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training system school-work of internship
in Italian high schools, with a look at the
German model”**

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Employability as a policy goal of the dual training system school-work of internship in Italian high schools, with a look at the German model.

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Abstract

In this essay we debate on the concept of employability that in the last decade gained momentum as the main framework to define individual behaviour in the labour market relationships. We invite to strenghten the comparison between the italian and the german system of school to work transition as Italy is facing reforms that claim inspiration to the latter. Youth unemployment figures have been high in Italy since the 70s of last century but after 2008 financial crisis have become even more dramatic. Scholars of many Universities, International Think Thanks, as well as national and european institutions are pretty sure that the negative performance of the labour market are linked to low employability of young people. The mainstream prescription to bridge their individual gap is a reform of the Vocational System to strenghten the transition from school to work. In Italy where territorial and institutional conditions face strong territorial divides, in 2015 the Government decided to reform a compulsory vocational system for all the secondary education relying mostly on self commitment of managers and teachers of schools whose resources have been cut over the last ten years. Employability as an individual characteristic stands as a keystone of this process of institutional reform although remains a debated concept and it's highly determined by the institutional background. Vocational System itself is also strongly dependent on its institutional context. We take the case of Germany, were the vocational system showed good performances, to point out that this

success story is the result of a strong network of private and public actors that is not likely to be exported in Italy

1) Introduction

The Italian regular labor market is by at least forty years among the slowest to absorb the offer of youth work. The levels of unemployment is among the highest in Europe and participation among the lowest. The labour market reforms promoted by Minister Treu in 1997 were aimed at putting on the regular market (the black market in Italy is a large share of labour rewards) the flexibility of workers required by market transformations and production models and their introduction was presented as a modernisation of the system which would have encouraged the use of youth and would give dynamism of the economy. Main Trade Unions agreed with this view. In the following decade despite the introduction of many new forms of contractualization and the abolition of the monopoly of the discussed employment offices, the bad record of the Italian youth unemployment has not waned even if the decade 1997-2007 saw increases in the level of employment of young people. Following the introduction of flexibility the biographies and the subjectivity of young workers and adults have changed profoundly (Colella 2009) but after the 2008 crisis youth unemployment has reached again alarming levels.

In the meantime the continental Europe and in particular Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, have seen a reduction to the minimum levels of unemployment, even youth unemployment, and a relevant increase of competitiveness of national companies with respect especially to those of the Mediterranean countries.

So there has been no surprise when numerous centers of national and international studies have looked at the Rhenish model as an example to follow, particularly for countries with strong difficulties in youth transitions from school to work. The labor market in this model is organized on the basis of a system that directs precociously toward the profession defined by the literature of the field as *Vocational Education and training* (vocational training in Italian is the more current translation) and that in Germany involves three quarters of young people in a system of alternation between school and work. However while the most popular transitions school work model is german, the ideological frame that supports the reform of the educational systems and the labor market in southern Europe is the concept of "employability" of Anglo-Saxon origin. In this essay we reflect critically on the concept of employability commonly understood as individual quality of the person who offers on the labour market and invite you to deepen the comparison between the system of transition from school to work present today in Germany with the

Italian model. In the scenario of institutional Italian school today, employability functions as ideological frame on horseback between education policies and active labor market policies. At the same time the model of alternation school German labor has been translated into Italian educational system as the institutional response to the serious effects of the economic crisis of 2008 that have increased in a particular way the social vulnerability of young people (Sergi and Kazepov 2015).

2) *Skill mismatch* and reforms of the education systems as a way out of the crisis?

Numerous studies argue that the deficit on youth employment in Italy, as in other countries is due to poor palatability of the skills of young people and by the misalignment between these skills and those required by a labor market which is extremely flexible and oriented to technological innovation and permanent management (OECD 2016, Manasseh, Manfredi 2014, McGowan, Andrews 2014). The young people of southern Europe are considered under this profile a little 'employable' or however the situation in these countries is characterized by a strong polarisation between uses *high* and *low skilled* and a strong *mismatch* between individual skills and demands of the market (Sparreboom Tarvid, 2016). According to the OECD and the European Commission for the introduction of a school system Vocational German type or Scandinavian would be able to remedy this shortcoming and quickly launch young people to a use: "The adaptability of the workforce - both employees and job seekers- should be encouraged through the development of skills (skills) transferable, wider professional profiles and a training based on skills delivered thanks to programs that incorporate the learning based on work, including apprenticeships of quality¹." The European Union therefore insists on the need for structural reforms:

"Experience has demonstrated that the countries with systems of education and professional training strong and attractive and especially with systems of apprenticeship

¹ OECD, ILO, World Bank, enhancing employability. Report prepared for the G20 Employment Group. 2016, p.3

well consolidated and a valid learning in the workplace tend to have better results as regards the transition from school to work and in the containment of unemployment.²"

The European Commission expresses following another solid conviction:

"Competitiveness of Europe, its innovative capacity and its productivity depends crucially on the availability of workers with a high level of education and training. The now consolidated trend toward a demand for increasingly high skills causes the young people who are not able to offer the skills required by the economy have increasingly more difficult to find a job. To combat unemployment should therefore be tackling the problem of lack of competence and the imbalance between the available skills and those requests. However, many education systems are today inadequate since they involve an abandonment rate high that cannot be accepted and are not always able to provide young people with the necessary skills. It is therefore urgent to ensure that education systems correspond more closely to the current and future needs in order to avoid both an imbalance between demand and availability of skills that bottlenecks.³"

The context to which it refers this orientation of policy is however very traditional:

- 1) Preparation of strong *hard skills*
- 2) Predictability of future demand for these *skills*
- 3) The need for a greater number of higher *skills* in the future
- 4) Integration between the education system and work to provide the young people of these *skills*

Also in the USA convictions concerning the need to invest in education for the promotion of income and of work have spread: "In the American labor market, employment opportunities have polarised between the areas of more qualified and better paid jobs (professional activities, technical and management), and that ones of the generic jobs at very low wages (catering services and care of the person, security) while the two are

² European Commission Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee. Working together for the young people of Europe, invitation to act against youth unemployment. COM (2013) 447, Brussels, 2013, p.9

³ Ibid. p.12

strictly linked⁴". Moretti (2017) shows that in the USA for each job with high remuneration can generate 5 low paid jobs in services and consequently it is necessary to invest in high professionalism to elevate the gains. However this strategy, perhaps rewarding on an individual plan, gives little benefits to most people in a ruthless competition for increasingly meager resources. Moreover 5/6 of new jobs in the areas of greatest development are low paid and somebody must do them. We could also read Moretti on the other side and say that the new economy needs 5 low paid jobs of producers and consumers to able to create one good high paid job.

