

PREVENTION OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING REPORT ON THE NATIONAL SITUATION

Interviews with Public Officers in Italy

Mauro Di Grazia, Anna Giagnoni, Giuseppe Italiano, Alfio Salsi,

Daniela Giovannini, Marco Manzuoli

CIPAT
presso Oratorio S. Michele alla Pace
Piazza S. Ambrogio angolo via dei Pilastrini
50121 Firenze
Italia
info@cipat.it

INTERVIEWS TO PUBLIC OFFICERS

1. Director of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education, Dr Cesare Angotti

- Who within your organisation is responsible for maintaining statistics on school 'drop outs'?

Following to the 2001 Agreement between the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education and the Education, Training and Work Council of Tuscany, the Sistema Informativo Scolastico Regionale (SISR) is responsible for the statistics about students' progression.. Its registers are based on the work of Osservatori Scolastici Provinciali (OSP).

- What information do you or your organisation have on truancy rates? Would you be willing to share this information with us please?

N/A

- What are the 3 main reasons for school 'drop outs' before the age of 16 within this region?

The great majority is represented by foreign students from a difficult socio-.economic background, among them Roma children.

- What are the 3 main reasons for young people not continuing in education after 16 or dropping out of education between 16 & 18?

In Tuscany dropping out of school after 16 years of age is related to

- 1. the gender (boys have double failures compared with girls)*
- 2. parents' education (graduate parents' children are likely to be successful many times more than children whose parents do not have any degree or diploma)*
- 3. lack of early intervention for students with learning difficulties (particularly in reading, writing and maths)*

- What are your main strategies currently in place to identify students at risk and prevent school drop outs?

Our main strategy consists of the Provincial Students' Register, OSPs, recording each student's progression It allows continuous monitoring and identification of the students at risk. The area maps allow our Regional General Office and the local Province and Town Councils to start strategies connected with the local situation and able to prevent early school leaving.

- What future new strategies are planned to help with the problem?

The recent regulations aiming at preventing early school leaving together with the recent raising of compulsory age have suggested agreements between our General Office, Tuscan Region and Local Councils to help autonomous schools, thanks to the Students' Register, OSP, with an early, precise identification of potential school leavers in order to start prompt, successful strategies.

On the basis of the Agreement Protocol our General Office promotes and finances almost all the Vocational Institutes to develop projects, integrated with accredited vocational training agencies and included in the state school curricula. So far 434 projects for a total of 9,439 students have been activated.

- How does the position locally compare with drop out rates nationally and elsewhere in Europe?

The Lisbon indicator indicates 10% target by 2010 and the Ministry of Education figures for Tuscany were 13.7% in 2005 while the average Italian rate was 20.5%.

- What are the organisations within this region which work to keep students in school / on courses?

Act 112/98 which became effective in 2002 declares that Local Authorities are in charge of the prevention of early school leaving together with the local schools, using the regional funds provided for the "right to study", just as it was included in the 2006/10 General Regional Plan (PIGI 2006/7).

- Can you recommend any current research on this problem which may help with our project?

N/A

- a. Can you suggest any other areas of research which may help with our project?

N/A

2. Education, Vocational Training and Work Councillor of Tuscan Region, Mr Gianfranco Simoncini,

- Who within your organisation is responsible for maintaining statistics on school 'drop outs'?

Following to the 2001 Agreement between the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education and the Education, Training and Work Council of Tuscany the Sistema informativo Scolastico Regionale (SISR) is responsible for the statistics. Its registers are based on the work of Osservatori Scolastici Provinciali (OSP) and the person in charge of it is the Education Office Manager.

- What information do you or your organisation have on truancy rates? Would you be willing to share this information with us please?

N/A

- What are the 3 main reasons for school 'drop outs' before the age of 16 within this region?

The great majority is represented by foreign students from a difficult socio-economic background, among them Roma children.

- What are the 3 main reasons for young people not continuing in education after 16 or dropping out of education between 16 & 18?

In Tuscany dropping out of school after 16 years of age is related to

- *the gender (boys have double failures compared with girls)*
 - *parents' education (graduate parents' children are likely to be successful many times more than children whose parent do not have any degree or diploma)*
 - *lack of early intervention for students with learning difficulties (particularly in reading and, writing)*
- What are your main strategies currently in place to identify students at risk and prevent school drop outs?

