

# The development of a National Qualifications Framework in Italy

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# The process towards the NQF

The process leading to the development of a National Qualifications Framework in Italy was based on diverse levels of commitment:

- ☐ Legal framework
- ☐ Socio-economic context
- ☐ Technical level



# The legal framework

The European legislation and LLL strategies

National policy and reforms

Regional developments

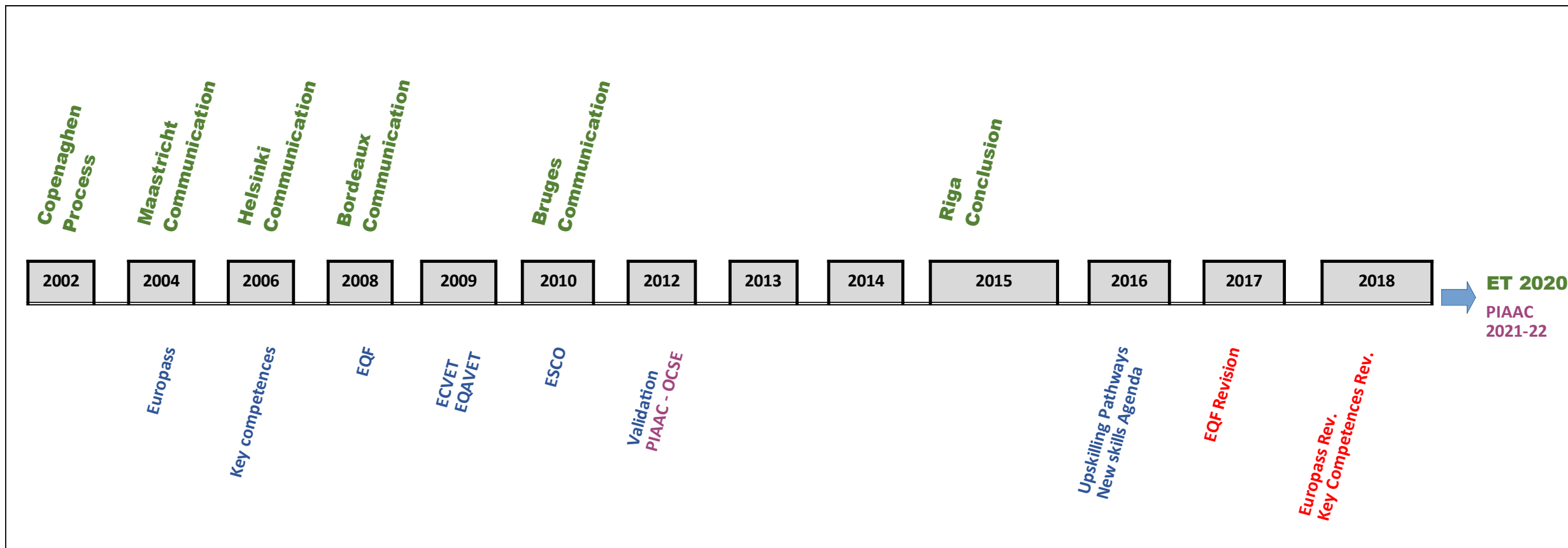


# The legal framework: the European legislation and processes

At European level the European Union issued a series of legislative acts and policy actions supporting the **development of common knowledge** and the **transparency and mobility of people** (workers or students), with **their qualifications and competences**.

1. Recommendations: these are non-legal binding acts (for EU members), they do not have a legal force, but they are negotiated and voted among representatives of EU members, thus they do have a political weight. Recommendations are in fact instruments of indirect action, aiming at supporting Member States preparing their own legislation.
2. Frameworks with the aim of building a **European area of lifelong learning**.
3. A number of European mobility and transparency processes/tools for the documentation and recognition of qualifications.