In the USA Moretti documents a growth with leopard spot where innovation is concentrated in some areas while others are stagnating or even withdrawing. Then next to a polarization of the labor market we are also witnessing a competition between territorial areas that, like in the case of the division of labor, will see depressed areas versus winning areas. Even from the point of view of local growth, the market tends to bias the growth and in the future will could see that beside some winning territories there will be an even greater number of losers. In the absence of structural interventions inequalities are destined to grow from local to individual level, since the welfare as it is today is considerably fragmented (Kazepov, Barberis 2013). In Europe the situation seems quite similar: in some member states we can see this growth of more qualified working positions, while in others, among which Italy, young people with higher education cannot get skilled jobs in the homeland while they are able to find them abroad in metropolitan areas with a high rate of innovation. It seems at least problematic to acknowledge in this context that the national education system is the main responsible of their unemployability. In addition to highlighting how the territorial gap affects most of the individual skills on the possibility of finding an employment, many studies insist on the weakness of the Italian labor market and on weaknesses from the side of job creation (Barbieri et.al.2009, 2014)

One of the effects of the economic crisis has been to increase social inequalities that in the field of formation can result in fewer opportunities of training success. Ensping Andersen has warned with respect to this theme: "Almost no developed country has arrived at a significant equality of opportunity, being still strong today as it was in the past, the bond between social origins and opportunities offered to the child in life. (...) What we understood is that education systems, as much as they are intended for progressives and

⁴ Moretti E. *New Geografy of jobs*. Mariner Books 2012, Trad. It. *La nuova geografia del lavoro* , Milano, Mondadori 2013, p.46

egalitarian purposes, are institutionally poorly equipped to create equality."⁵ But the same Esping Andersen grants that inequality can be very attenuated by good welfare systems. "In the field of social legacy, mechanisms that really count are hidden in the preschool. (...) If our goal is to create more equality or simply to increase the productivity of the labor force, we must focus our analysis on what happens at home. It is there that the most important effects really stand."⁶ The idea of strong policies oriented to the early years of life of children are certainly consistent with the capabilities approach supported by Amartya Sen. In fact he believes that the inequality should not be reduced to a mere monetary redistribution, but with the offer of conditions that make a person in the condition to realize in freedom its capacities and his inclinations. This approach has had the great fortune between supporters of the usefulness of the policies of social investment giving rise to new moral need to which is subjected the public institution: "public intervention is then called, is to provide an 'adequate space informative about the opportunities available to the individual, both to allow the individual himself to actually realising the choices made."⁷

"Promoting maximum 'social inclusion', create works of good quality, characterize the services with an approach aimed at maximizing the 'capacitation' persons, pursue equal opportunities, appear as many levers that should inspire public action."⁸ 'This is a shift in philosophy from the logic of equality (on) of result to that of equality (relative) opportunities."⁹

This change of philosophy with respect to the old Keynesian logic is still compatible with the liberal paradigm because its supporters do not wish to intervene in the mechanisms of resource allocation of market but upstream thereof, in the conditions with which each person presents itself on the market. From the social investment in education or equal opportunities we expect therefore a promotion of the employability of people which should translate, as we have seen, in a higher allocation of capital to be spent by each person on the labor market.

⁵ Esping Andersen G. *Trois leçons sur l'Etat providence*, Editions du Seuil, 2008, it trad. *Oltre lo stato assistenziale. Per un nuovo patto tra generazioni*. Milan, Garzanti, 2010, p. 58

⁶ *Ibid.* p.69

⁷ Paci. M. *Le politiche di emancipazione sociale e promozione delle capacità*. Paci M Pugliese E. *Welfare e promozione delle capacità*. Bologna, Il Mulino 2011. P.23

⁸ Ascoli U. Sgritta G. *Segni di investimento sociale in Italia?* In Ascoli U. Ranci C. Sgritta G. *Investire nel sociale*. Bologna, Il Mulino, 2016, p. 11

⁹ *Ibidem* p.14

Here however shows a strong operational ambiguity of policies to pursue this objective: some of them have been designed within the model of a society governed by the old professions in which the contractualization and the division of labor seemed to reward the *hard skills* with respect to *soft*. Moreover: is it possible to quantify the effectiveness of the vocational approach in the territories that are very different in terms of incomes and intensity of work and where density of firms is highly variable?

3) The introduction of the school-work education in Italy

Italian law 107 of 2015 has made compulsory a minimum amount of hours of school-work training in all upper secondary schools of Italy and so giving way to an unprecedented social experiment that involved 1,2 million students until now. A large discussion spread among teachers about principles and results of this policy and brought to a debate at the academic level in which this paper wants to give a contribution.

All students of scientific and classic high schools must play at least 200 hours in school-work programs during their last 3 years, while technical and professional high school students must spend not less than 400 hours within the same period of time.

This activity can also be carried out in hours and days outside their scholastic activity (i.e. mainly during the summer holidays), abroad or inside schools in the form of simulated company.

In one of the few extensive research on the theme Giubileo (2017) has already traced effectively the legislative path that led to the current situation. We would like to highlight in this path of institutionalisation some points relevant to our argument.

The reform Treu has provided since 1997 the possibility to increase *on-the-job training* through the institutionalisation of the *stage* and of placements and the law 196/97 introduces the expression "alternanza scuola lavoro" (work-school alternation) which is therefore present, as practice, in our professional schools since a long time. Between 2003 and 2005 the Moratti reform started a system of alternation that gave the base characteristics of today or the articulation between periods of classroom training and periods of learning through work experience (in company or simulated). In this context students were called to take in a voluntary way and optional access to this type of activity

and in practice educational institutions, in the framework of their autonomy, were charged to choose how and how much to invest resources on alternating with results very diversified at national level. Between 2010 and 2013 Government made two other important regulatory elements to regulate and increase the level of quality and standardization of some elements of the practices of alternation at national level since the number of schools and students that participated in this activity was growing progressively as it can be seen from the data collected from schools.