The Provincial Students' Register, OSP, which records each student's progression and allows continuous monitoring of students' progression or failures and identification of the students at risk. The area maps allow local Province and Town Councils to start strategies connected with the local situation and able to prevent early school leaving just where the phenomenon is more evident. The regional plan 2006/10 (PIGI 2006/10) has gathered the current indications and the analyses and has suggested strategies to fight learning failures.

- What future new strategies are planned to help with the problem?

The recent regulations aiming at preventing early school leaving together with the recent raising of compulsory age have suggested agreements between our General Office, Tuscan Region and Local Councils in order to obtain an early, precise identification of potential school leavers. One of the aims of the agreement is to start prompt, successful strategies to prevent students from failing or dropping out of school. The Osservatori Scolastici Provinciali (OSP) are in charge of monitoring students' failures and gather promptly any information about students, younger than 18, interrupting their pathways in education, vocational training or apprenticeship.

- How does the position locally compare with drop out rates nationally and elsewhere in Europe?

The Lisbon indicator indicates 10% target by 2010 and the Ministry of Education figures for Tuscany were 13.7% in 2005 while the average Italian rate was 20.5%.

- What are the organisations within this region which work to keep students in school / on courses?

Act 112/98 which became effective in 2002 declares that Local Authorities are in charge of the prevention of early school leaving together with the local schools, using the regional funds provided for the "right to study", just as it was included in the 2006/10 General Regional Plan (PIGI "2006/7).

- Can you recommend any current research on this problem which may help with our project?

N/A

- Can you suggest any other areas of research which may help with our project?

N/A

3, Manager of the Office for Education, Vocational Training. Careers Guidance and Work of the Province of Prato, Dr Enza Franca Ferrara

- Who within your organisation is responsible for maintaining statistics on school 'drop outs'?

The Manager of the Office for Education, Vocational Training, Careers Guidance and Work with the Osservatorio Scolastico Provinciale (OSP). The OSP contributes and is part of the Sistema informativo Scolastico Regionale (SISR). The SISR is the data base of the students of the Tuscan Region. It includes provincial data of enrolments, attendance and progression of all Tuscan students from state schools of any level.

- What information do you or your organisation have on truancy rates? Would you be willing to share this information with us please?

The OSP receives data referring to early school leaving from schools during the school year. The figures below show the data of school year 2006/7.

Students who left school during the school year , with differences in type of school, sex and date of birth, School year 2006/7 (March 10th, 2007)

Date of birth	Licei			Vocational Institutes			Technical Institutes			Total		
	F	M	F+M	F	M	F+M	F	M	F+M	F	M	F+M
1987	0	0	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	2	1	3
1988	3	1	4	1	3	4	2	3	5	6	7	13
1989	3	2	5	3	7	10	2	3	5	8	12	20
1990	6	4	10	5	12	17	0	3	3	11	19	30

1991	2	1	3	9	10	19	3	3	6	14	14	28
1992	1	0	1	3	5	8	0	0	0	4	5	9
Total	15	8	23	23	38	61	7	12	19	45	58	103

Students who left school during the school year , with differences in type of school, sex and origin, School year 2006/7 (March 10th, 2007

Origin	Licei			Vocational Institutes			Technical Institutes			Total		
	F	M	F+M	F	M	F+M	F	M	F+M	F	M	F+M
Morocco	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	3
Albania	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	1	2	3
China	8	5	13	6	6	12	2	1	3	16	12	28
Colombia	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Italy	6	1	7	16	24	40	5	11	16	27	36	63
Pakistan	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Peru	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
Uzbekistan	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	15	8	23	23	38	61	7	12	19	45	58	103

Source: Osservatorio Scolastico Provinciale

- What are the 3 main reasons for school 'drop outs' before the age of 16 within this region?

In our Province:

non-Italian nationality

a problematic family, not socially integrated

deviance (social, economic, cultural, personal causes)

- What are the 3 main reasons for young people not continuing in education after 16 or dropping out of education between 16 & 18?

Lack of regular progression in studies because of school failures

Need to work or wish to face the challenge of work experiences

Social deviance

- What are your main strategies currently in place to identify students at risk and prevent school drop outs?