# The legal framework: the European legislation and LLL strategies

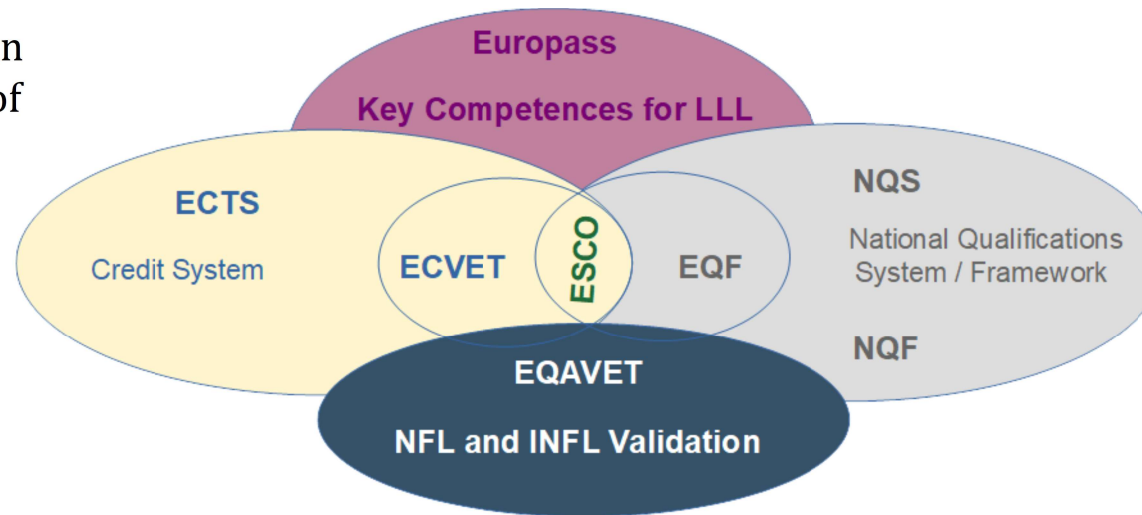


As part of the framework for European policy cooperation in education and training (**ET 2020**)

# The legal framework: LLL European strategies

**ESCO (2010)** - the European multilingual classification of three pillars:

- Skills /competences
- Occupations
- Qualifications



**Europass (2004/2018)** A set of documents to help people to make their skills and qualifications more visible

**Key competences for LLL (2006/2018)**  
- to promote the development of key competences and basic skills.

**EQF (2008/2017)** – European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning – a common frame which acts as a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe, promoting workers’ and learners’ mobility between countries and facilitating LLL (based on LO – Learning Outcomes)

**ECVET (2009)** – European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training - a common frame to make it easier for people to get validation and recognition of work-related skills and knowledge acquired in different systems and countries (Units of Learning Outcomes)

**EQAVET (2009)** – European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training - is designed to promote better vocational education and training by providing authorities with common tools for the management of quality.

**Validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012)** – to make visible and valuable the full range of knowledge and competences held by an individual and acquired in any context.

# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

The **complexity of the Italian system** of General Education (GE), Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE) is a challenge, especially VET provisions whose competency is shared among the Ministry of Education and local authorities (Regions and Autonomous Provinces)

The national **legal framework** is also very **articulated** and complex, providing a higher level of difficulty to the entire process.

Another factor of difficulties resides in all **stakeholders** (Ministries, Regions, labour market agencies, research institutes) involved in the process with different objectives.

Such complexity requires a **holistic approach** to analyse and understand the way competent bodies interoperate, work over time and function within the context of a larger, evolving system. This becomes essentially a system made up of several interwoven and interconnected systems, representing the diversity of national and regional approaches. This **diversity** leads sometimes to difficulty in sharing models and common understandings, but it is also a source for pilot actions and innovations.

# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

A deep understanding of the national system helps to analyse reforms.

In general, the education cycles are based on the progression of education pathways in terms of age of students, type of pathways, courses/pathways propaedeutic to others, etc.

The **I cycle** is mainly compulsory education and it represents the basis for the II cycle which is under the Ministry of Education competency.

