2013, n. 119". It wants to transmit in the Italian schools knowledge and awareness regarding the rights and duties of the person constitutionally guaranteed, and to develop the key competences of national, European and international citizenship, which include the promotion of conscious self-determination and respect for the person (as established by the Lisbon Strategy).

The mentioned paragraph implements the fundamental principles of equal dignity and non-discrimination referred to Article 3 of the Italian Constitution - *All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinions, personal and social conditions. It is the Republic's task to remove economic and social obstacles which, by effectively restricting the freedom and equality of citizens, prevent the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in the political organisation, economic and social of the country.*

## 2. Examination of existing VET programs:

- **Are topics like democracy already part of the training programs?**
- **Are there antidiscrimination parts in it?**
- **Are there participation opportunities for the students?**
- **Are there special trainings for the teaching and training staff?**

The fundamental principles of our state, inserted in the Italian Constitution (primary source and solid basis of the entire legal system), establish as essential values for all citizens: democracy (art. 1 Const.), equality (art. 3 Const.), the inviolable freedom and rights of man (art. 2 Const.).

Through a careful study plan, it is to be established an awareness of the importance of democracy through the recognition of civil rights in all schools and, above all, in all potential students active citizens of tomorrow, and social policies, both individually and in social formations.

The school is one of the ethical-social aspect of great importance, in which the implementation of democracy, inviolable rights and equality assume a fundamental role through education, cultural promotion, freedom of education and teaching the right to study and pluralism of education (Art. 33 and 34 Consts). Therefore various initiatives and different forms of programming are envisaged to allow for the entire school and training network to work in this direction and to achieve the construction of solid democratic realities:

1. School and training programs: hours of citizenship education, active citizenship and cultural mediation are planned to consciously build in each student the opportunity and responsibility to be an active citizen of tomorrow. For years, the Ministry of Education, the Senate of the Republic and the Chamber of Deputies have maintained a close collaboration aimed at offering schools tools that encourage planning and reflection, within the curricular educational paths, on the principles and topicality of the Constitutional Charter. Bringing young people closer to its values and supporting the teaching of "Citizenship and Constitution", through multidisciplinary activities and laboratory methodologies, is in fact a common commitment of the world of school and Parliament, that over time has translated into new initiatives and a plurality of projects, aimed at different levels of education and implemented thanks to the contribution of regional school offices, school managers and teachers.

According to the L 30 October 2008, n. 169 „Citizenship and Constitution“, from the beginning of school year 2008/2009 awareness raising and staff training actions are activated aimed at the acquisition in the first and second cycle of education of knowledge and skills related

to «Citizenship and Constitution», within the historical areas-geographical and historical-social and the total hours planned for them.

2. Group initiatives within each educational or training institution (Learning Unit as "Becoming a citizen")
3. Projects and initiatives at regional and national level offering opportunities for comparison and growth, e.g. "Practical tests of democracy in learning" – promoted by a scientific high school in Modena in collaboration with other higher schools and the patronage of the Emilia Romagna region and universities of Bologna and Milan)
4. National, Regional and local competitions (as analyse in section 3)

### 3. Existing competitions?

- **Collect existing competitions regarding the topic democracy (Antidiscrimination, diversity, participation possibilities etc.)**
- **Collect existing labels**

In Italy we can find many national projects or events which deal with the subject of democracy and antidiscrimination. These have been developed either by Government or by private associations that work in the field of human rights

Here are some examples:

#### - **The action week against racism**



It is a traditional appointment directed to a wide public due to a busy schedule of training and awareness activities in addition to national animated initiatives carried out within the education system, universities, sports and cultural associations.

The event takes place every year during the worldwide “Day for the elimination of racial discriminations”, established on March 21st by the United Nation General Assembly. It is a way to remember the massacre of the 69 demonstrators that were peacefully protesting against the racial laws issued by the apartheid legislation that took place in Sharpeville in 1960 perpetrated by the South African police.

### - **Urban Diversity**



It is a photographic contest addressed to youngsters from 18 to 35 years with the aim of bringing out, at a national level, images capable of telling, beyond stereotypes, dialogue, inclusion and the presence, in Italian urban contexts, of citizens considered more at risk of marginalization

and social exclusion: foreigners, Roma, disabled people, homosexuals and transsexuals, religious minorities.

At the end of the competition, a judging committee made up of UNAR experts and the National Working Group against discrimination, selected, in addition to the 6 absolute winners, also a group of photos that were disseminated in the context of information and awareness campaigns promoted by the Department for Equal Opportunities, as well as exhibited during national photographic exhibitions.

### - **Dymove. Diversity on the Move**



It is a project co-funded by the European Union – DG justice – Progress Program, with the objective of exploring the thematic of discrimination at work, in particular about the sexual orientation, focusing on the diversity management in the public administrations and public utilities.