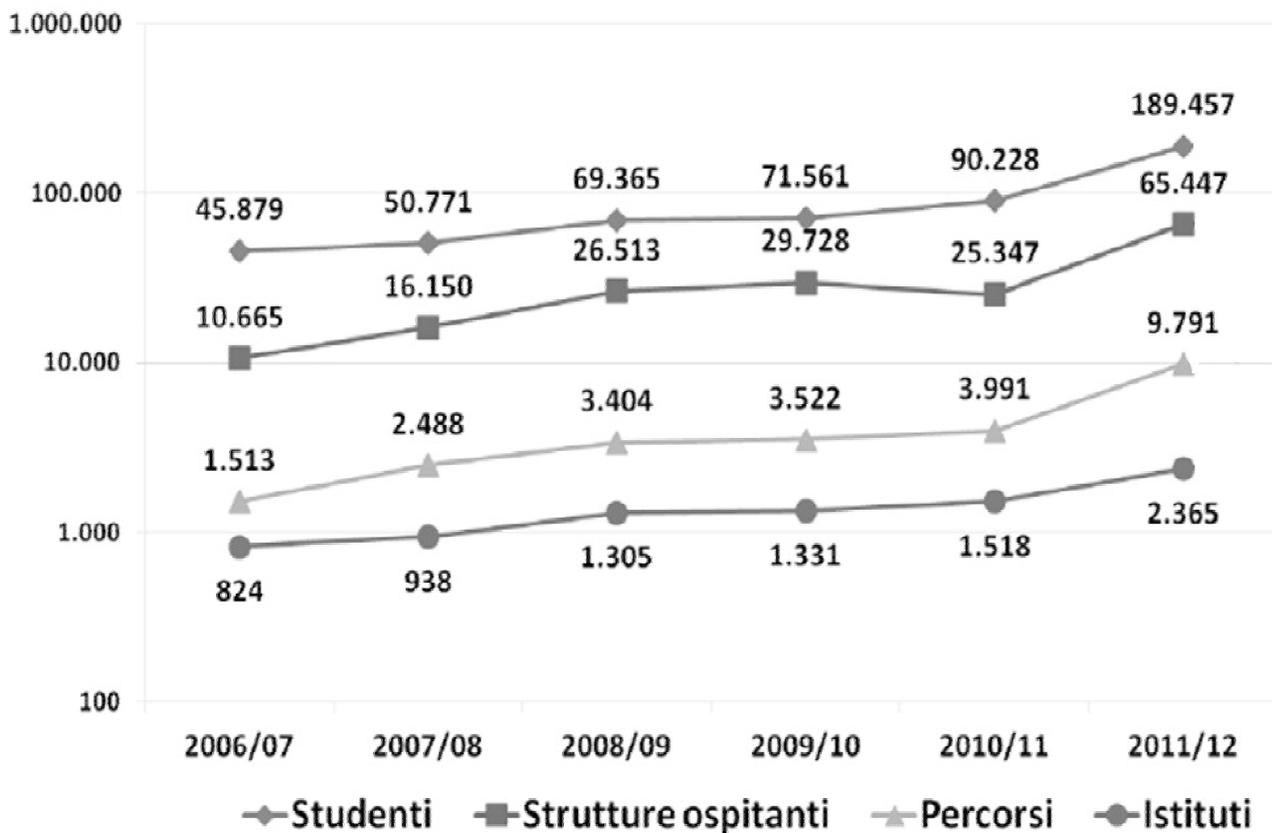


Fig.1 Students, external tutors, training agreements, schools in Italian vocational system. Source: Giubileo 2016,

The number of participating students has grown without interruption but in a few areas of the country the total number of participating schools has stopped increasing or even began to decrease and a particularly low percentage of accession in schools has been seen in the south of Italy with the exception of Puglia (INDIRE 2011). There is no room to follow this topic here, but these data can be read as a clear link of the implementation of this policy with the economic environment in which schools are based.

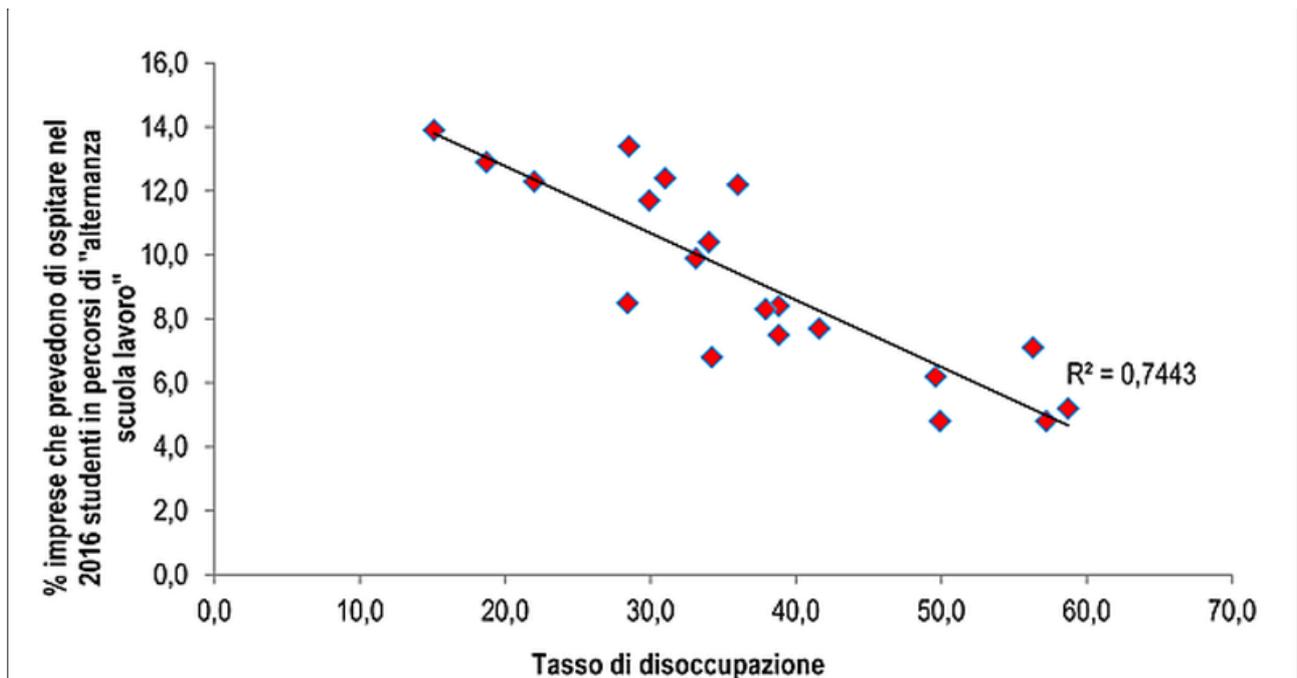


Fig.2 Percentage of small firm ready to take students for school work vs young unemeplyment by region in Italy. Source: Confartigianato 2017

Data of this figure shows how economic weakness is connected with propensity of firms to participate at school work projects. Of course these data would be much worst if we take into account real number instead of percentage of small firms that stand in the regions.

The monitoring of the Miur is started in the school year 2004/2005 and was managed by the public institute of research on didactics hold up to 2016 when monitoring was taken up directly from the MIUR. During this period technical and professional institutes framed in this new regulatory framework the activities of practical training and internships that already provided to their pupils. Many of these internships were designed in connection with those companies in the territory directly concerned with the technical training of staff and that had an interest on a common cpolicy for future recruiting.