The **II cycle** is divided into two main pathways:

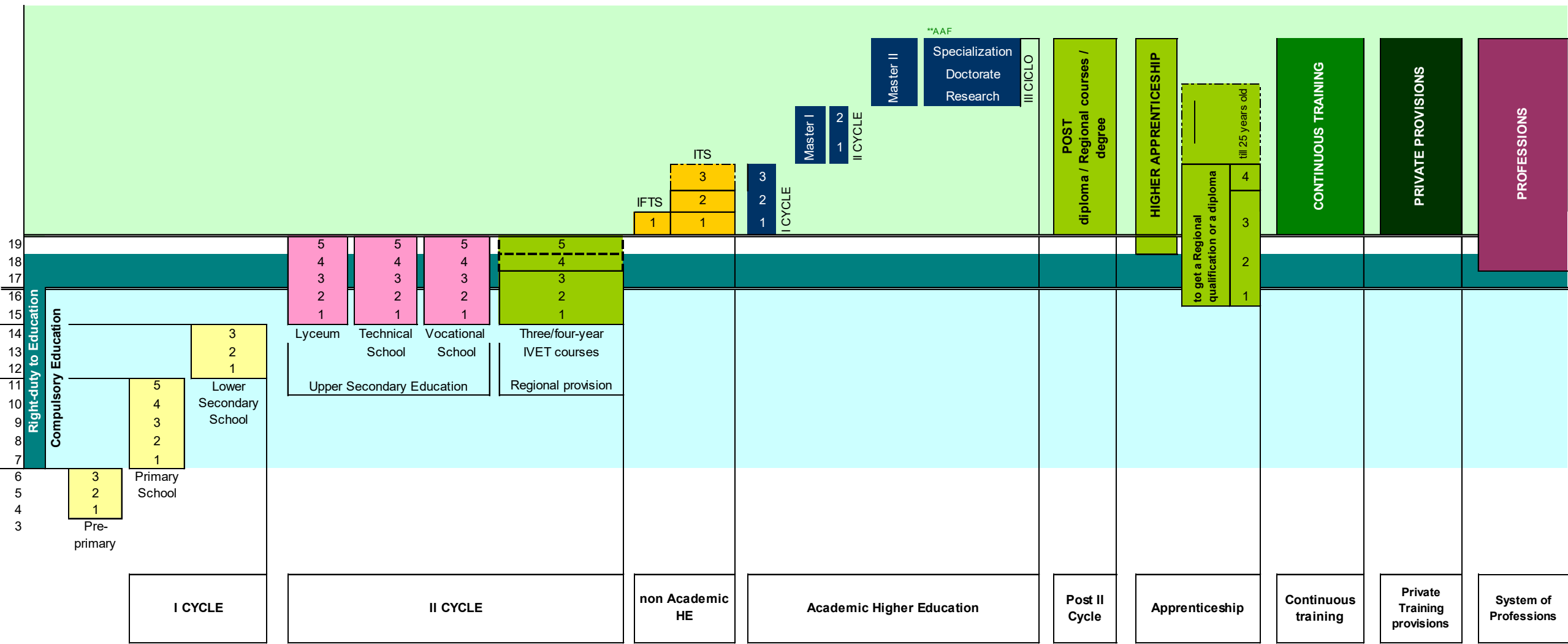
- those regulated nationally under the Ministry of Education competency and
- regional ones under the competency of Regions.

The full integration between all systems involved is essential to enable the development of a dynamic system in which local requirements are taken on board and institutional and social actors may play distinctive and complementary roles, through predefined and shared procedures.

Qualifications are still described with great differences among systems and methodological approaches (such as Learning Outcomes and competence-based) have been implemented with a level of diversification.