Policies aiming at offering every young person the possibility to be successful in a pathway of education and/or vocational training, in order to achieve competences and qualifications allowing personal realization in the labour market.

Act 144, 1999 and the following Act 53, 2003 allowed the creation of alternative pathways for youngsters in the age of compulsory education/vocational training (by 18 years of age), offering them the possibility to achieve a qualification in integrated courses with accredited vocational agencies or after a period of apprenticeship in companies.

Keeping youngsters in education/vocational training for a longer period allows to plan adequate career guidance, strengthen the choices which have been made, individualise educational pathways, to lay the foundations for a better balanced relation between schools, vocational training and work.

Early school leaving will then be tackled by different institutions, from schools to vocational agencies and work experiences.

- What future new strategies are planned to help with the problem?

The Financial Act 2007 made education compulsory for ten years, so apprenticeship could start only after 16 years of age instead of 15.

The Regional Act 615/2007 for the new compulsory education in Tuscany provides that

- *two years of upper education are to be attended in schools (to achieve basic competences, as required by the rules and regulations of the Ministry of Education)*
- *then students can choose (with the possibility of transferring their competences from one system to the others) between*
 1. *school pathways*
 2. *vocational training pathways to achieve a qualification*
 3. *apprenticeship aiming at obtaining a qualification*

The Tuscan education system will develop in the following areas to meet the requirements of compulsory education:

1. *career guidance*
2. *two years' attendance in the system of Upper Education Schools*
3. *one year's vocational education in accredited vocational agencies*

The choice of our region, which is not shared by other regions, to make education compulsory for two years inside the Upper education schools aims at allowing each student to have the possibility of obtaining a diploma of Upper Education.

To achieve the target it is necessary

- *to develop a high quality career guidance and monitor students' progression both in Lower and Upper Education Secondary schools*
 - *to increase the number of students who achieve basic competences, as required by the regulations of the Ministry of Education)*
 - *to organize a one year's curriculum, starting from school year 2009/10 to complete the two years' compulsory courses for those students who started Upper Education school in 2007/8 and wish to leave school*
-
- *How does the position locally compare with drop out rates nationally and elsewhere in Europe?*

School failures in Upper Secondary schools in school year 2005/6 in the Province of Prato:

School failures in Upper Secondary Schools

Schools	total	“Drop Outs”	Failing admittance to the next year	Without degree	Total of failing and dropping out students	% failures
Vocational Institutes	1.892	85	285	30	400	21,14
Technical Institutes	2.790	52	350	8	410	14,70
Licei	3.877	68	333	1	402	10,37
Totale	8.559	205	968	39	1.212	14,16

Source: Osservatorio Scolastico Provinciale

The Ministry of Education made a research on early school leaving related to the school year 2004/5. The ‘Lisbon benchmark’ aims, by 2010, to reduce by half the year 2000 dropout rate of young people (students from 18 to 24 years of age) who have achieved a qualification at most of ISCED2 and who do not participate in any education / training activities.

The target of 10% reduction is very far for Italy where the percentage was 21.9 in 2005.

The 2004/5 research data are divided into different areas (northern, central and southern Italy), sex and types of schools. Figures of the first year of Lower Education schools (students aged 11) show that 2.9% students repeat the school year while 11.4% students repeat the first year in Upper Education schools. The highest figures are in Technical and Vocational Institutes (18.1%) and in southern Italy. In other countries, particularly in Northern Europe strengths and weaknesses are equally distributed in different types of schools. Students of Technical and Vocational Institutes who fail in the first year will continue to have problems and are most likely to drop out of school.

- What are the organisations within this region which work to keep students in school / on courses?

Schools, local institutions, vocational, training agencies and Job Centres

- Can you recommend any current research on this problem which may help with our project?

The analysis of early school leaving started by Osservatorio Scolastico Provinciale will involve analysis of early school leaving both at Upper Education and University levels.

The research will examine:

- *Number and type of students who continue their studies in University courses*
 - *Types of Faculties and curricula chosen*
 - *University progression (in terms of repeated exams and years) in the different Faculties and curricula*
 - *Successful students*
 - *Impact on the labour market*
-
- Can you suggest any other areas of research which may help with our project?