Young Guarantee european, started on 2014-2015 and aimed at helping young not in education, employment or training (NEET), was the first program in Italy that clearly emphasized the reading of the phenomenon of youth unemployment with the key of the "employability" (Cefalo, Sergi, Giannelli 2015, Sergi, Barberis 2016). What were however the institutional reasons that have led to the extension to all students and students of this interpretation? Why today for the government and for a good part of the entrepreneurial world has become so urgent to generalize this practice? We find immediately trace of such urgency joined to the overall recruitment of employability in the institutional discourse by analyzing the circulars and the operating documents of MIUR of 2015: "The school system

is called, then, to deal with the world of work in order to achieve an effective lifelong learning, which is an essential condition for the development of human capital, economic competitiveness, the rights of citizenship and social cohesion. The alternating school/work must, therefore, provide a strong innovative dimension, to ensure young people, in addition to the knowledge base, also the acquisition of greater responsibility for their employability and self-entrepreneurship." The same document motivates inter alia for the adoption of the obligation for all schools to make the alternation with the argument rather self-referential who cites: "the enormous importance assumed by the activities of alternation for the purposes of the acquisition of the skills spendable in the world of work, has meant that the law of 13 July 2015, n. 107, it had the full implementation from classes third activated in the school year 2015/2016, following that in progress at the date of entry into force of the same."¹⁰ therefore the urgency dictated by the numbers of unemployment, of NEETs and early school leavers appears to be justification for the introduction of the obligation of the alternation school work, that through the law 107/2015 has taken on the features of the classical reform "top-down" that is imposed from the top with all the known risks and institutional constraints that this type of approaches entails. Furthermore there are no scientific evidence that the alternation school-work in conditions of poor growth or recession leads to a higher rate of employment of young people.

In the course of the first year of application of the reform have highlighted some important institutional initiatives that have involved so unprecedented for quantity and quality of the commitment to the world of business and labor market institutions such as chambers of commerce, the main trade unions and the employers' organizations (Confindustria, CNA, Confcommercio) and many major multinational relief that have signed agreements, known as "the samples of the alternation" to accommodate students in alternation up to a total of 27,000 unit¹¹. These agreements especially those tight with companies whose social responsibility is the subject of public debate, have raised many criticisms and concerns (Raimo 2016). The last institutional innovation produced by the reform of the alternation are finally in "territorial Laboratories for employability" financed in 2016 by Miur with 45 million euros for the "creation of spaces from the high innovative profile at the disposal of more schools of the territory, where develop practical advanced teaching in synergy with

¹⁰ circular of the Ministry for the University, Education and Research of 21/09/2015

¹¹ the agreements signed between the MIUR and companies are available on the network at the address [Http://www.istruzione.it/alternanza/campioni.shtml](http://www.istruzione.it/alternanza/campioni.shtml).

the local policies for work and business" ¹² which should constitute the didactic laboratories where do interact undertakings and school. Each Regional School Office currently has a considerable autonomy in designing interventions of alternation and moreover each school within the framework of legislation has margins for a decision on the manner in which the paths of alternation must be managed. In some regions like Veneto and Tuscany were signed protocols of agreement between the social partners, schools and the world of private enterprise and regional institutions are trying to make the system a significant number of young participants. The Miur has announced that in the academic year of the last recording 2015/2016 participated 652.641 students in the face of an appropriation of EUR 100 million, i.e. an average of financing rather reduced to 153 Euros per student. In this context of scarce resources in most of the institutes this new educational activity was administered with internal resources or entrusting teachers who wanted to play in exchange for compensation symbolic almost a considerable additional work of organization and communication with external actors (companies, institutions, households) especially in institutes that have had to improvise paths of alternation without having structures, relationship network and internal professionalism. In these conditions it is not a surprise if families of pupils have been called to collaborate providing links and ideas to help teachers to fulfill suddenly this large amount of training programs with external actors. Within the world of the school have arisen many resistances which however have never reached the threshold of a mobilization organized and translated, especially in high schools without past experience on this field, in passive boycott looking for internal solutions (simulated company, accreditation as an activity of the alternation of hours of courses and educational activities in the afternoon etc.) for completion at least partial amount of hours fixed by law.

It is not immediately clear how the massive use of young students in companies that make wide use of staff at low qualify is not at risk of becoming a practice for the replacement of labor employed. It also records the birth of the first initiatives of contrast by groups of students and there is an ongoing debate in the field auditors on the risks of labor exploitation and replacing posts paid due to the high number of young people involved. This situation requires without doubt a deepening of field research that we intend to conduct at local level in the Marche region during the new school year 2017/2018. Today in fact in the field of alternating school work you are doing an experiment of public policy

¹² Site [Http://www.istruzione.it/scuola_digitale/prog-laboratori-territoriali.shtml](http://www.istruzione.it/scuola_digitale/prog-laboratori-territoriali.shtml) MIUR

that affects every year over 800 thousand students and tens of thousands of teachers and that a scheme will affect approximately 1.5 million students according to the data of the MIUR.

4) employability as asset of relational capital: a critical look.

The word employability is entry in the Italian dictionary as a translation of the English term *employability*; its import in institutional lexicon is relatively recent. In the Italian text, published by Miur, of the Bologna Declaration of June 1999 of the Ministers of Education of the member countries, stated that "European Space of Higher Education must facilitate the movement of citizens and their employability", while later it adds that the system of diplomas must "promote the *employability*" and the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education". In the documents of the ILO¹³ There is a greater attention to the responsibility of policies which also insist on the slope of the demand for labor. However in the shared documents and adopted in international or intergovernmental forum these references to the creation of jobs become more rarefied. As pointed out at the end of the nineties so witty a critic of this concept: "employability is a concept that flourishes when unemployment is high. It has been widely discussed in the years '30s but nobody in 1944 took it more seriously because the great demand for work during the war had demonstrated that practically nobody is "unemployable"¹⁴.