# The Italian LifeLong Learning SYSTEM



# The legal framework: national policy and reforms – actors involved

## Competent bodies for the Qualifications

**Ministry of Education, University and Research (MEUR)**

**Ministry of Labour (MLPS) and other Ministries**

***Regions and Autonomous Provinces***

**Isfol (today Inapp)  
MLPS Technical body**

**Cimea  
MEUR Technical body**

**Tecnostruttura  
Regions Technical body**

**Social partners**

**Trade unions**

**Sectors representatives**

## Socio-economic context



# Socio-economic context



Globalisation requires mobility to ensure that workers will not be trapped in jobs which have no future. Improving competences and qualification is strongly needed especially within high technology sectors.



- Rigidity of Labour Market
- Lack of financial incentives at work
- Tax burden on enterprises
- Insufficient investments in human capital
- Incapacity to innovate (or too expensive)
- Inadequate workers' skills (PIAAC)
- Needs of education and training systems reforms

# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

As a result of the economic crisis that began in 2008 and the subsequent period of profound crisis of the Italian labor market.

The years 2010-2015 may be considered the period in which the main legislative innovations were issued.

Following the numerous solicitations coming from EU, national stakeholders, and the economic and social situation, Italy has been involved in a profound process of reforms regarding both the education and training systems and the competences certification system, all connected to the development of the National Qualifications Framework.

# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

The first response to the economic and social crises occurred in **2012** with the **Law no. 92/2012** (so called Fornero Law) which **establishing the right to lifelong learning** and gradually implementing different steps of a national lifelong learning strategy, based on the development of mechanisms of transparency, accumulation, validation and transfer of skills and competences acquired by the **individual**.

Main innovations of the Law 92/2012:

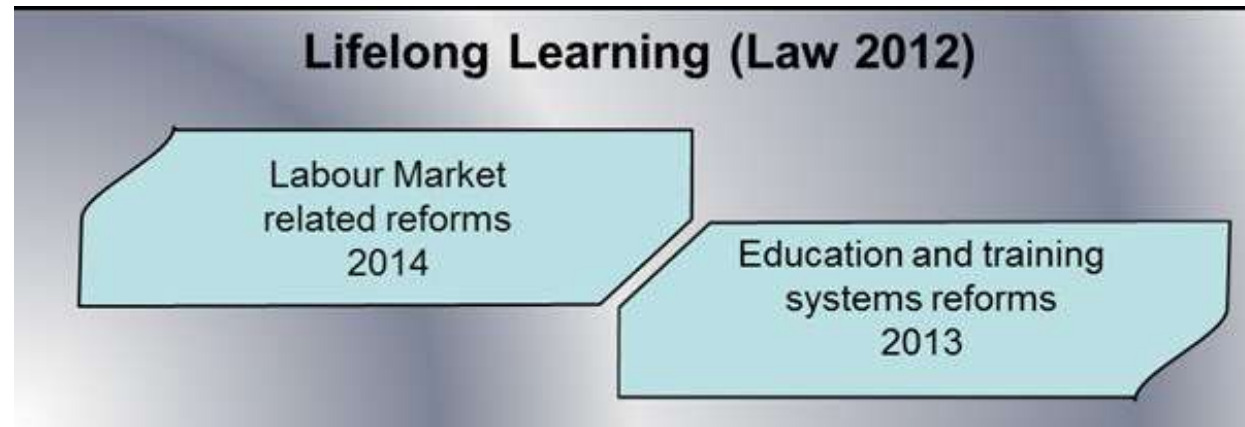
- reformed the labour market;
- established the right to lifelong learning;
- relaunched policies for learning through permanent territorial networks;
- developed services for the identification and valorisation of formal, non-formal and informal learning, even considering a unified ICT (information and communications technology) tool;
- defined essential performance levels (livelli essenziali delle prestazioni - LEP) and national standards for the validation of non-formal and informal learning and the certification of skills and competences;
- advanced the development of the national system of competence certification (NQF).

## Lifelong Learning



# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

The subsequent interventions were divided into two interconnected directions:



# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

## **A. Labour market-related reforms**

Measures related to the LM implemented were quite compound.