### - **Don't Touch**



It's a national context about violence. Students are asked to develop a short film (2 minutes) about the fight against gender violence and in particular to prevent violence against women

- **Il mese dello STEM** – the month of STEM)



It's a project that promotes STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering and mathematics) in the school contrasting one of the most common stereotype within education field, i.e. "women are worse than men within these disciplines".

The context wants to encourage students (male and female) to reflect on the presence of women within the STEM disciplines and to fight against false gender stereotypes.

Last year the competition proposed to realize a project within these two thematic areas: *Scientists of yesterday* and *The right to count*

- **Rileggiamo l'articolo 3** – Let's revise Art. 3



The first paragraph of the Art. 3 of the Italian Constitution ratifies the principle of equality among citizens without any difference of gender, race, language, religion, politic opinions, personal and social conditions.

The second one ratifies the Italian State have to break down all the barriers that are obstacles to the development of human being.

This competition promotes, among high school students, to reflect on the contradiction between a knowledge-based economy and a growing intellectual and spiritual misery that goes hand in hand with the increase in poverty. Student will have to go deeper into the study of Art. 3 by writing a text of 2.500 characters that will be examined by a jury composed of authoritative jurists, philosophers and journalists.

- **Apprendimento e democrazia** – *Learning and Democracy*



This project deals with the theme of the relationship between democracy and learning in school, as the possibility of identifying the characteristics that define a democratic context for more conscious learning.

It has been used a mixed methodology between *autobiographical approach* and *participant observation*



- **I giovani e la Democrazia** – *Young people and Democracy*

Democracy can be learned in the class: this is the goal of a training project called Young people and democracy to which about fifteen high schools throughout Italy have joined.

- **A scuola di Costituzione** - *School of Constitution*



This project is promoted by the Teachers' Democratic Initiative Center has been promoting for twelve years in agreement with the National Association of Magistrates and with other Foundations. Taking part in it, schools of all types and levels propose to students, the investigation of our Constitution and the human rights that are named inside it.

The project aims at creating a curricular paths, within the framework of school activities, in order to "read", "explore" and "practice" the Italian Constitution.

#### 4. Already existing trainings and workshop methods

- **Diversity training, training in human rights, antidiscrimination, democratic structures etc.**
- **Collect existing training methods**
- **Pro & cons**
- **What is usable**

In Italy there are a lot of projects, most of them funded by European Union, that involve high school students and deal with antidiscrimination, diversity and human rights. They are external to the school institutions and they are usually implemented by competent teachers who care about transforming their students into aware citizens, but who might not have received a specific training within the field.

Plenty of private organisations propose trainings about democracy, human rights and the fight against discrimination and most of them are funded by Erasmus + Programme or other European Programmes and addressed to students and teachers within the Educational System.

Since the school year 2020-2021 the transversal discipline of civic education has been introduced in the first and second cycle, supplemented by awareness-raising initiatives to a responsible citizenship in the school of childhood (in accordance to the law n. 92).

The theme of civic education today assumes a strategic importance and its transversal declination in school disciplines represents a "founding" choice of our educational system, contributing to "to train responsible and active citizens and to promote full and conscious participation in the civic, cultural and social life of communities, in compliance with the rules, rights and duties".

To support teachers in this discipline the Education Ministry will organise training courses for them during the whole school year. A referent person in each Institution will be chosen and trained for at least 40 hours through laboratorial activities and experts' lectures. The training programmes will offer **webinar, online lessons** and a „**support on the job**“ during the whole first year.

Another interesting Project (funded by DEAR Programme) promoted by the City of Turin in collaboration with Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, involved high school students who took placed to **lectures, workshop** and **laboratories** within their school activities. They were asked to play an online game on the subject of diversity Choose&Change ([game.recandchange.eu](http://game.recandchange.eu)) to create their own video clip (about 30 second) and share on the project social networks.



A good example of training in antidiscrimination has been offered by the University of Federico II of Naples to its students. Through *experiential training workshops* students have been able to focus on key-concepts like stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination of minority etc.

These workshops have been divided in two part:

1. The first is a theoretical introduction to fix the key-concepts
2. The second one, more practical, has involved students into laboratorial activities that I've found interesting and usable in our project:
  - **brainstorming activity**: to focus on the students' ideas and knowledge about the subject;
  - **get involved activity**: on the one hand each student brings his own previous personal experience, on the other hand they have to reflect on the future actions in the field.
  - **didactic game activity** like the one named „hot chair“ when each student has to listen a discriminated person and all his difficulties either in life or in the university context.
  - **role-playing activity** during which students were asked to try to resolve situations of discrimination in different contexts, or to step into the shoes of a group of professionals to suggest ideas and projects to combat homophobia to a hypothetical interlocutor, such as a municipal councilor

All the experiential activities carried out have been followed by moments of sharing and reflection in the group, which have favored the expression of feelings, emotions and ideas regarding the delicate topics addressed.