Thirty years before the Member States undertook to promote employment not only with policies aimed at improving the supply of labor but also adapted to generate more demand. The more conspicuous demonstration of the paradigm shift is seen by comparing the statutes of the two major central banks of the world. In the statute of the Federal Reserve, written in 1913 and amended in the seventies, we read that "The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal Open Market Committee shall maintain long run growth of the monetary and credit aggregates commensurate with the economy's long run potential to increase production, so as to promote effectively the goals

¹³ for example: ILO The Youth Employment Crisis: a call for action. International Labor Conference, Geneva, 2012

¹⁴ See the article David Webster of 1999 "Mr Brown clings to unworkable theory" in <https://www.theguardian.com/business/1999/dec/20/10?INTCMP=SRCH>

of maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates.¹⁵ The statute of the European Central Bank, written in the years '90 sets out instead that "the primary objective of the ESCB shall be to maintain price stability. Without prejudice to the objective of price stability, it shall support the general economic policies in the Community with a view to contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Community as laid down in Article 2 of the Treaty."¹⁶

The paradigm shift has happened slowly from the end of the seventies of the twentieth century. "Political leaders were persuaded by economic experts to abandon the Keynesian model to adopt an approach which is more rigid. Full employment was downgraded from first political objective to direct consequence of economic rehabilitation, while governments and central banks have focused on the fight against inflation. More generally vast sectors of opinion felt failed all the social democratic experiment of market management by the public intervention: you could not rely on the governments, too prone to immediate popularity"¹⁷.

The stages of the expansion of the cultural hegemony neoliberal were many and with very different from country to country. Great Britain of Margaret Thatcher was the pioneer of all policies neo liberal: liberalisation, privatisation, deregulation of employment, downgrading of unions, managerial reforms of the public administration. In Italy in 1981 started the separation between the Minister of the Treasury and the Bank of Italy, while in the policies and in the language of the conversion is completed over the next twenty years.

The ideological core of liberalism is the idea that markets will protect the collective interest best of public administration and therefore the public interventions must be limited to a better functioning of the virtuous mechanism of free competition that promotes the quality of products and rewards the skills and the merits of workers. The ordoliberal inspiration of the Treaties establishing the European Communities and the European Union has favored the diffusion of the culture of free competition progressively reducing many national barriers to free movement before the goods besides of workers. The eastward

¹⁵ Federal Reserve Act. Section 2A. Monetary policy objectives
<https://www.federalreserve.gov/aboutthefed/section2a.htm>.

¹⁶ https://www.ecb.europa.eu/ecb/legal/pdf/it_statute_2.pdf 16

¹⁷ Crouch C. 2012. *The power of the giants: Why the crisis has not defeated the neo-liberalism*. Bari: Laterza, p. 18

enlargement of the EU has widened the scope of this freedom to low-income countries and lower cost of living.

The policies of *workfare* inaugurated by the Government Thatcher in the 1980s have dramatically restricted the conditions for obtaining unemployment benefits in order to encourage the unemployed to stay more on the market and to reduce the costs for social services. The *welfare to work* was not denied by the successive Labour governments which instead invested on services of *job placement* and *tutoring* in view of reinserting people in the labor market. The corollary was thus confirmed: only the market produces jobs and the market is increasingly fluid and unpredictable. Therefore the task of the State is to form young people so that they can be attractive on the market and be able to move from one job to another. To aged young people who lost their jobs must be dedicated activation policies that should be able of providing new skills good for the market demand.

The concept of *employability* is entered in the institutional vocabulary of public education when the ideology that is at its base was already consolidated in the labor market and in the business lexicon in particular in the English-speaking world. It in fact seems that it is first used in a public document in a report of experts from the Ministry of Education and work in 1998, during the first Labor government of Tony Blair. "Employability is defined here, within a context relevant to the safety of the work, such as the ability to autonomously move within the labor market in order to realize its potential through a sustainable employment. The report suggests that in the new flexible work environment individuals should be ready to move between jobs and roles and be able to manage their employment transitions using effectively their 'employability assets.'" ¹⁸ According to Michel Foucault, the Genealogy of this representation of the individual as entrepreneur of himself or better as a firm is to connect with founding text founding of the economist of the Chicago School "Human Capital" of Becker (1964) which is at the basis of the neoliberal turn fully described also by Boltansky and Chiappello (2014). This direct connection has recently confirmed also by Shepherd (2016) in one of the few scholarly articles published in Italy by the alternating school work. The author says as the model focused on the vision of human capital is widely replacing the ideological system of upper secondary school based on the neo-gentilian idealism the was based on the idea that education is a theoretical activity

¹⁸ Arming and Bove in Murgia A., 2017 Mapping precariousness, Labor Insecurity and uncertain livelihoods, New York Routledge.

separate from practice. But we believe that the passage from the idealism to neoliberalism is not the only possibility of renewal of the school and of the Italian university system that also hosts some critical voices (Colella 2016, Raimo 2016).

The term employability thus relates to the quality that the market in its various manifestations local, national or international, can judge worthy of remuneration. It therefore comes as no surprise if today a google search of "employability" find numerous sites of British universities that seek to attract new students claiming to be able to offer these qualities to those who subscribe to their courses. For example, here is what he writes on the website of the University of Warwick: "Employability can be a difficult concept to define - it is multidimensional- Employability concerns not only a deposit of the student in the bank skills), it is a synergistic combination of personal qualities, skills of various kinds and comprehension skills. The key point is the development of critical skills and reflective with a perspective of the strengthening and growth of the one who learns." ¹⁹

This approach sees today numerous critical because "the principle of the provision assumes, through the cult of performance, the semblance of a real social rationality." ²⁰ Unlike the company based on obedience to the rules of the Ford model, that based on the provision does not require to be obedient but flexible, adaptable, responsible for their decisions. In this way within the rules of the competition you feel more free than in the past. Representations and television games and computer feed a pedagogy of competition from the earliest age. The media and educational institutions "are innervated a performative pedagogy that admits, indeed urges, ethical behavior and integral, but only if they are compatible with the performance of an action measurable on the performance plan or of their *employability* (employability).²¹"

While in the ford optical the salary is the remuneration of the individual contribution to the productive activity of a group, from the point of view of the neoliberal it is the remuneration of a relational capital individually.²² "what is the capital of which the salary is the income? Well consists in the set of all those factors physical or psychological that make someone

¹⁹ University of Warwick Employability what is it?

<https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/getahead/employability.pdf>

²⁰ Chicchi F. Simone A. La società della prestazione Roma, Ediesse, 2017 p.72

²¹ Same book- p.74

²² Becker G. Human Capital, Chicago 1964 cit in Chicchi F. Simone A. La società della prestazione Roma, Ediesse, 2017 p.59

able to earn an income rather than another so that, seen from the perspective of the worker labor is not a commodity reduced for abstraction in the work force and the time it takes for you to use. Decomposed in economic terms, from the point of view of the worker the work involves a capital, it is an attitude, a competence."²³

The employability would be the expendability on the labor market of this capital that each carries within himself. In society governed and sorted according to categories stable a person was formed to do a job for which had to be prepared and disciplined. With the neo-liberal revolution and the increasingly rapid technological development workers are no longer required to be competent to exercise a profession, rather is required to be entrepreneurs of their own human capital, a capital that depreciates continuously or is offset by the new configurations of market and technology. It follows that each is an entrepreneur himself that must treat its responsibilities under the volatility of the markets and technologies. This description of the functioning of the labor market made hegemonic today the social representation of the young and their self-perception as workers in perennial state of formation. Cuzzocrea (2015) suggests that the term "employability" has assumed finally the character of a "magical device" inside what Maurizio Ferrera (2013) defines "neo-liberal welfarismo". Surely this is a semantic device controversial that currently exerts a great influence on the development of active policies for the job in Europe and in Italy (Sergi, Barberis 2016) and that has attracted criticism from the field of sociology critical toward the insecurity in the labor market (Southwood 2017).