Two main domains are relevant here:

- 1) Services for employment and active policies (Jobs Act).
- 2) Processes connected to the valorisation of qualifications, certification frameworks, validation of non-formal and informal learning



# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

## Services for employment and active policies to support labour market

These services have been developed mainly through the [Jobs Act Reform](#), the legislative initiative promoted in 2014 and 2015 intended to create stable employment through a series of innovations.

The following legislative acts are included in the Jobs Act (and were later followed by several implementing decrees):

- the **Legislative Decree (no. 150) issued in 2015** intended to reorganize the legislation frame regarding services for employment and active policies; and,
- the Legislative Decree (no. 81) concerning the development of an organic discipline of employment contracts and review of the related regulations. This introduced new features for the apprenticeship contract, now considered as a “permanent contract” aimed at training and employment.

## The legal framework: national policy and reforms



# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

## Valorisation of qualifications

The process which had started in 2012 with the First Italian Referencing Report to the EQF, had further developed in the years 2013-2016.

In 2013, a step forward was the [Legislative Decree no. 13/2013](#) regarding the “*Definition of the general rules and essential performance levels for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and the minimum standards of the national system of competence certification, following art. 4, sub-paragraphs 58 e 68, of the **law no. 92/2012***” ).

It defined the general rules and essential performance levels for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and the minimum standards of the national system of competence certification. This act represents the basis for the implementation of the national system of competences certification and it aims at enhancing recognition and transparency of qualifications.

It has reached important results in the past two years and has become an effective legal framework for:

- a) The implementation of the national repertory of qualifications as a unique reference for the certification of competences.
- b) The definition of a framework of minimum standards which guarantees the quality of competences certification services.

# The legal framework: national policy and reforms

## NQF

In 2015 competent Ministries, Regions and Autonomous Provinces agreed on an Operative Framework ([Interministerial Decree of 30 June 2015](#)) for the national recognition of the regional qualifications and competences, within the national repertory of qualifications.

The decree also provides the infrastructure and operational basis for the overall set up of the system for the certification of competences.

A process to recognise regional qualification started and the following main activities were carried out:

- ✓ the definition of a “Register” (Repertorio nazionale delle Qualificazioni) collecting all regional qualifications repertories
- ✓ a process of homogenization, of all the regional qualifications;
- ✓ The development of an online tool: the [Atlas of Labour and Qualifications](#) which is available since 2016 and it has just been renovated at the end of 2019;
- ✓ the definition of the Italian NQF (correlated to EQF and to Regional repertories) formalised in 2018;
- ✓ the definition of national guidelines for validation and certification of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (NFIL) which will be realised shortly.

# The legal framework: Regional development

Regions and P.A, as competent bodies regarding Regional qualifications, have an active role - both politically and technically – in the development of the National System of competence certification (NQF) – following the Legislative decree no.13/2013

At **political level** Regions signed (in July 2013) a specific work plan. In addition, they shared with the MLPS the commitments towards the European Commission.

At **technical level**, Regions and P.A and MLPS set up two National Technical Committee, supported by Inapp and Tecnostruttura, in order to develop all activities.

# The legal framework: Regional development

A **National Technical Committee**, was established with the **Legislative Decree no. 13/2013**. It is chaired by representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and the Ministry of Education, University and Research. It is made up of representatives of the Ministry for Public Administration and the simplification of the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Regions and autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano.

A **Technical Group** set up (and chaired) by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies with the **Interministerial Decree of 30 June 2015** (art. 9, paragraph 1) and supplemented by the **Interministerial Decree of 8 January 2018** (art.5, paragraph 3), it is made up of representatives of the following bodies:

Ministry of Labour and Social Policies;

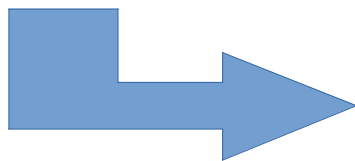
Ministry of Education, University and Research;

Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department of European Policies;

Regions and Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano;

National Agency for Active Labour Policies ANPAL.

The scientific support is assured by INAPP and Tecnostruttura.

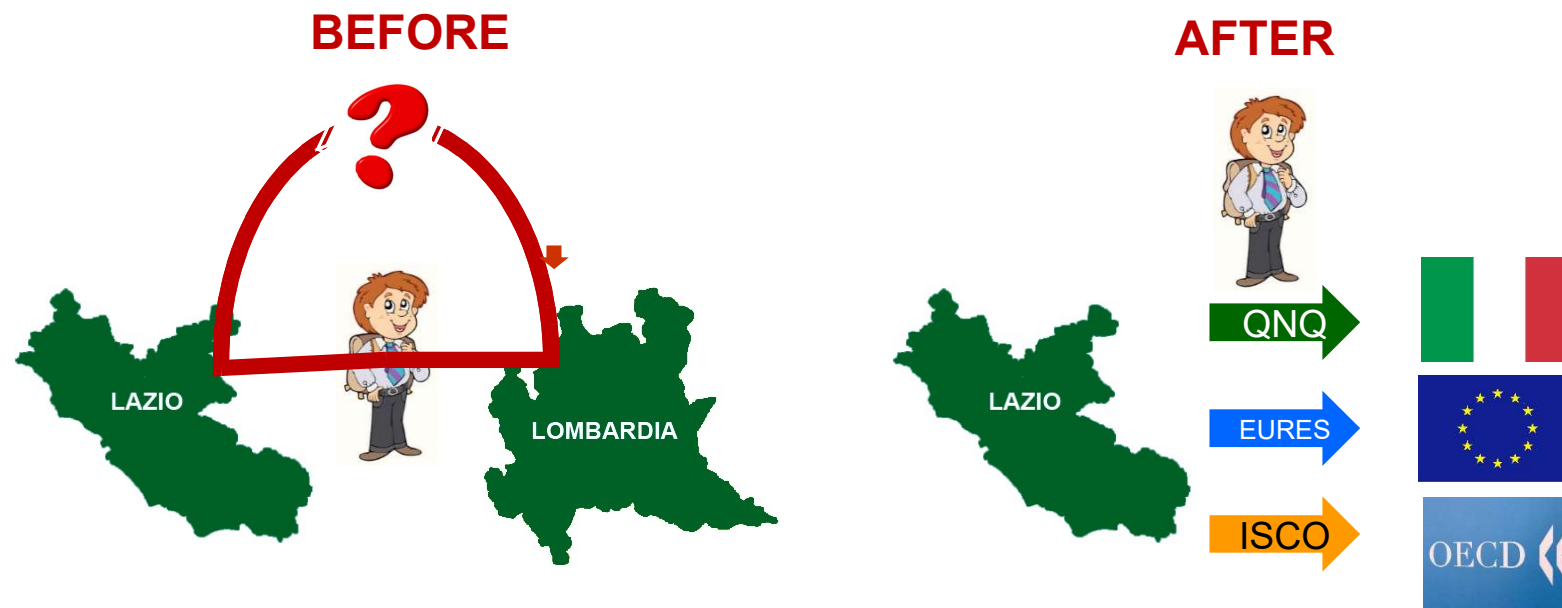


According to its internal regulations, the technical group also benefits from the work carried out by a specific work group called the Competence Certification Group, established at Tecnostruttura, but made up of representatives of Regions, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies with the scientific and technical support of ANPAL, INAPP and Tecnostruttura.



# The legal framework: Regional development

The final objective.....



# The legal framework: Regional development

To make this possible Regions needed (and in some cases are still working on it) to change/integrate/issue a new Regional legislation coherent with the entire framework agreed.