As Boltansky affirm and Chiappello (2014) in the analysis of the individualisation of work situations: "The individualisation of the skills, bonuses and sanctions exerts another effect dangerous, tending to make each individual the sole responsibility of its successes and its failures",²⁴ also the emphasis on employability as individual characteristic is part of the ideological discourse that tends to represent the "human resources" as a commodity without maintenance costs and use that tend to be downloaded on the State and the public in the form of efforts to education, training, work affective, welfare. These resources necessary to the production of the so-called "human capital" are also distributed from a highly competitive system classist and whose results that have an impact on the level of "employability" of the individuals are not normally put into question.

²³ Foucault M. Naissance de la biopolitique. Cours au Collège de France. 1978-1979. Paris, 2004. Quoted in Chicchi F. Simone A. La società della prestazione Roma, Ediesse, 2017 p.58

²⁴ Boltansky L., Chiappello E. 2014. *Il nuovo spirito del capitalismo*. Milano: Mimesis, p. 325

5) The rise of Soft Skills

In this sense today to take care of their employability does not mean simply as twenty years ago, "keep up". The same companies are not able to predict which technical skills will tomorrow and know that they will have to submit the workers to continue new training. It is not surprising therefore "the technical skills of the discipline appear only to tenth place in the requests of employers (American). All respondents agree that the so-called *soft skills* represent the main criterion in the decision to hire anyone. (...) Must be able to take decisions, dealing with people and keep behaviors, all characteristics which in the last century distinguished executives from employees. (...) Yet the Italian newspapers continue publishing statistics according to which thousands of jobs remain vacant because they lack the technical skills. (...) It is all a misunderstanding: those places not remain vacant because schools not brew enough young people with the right skills, but because they are not enough young people with the soft skills required. And what are the soft skills that affect to Italian companies? (...) The work ethic is in the first place, then are the ability to work in a group, to communicate and to solve problems."²⁵ In line with this rhetoric appears the report published by the Toniolo Institute on commission of the Foundation McDonald's in 2016²⁶ that supports the participation of the company to the ministerial program samples of the alternation²⁷ which has received numerous critical for the ambiguity of the roles taken by students and for the pervasive level of corporate mentality in educational projects (Raimo 2016).

By invoking the distinction between employability in entry and employability along the arc of life Massagli (2016) emphasizes as "the formation of the individual must allow not only its versatility, but its versatility that prepare to continuous change "yes to be able to adapt gradually in the course of life to a world outside, for a company in continuous transformation in an effort to not let overtake and overwhelmed by the changes in progress, indeed is such as to arrange it he himself becomes a factor of renewal and

²⁵ Abravanel R. D'Agnesse L. La ricreazione è finita. Scegliere la scuola, trovare il lavoro. Milano, Rizzoli, 2015 pp.52 e segg.

²⁶ <http://www.rapportogiovani.it/new/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Giovani-e-Soft-Skill-tra-scuola-e-lavoro.pdf> 26

²⁷ [Http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/ministero/cs181016](http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/ministero/cs181016) 27

evolution of such a system."²⁸ We can take this conception of employability within the more general concept of resilience, where it is defined as "the ability of a system of a company or of a person to maintain its final objectives and its integrity in the face of a dramatic change of circumstances."²⁹

Employability on which today is based the design of the alternation school work is understood as an individual quality whose value depends on the market, i.e. by characteristics whose variability does not depend on the individual. This variability depends instead on the nature, from stability and predictability of other private institutions or public present on the market, those that offer the work and that regulate or encourage the conditions of these exchanges. Each individual has also not only a reference market but it can have many and different amplitude depending on its capital, relational, cognitive, financial. This society dominated by markets increasingly interconnected and increasingly less mediated by public institutions appears every day more liquid, to use the words Baumann, and tends to reward the most skills soft that those hard and the materials are much more related to individual specificity, even existential, of the second.

6) The system German vocational and its problematic import into Italy

As we have already explained the training paths of the strongest countries from the economic point of view as Germany were identified by Italian institutions as the passkey of the weaker countries to virtue that missing (Jubilee 2016, Pastor 2017) . This approach to the institutional learning does not take into account the fact that countries have strong public and private institutions more solid, capable of reducing unpredictability of markets and to enhance the human capital of who presents itself on the market.

"The insistence of community hierarchies toward Member States has grown so that all may achieve the exceptional statistical results in the context of the labor market registered youth in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, i.e. in the countries with the most established tradition of vocational education and training apprenticeship."³⁰ So even Italy, which is the

²⁸ Massagli E. Alternanza formativa e apprendistato in Italia e in Europa. Roma, Edizioni Studium 2016 p.30

²⁹ Zolli A. Healy M. Resilience, London 2012 p.8

³⁰ Massagli E. Alternanza formativa e apprendistato in Italia e in Europa. Roma, Edizioni Studium 2016 p.20

third nation in Europe for the level of youth unemployment, has decided to look at those models to refine the transition from school to work for young people. From the crisis of 2008 Germany is output quickly and since then GDP and employment are grown. Currently its competitiveness is so strong that its trade surplus (about 300 billion dollars) has become a problem for the World Economy ³¹. The reasons for this success are connected with the wage moderation operated in agreement between the social partners while "while the state supports the vocational system that ensures a large supply of skilled labor. ³² ""The socio-economic model German is based on the export of products with high technological intensity and high quality production, which in turn are based on a qualified work force and not conflictual, well remunerated and generously assisted in the event of unemployment. (...) In the case of Germany, the high qualification is ensured by the dual system of vocational training. ³³ "

Not only the centers international studies, such as the OECD and the ILO, emphasize the good performance of the systems to the Vocation education and training (VET) of Germany and Austria in particular, but also the European Commission exalts the results. "Improve the offer and the quality of the apprenticeship is therefore a key component of the strategy for the youth employment. ³⁴ " It should indeed be borne in mind that in the German model apprenticeship is none other than the terminal pitch of a path of alternation between school and work that you can precisely define education-training vocational nature managed in collaboration between educational institutions and companies. The school system German provides three basic paths: two of these are of a type of vocations and one of the generic type gymnasium that leads to the university