## Examples:

**Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia** – Deliberation of the Regional Committee no. 1301 del 26 luglio 2019

<http://www.regione.fvg.it/rafvfg/cms/RAFVG/formazione-lavoro/formazione/FOGLIA15/>

**Lazio region** - Repertoire of skills and profiles established with the DGR n. 452/2012 was adapted to the requirements of Legislative Decree 13/13 and the Interministerial Decree of 30 June 2015, which establishes the National Framework of Regional Qualifications

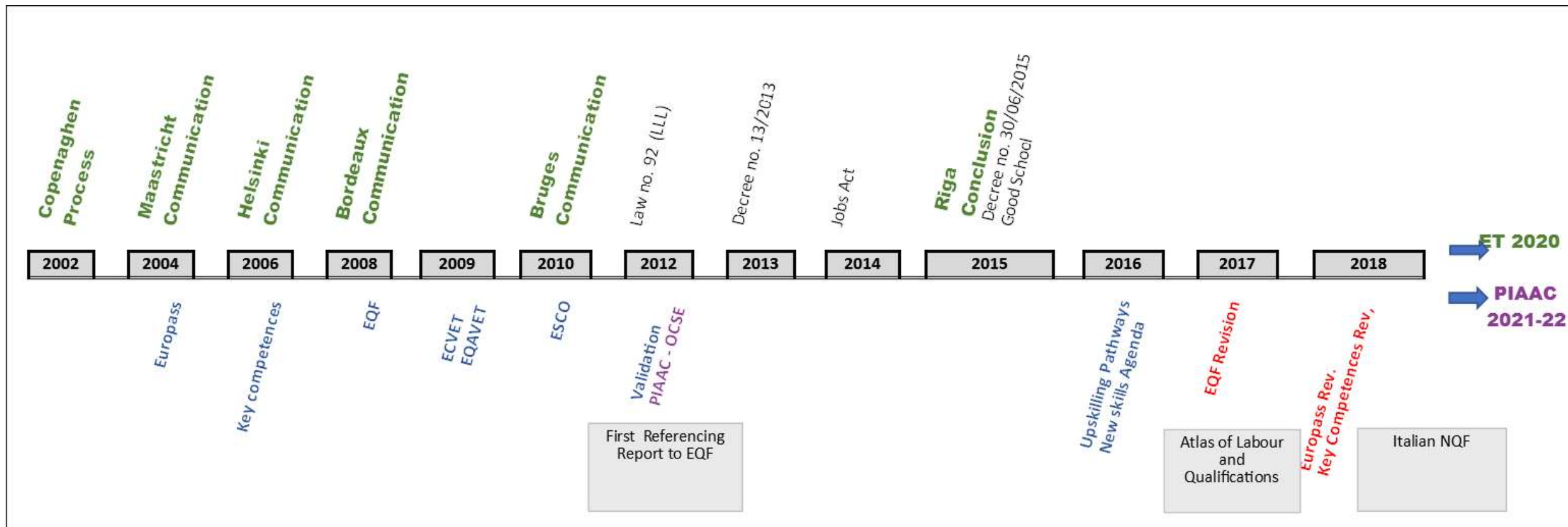
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**Calabria region** – the Regional Repertory of Qualifications and Competences was established with the DGR n.215 del 13 giugno 2016.

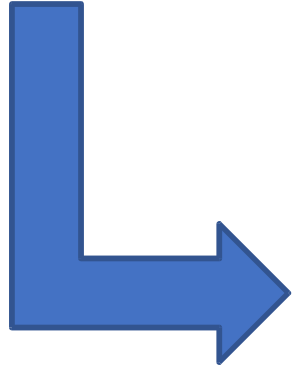
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# The legal framework: national policy and reforms



# The Technical level → Referencing process



## Phase 1:

First Referencing Report

## Phase 2:


Referencing qualifications NOT included in the first phase

Develop the NQF, consistent with the national system of competences certification (QNQ):

- Objectives of the NQF
- Ratio of the NQF
- Characteristics of LOs
- Development of national level descriptors

# Thank you for your attention

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