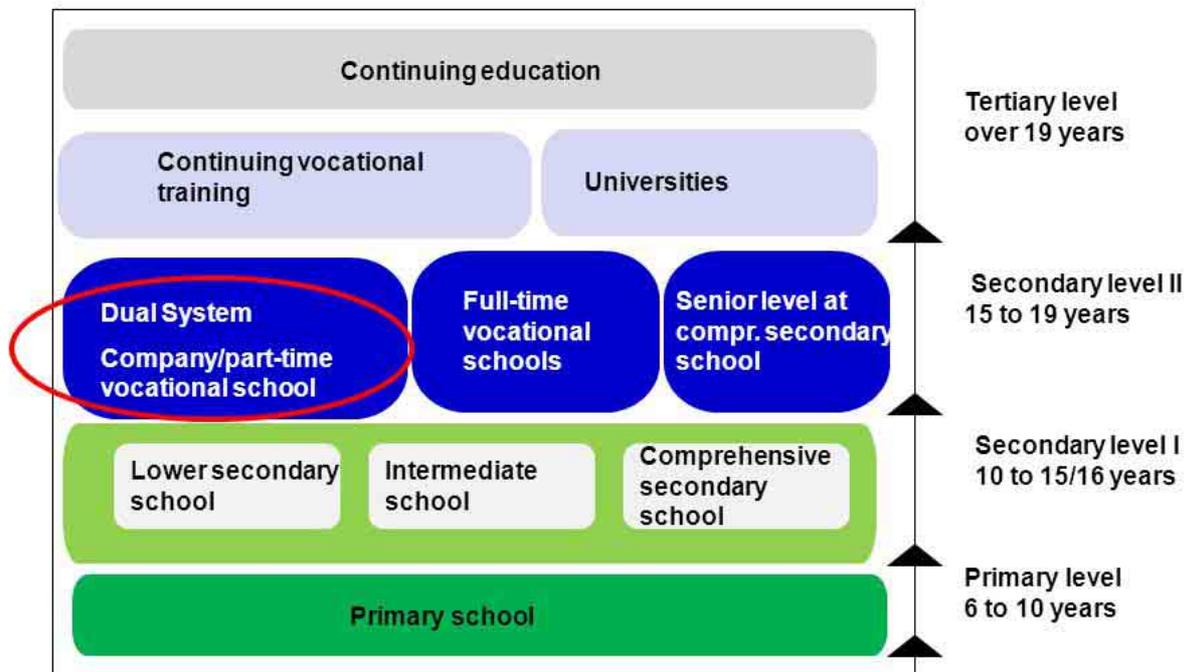
³¹ The Economist The German problem. Why its surplus demaging is the world economy. July 8th -14th 2017

³² Vorsprung durch Angst. Admired for its stability but derided for persistent trade surplus, the good and bad in Germany's economy are strongly linked. July 8th -14th 2017 p.16

³³ Ballarino G. Cecchi D. La Germania può essere un termine di paragone per l'Italia? Istruzione e formazione in un'economia di mercato coordinata. In Rivista di Politica Economica N.1 2013 pp39-74, p. 42

³⁴ European Commission Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee. Working together for the young people of Europe, invitation to act against youth unemployment. COM (2013) 447, Brussels, 2013, p.10

Basic structure of the German education and training system



The child is judged for his attitudes by teachers of the primary school and directed toward the professional path that more quickly leads to the work toward that technician that go up to the technical colleges or toward the gymnasium that leads to the university. Who wants to change the road with respect to this path must pass one or more exams. Only a quarter of the young arrives at the University because the others are absorbed by the dual system and in any case would not be allowed without supplementary examinations. Two thirds of the latter remain or return to work in a company in which they have done an internship. The alternation between work and school in fact provides that almost half and in some courses more than half of the curricular hours are conducted at the related companies. This is a system strongly channeled that has the advantage of a strong working placement but also the defect route precocente kids on a default path that to a large extent corresponds to the social class of origin. Discourages social mobility and does not take into account the inclinations of the young. "The system is faced many challenges. Too many students fail in the management of the transition from school systems required to vocational programs and many have mathematical skills and literary inadequate basis.

Despite the recent initiatives, the transition from the system of vocations to the tertiary sector (university) remains difficult.³⁵ "

³⁵ hoeckel k. Schwartz R. Learning for Jobs OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training. Germany OECD 2010 p.17

In these seat most of the pedagogical principles we want to stress the particularity of the institutional context in which it is rooted the dual system german. We schematically identify three main characteristics

(A) the certification of skills

The hours held at companies corresponding to real training paths, provided in detail by agreements between the State, companies and trade unions, on the basis of national protocols that identify well over three hundred professional figures of reference (in the Italian apprenticeship are less than 30). These paths attest to the professionalism reached by the student with a document valid throughout Germany. In Italy the apprenticeship has never had a similar level of formative definition. The Fornero Law (2012) provided for a simple and unilateral written attestation of the kind of learning done in company but was opposed by the employer associations.³⁶ and in fact the written form of this attestation was eliminated from the first decree of the Minister Poletti in 2014. At the opposite of Italian ones, German companies are therefore accustomed, organized and equipped to accommodate students in a formative context. They do not make training simply putting the boys to see how adults are working. In fact it is necessary to distinguish, thing that the alternation school work in Italy does not seem to be able to do, between the episodic experience of the stage and a training methodology integrated between theory and practice. In addition the administration and movement educational credentials is central to the proper functioning of the system while in our country the formation, delegated to the regions is fragmented in qualitative levels, in the results and in the type of educational credentials produced. In this respect in fact Ballarino says: "The engine of the dual system, in fact, is not in the alternation between school and work *per se*, but in the other two elements: it is the involvement of the dual system between the social partners and the value of employment qualifications ("credenzialismo" in terms of the sociology of education)." ³⁷ The system is so consolidated from Germany that speaks of the vocational labor market, in the sense that the career of a person can easily go between different companies in the same field of employment or in the same company changing context. Even in Germany this shared path and structured is much easier to realize in medium and

³⁶ Interview of Nicola Giannelli at former minister Elsa Fornero on 20 February 2015

³⁷ Ballarino G. Cecchi D. La Germania può essere un termine di paragone per l'Italia? Istruzione e formazione in un'economia di mercato coordinata. In Rivista di Politica Economica N.1 2013 pp39-74, p. 7

large enterprises where there are the capital, structures, skills and the division of roles suitable for a formative insertion. This happens much less in small businesses that often prefer to remain on the sidelines of the dual system or participate only in key artisan apprenticeship. However the presence of medium and large enterprises in Germany and much stronger than in Italy.

The employees in enterprises with less than 50 employees in Italy there are about a million and half like in Germany, where there are fewer employees in micro-enterprises (0-9). But in Germany the workers of companies from 50 to 249 employees are about 1.7 million while in Italy are half million, while workers of companies above 250 employees are 3.9 million against 0.9 of Italy (and 1.4 of France).³⁸

(B) administrative efficiency and business culture

The Chambers of Commerce have a role of arbitration, appointing the members of the boards of examiners of consultation with the social partners that participate in equal measure. But also public bodies play an important role. "A greater strength of the dual system is another degree of involvement and ownership on the part of employers and other social partners. But the system is also characterized by a system of checks and monitoring at national level, state, municipal business and which ensures that the needs of short term employers do not distort the broader objectives of the system of apprenticeship. The dual system also benefits from a clear division of responsibilities between the federal government and States and the private sector, a division normalized on which it has worked closely over the course of time."³⁹

(C) economic investment

The cost of the german dual system is relatively high: 21 billion euros for the state and about 6 for enterprises.⁴⁰ The costs vary by reason of the professional path. This cost is to be added to the annual average of school. Before the crisis there was not much of a difference of spending between Germany and Italy: the first spent a little more than 4% of

³⁸ data derived from the graphs published on the website of the OECD:
<https://data.oecd.org/entrepreneur/employees-by-business-size.htm#indicator-chart>

³⁹ hoeckel k. Schwartz R. Learning for Jobs OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training. Germany OECD 2010 p.17

⁴⁰ Massagli E. Alternanza formativa e apprendistato in Italia e in Europa. Roma, Edizioni Studium 2016 p.82

GDP and a little more than 8% of public budgets in education, the second a 10-15% less, but with the salaries of teachers much lower. From 2008 to 2013 the Italian expenditure for education has decreased by 14% while in Germany grew by 7%⁴¹ against a dramatic situation concerning early school leaving and young unemployed and inactive in our country. Germany also spends less than us for primary education and much more for that lower secondary where students start these paths of alternation⁴². The average cost of a student of Italian school today is approximately 6900 euro,⁴³ that means a 8 % less than the OECD average and a 10% less than the European average.⁴⁴ In his first regulatory scheme, with law of 2003, to the dual apprenticeship were dedicated a few tens of millions of euros (on a budget of over 40 billion) that have passed the hundred this year, with the law 107 of 2015 (so-called "Good School") was chosen the road not to multiply the incentives but impose on all secondary schools the obligation to organise paths of dual apprenticeship for a minimum number of hours for all students. Companies, local authorities, chambers of Commerce were invited to participate voluntarily without any incentive or economic commitment.

7) Conclusions

The German dual model teaches that a compulsory scheme on schools it is not enough to produce effective paths of school work. We need to involve trade unions and companies in the definition of serious formative paths able to certify the acquisition of precise professionalism. We must establish stable relationships with companies willing to accommodate students in suitable environments, with educational paths predefined and suitable. We need participation at this program of national and local institutions, when concerned, who are guarantors of the identification and the continuous updating of professional profiles and correspondence to these profiles of the paths of the alternation, evaluation on learning of the learners and routes for any passage of a student from a path of study to another.

⁴¹ OECD Education at a glance. 2016, Italy. p. 10, Paris, OECD, 2016

⁴² OECD Education at a glance. 2016, International. Chapter B1, p.185, Paris, OECD, 2016

⁴³ Macrì F. Costo Standard dello studente. Seminario, Roma, Camera dei Deputati, Sala del Refettorio, 1 aprile 2014

⁴⁴ OECD Education at a glance. 2016, Italy. The salient facts for Italy, p.9. Paris, OECD, 2016

In this system of relationships, medium and large enterprises, and in particular those with the highest technological innovation, have greater interest to develop shared locations of alternation and are able to predict with reasonable certainty which professional figures will have demand in the near future. Small and medium-sized Italian enterprises have demonstrated in the years of crisis a strong reluctance to investment in training and a cultural inability to a change of paradigm (Mullet 2016). In this respect, the social partners often cited as a positive example the agreement of alternation school work DESI (Dual Education System Italy) with Ducati and Lamborghini.⁴⁵ This has been described as the first attempt which has most succeeded to import in the Italian context the German model of vocational education, starting precisely from the construction of precise institutional requirements (Giubileo 2017). However the model Ducati shows some structural elements which seem to us to be hardly extensible at national level:

- Salary of students in alternation in the form of scholarship of 600 (Project DESI I) and 450 (Project DESI II) financed by local government
- Roof maximum future recruitment fixed by the company to 25% of the students participating in the project
- 1500 hours of training in the company of which 50% in laboratory and 50% in the workplace

From the first journalistic investigations on the field and by the critical positions of basic unionism we learned about many cases in which young people in alternation performed simple work tasks in change of staff contractualized and that there is no objective evidence of increased employability and employment levels as a result of the alternating school-work.⁴⁶ Single cases could be poorly relevant in large numbers. These assumptions are waiting for the deepening of doing quantitative and qualitative research methodologically more solid. The first evidence of the sudden introduction of the obligation of the alternation for all upper secondary schools shows the hardship for the institutional education framework due to lack of organizational and material resources, for no clear definition of

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The agreement with the two companies of the Audi Group, signed on 28/06/2016 from the Regional School Office of Emilia-Romagna, Region Emilia Romagna and Volkswagen Foundation, provides a program of alternating school-work for 48 students of 2 professional schools at the two mechanical firms. [Http://scuola.regione.emilia-romagna.it/notizie/2016/alternanza-scuola-lavoro-accordo-con-ducati-e-lamborghini](http://scuola.regione.emilia-romagna.it/notizie/2016/alternanza-scuola-lavoro-accordo-con-ducati-e-lamborghini)

⁴⁶ see [Http://genova.repubblica.it/cronaca/2017/08/25/news/titolo_non_esportato_da_hermes_-_id_articolo_7839840-173791022/](http://genova.repubblica.it/cronaca/2017/08/25/news/titolo_non_esportato_da_hermes_-_id_articolo_7839840-173791022/) and also [Https://www.ultimavoce.it/lalternanza-scuola-lavoro-unanalisi-critica/](https://www.ultimavoce.it/lalternanza-scuola-lavoro-unanalisi-critica/)

training goals of non technical and professional high schools, and to a compulsory-time scheme that could be too invasive for vocational schools as well. A policy learning from past experience on this field could have avoided these mistakes. Impacts on labour markets, especially on low skill seasonal jobs, must be studied and many measures have to be taken in order to avoid a further deterioration of Italian low paid labour market. Subsequent research will place greater emphasis on the theoretical issues and *policy* highlighted by this our preliminary exploration of the field of study.

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