An analysis of the integration of the systems of Upper Education schools with vocational training courses, career guidance and work; in particular to examine the number and type of

- *students who go back to the school system after experiencing vocational training or apprenticeship*
- *competences accepted and recognised in a system of credit transfer*

An analysis of useful strategies to monitor the passage from Lower to Upper Education schools.

Strategies for particular types of students with special needs.

4. Manager of Leghorn Provincial Office of the Ministry of Education, Dr Romano Gori

- Who within your organisation is responsible for maintaining statistics on school 'drop outs'?

The person in charge of preventing early school leaving or the person in charge of career guidance.

- What information do you or your organisation have on truancy rates? Would you be willing to share this information with us please?

Yes, we have information and can provide it on request.

- How does the position locally compare with drop out rates nationally and elsewhere in Europe?

The provincial dropout rate is 3.98%

- What are the 3 main reasons for school 'drop outs' before the age of 16 within this region?
 - a. Repeating school years*
 - b. Socio-economic disadvantage*
 - c. Moving to a new school*
- What are the 3 main reasons for young people not continuing in education after 16 or dropping out of education between 16 & 18?
 - a. Work*
 - b. Lack of interest (demotivation)*
- What are your main strategies currently in place to identify students at risk and prevent school drop outs?

Remedial courses, career guidance, monitoring truancy (cooperation with families)

- What future new strategies are planned to help with the problem?

Improve current strategies, psychological services for schools, listening centres

- What are the organisations within this region which work to keep students in school / on courses?

Regional public competition to obtain grants to develop projects (unfortunately they are published in October/November of each year, so they are ineffective in the first months of each school year)

- Can you recommend any current research on this problem which may help with our project?

Psychology and Sociology Faculties of the University of Florence, Resources from the Ministry of Education to prevent early school leaving, Yearly Provincial competition for grants to develop integrated projects between schools and accredited vocational, training agencies

- Can you suggest any other areas of research which may help with our project?

Leghorn OSP (Osservatorio Scolastico Provinciale) website www.provincia.livorno.it/osp_livorno

5. Manager of the Education Office of the Province of Grosseto, Dr Milvia Bruschi

- Who within your organisation is responsible for maintaining statistics on school 'drop outs'?

Our office is the seat of the Osservatorio Scolastico Provinciale (OSP) which is in charge of collecting data on students' progression in all the different types of schools, as required from the guidelines of the Tuscan Region Sistema Informativo Scolastico Regionale (SISR). One of the target of the OSP is monitoring early school leaving. I am the person responsible for the OSP and the contact person is Ms Elena Colombini , e.colombini@provincia.grosseto.it

- What information do you or your organisation have on truancy rates? Would you be willing to share this information with us please?

As we have said OSP has figures related to early school leaving which can be communicated to institutional bodies on request. However our figures are rather low.

- How does the position locally compare with drop out rates nationally and elsewhere in Europe?

From a recent research required by the Province, the dropout rate resulted to be the same as the national one.

- What are the 3 main reasons for school 'drop outs' before the age of 16 within this region?

We cannot give answers related to the "regional" situation; as far as our Province is concerned, we are planning a specific research on the issue to be carried out in a few months

- What are the 3 main reasons for young people not continuing in education after 16 or dropping out of education between 16 & 18?

See above.

- What are your main strategies currently in place to identify students at risk and prevent school drop outs?

For years the Province of Grosseto, aiming particularly at preventing early school leaving, has been integrating the educational offers with its own funds, mainly cooperating with Upper Education schools in the field of such extracurricular activities as drama, scientific education, historical, multicultural education and cinema. Then we have been financing, with relevant funds, the integration of students with special educational needs, providing individualised support activities, free bus services together with home support for students with sight or hearing impairments .We have been actively cooperating

in all the activities promoted and financed by the Tuscan Region, including two years' career guidance service for the students in the first year of Upper Education schools which will be continued for the students of the second Year of Vocational Institutes in the future. All the initiatives aim at preventing early school leaving, mostly with vocational training activities

- What future new strategies are planned to help with the problem?

We have taken into consideration the new rules and regulations about compulsory education (right/duty to education) and, following the regional guidelines, we have started cooperation projects together with schools, accredited vocational, training agencies and Job Centres (guidance activities, integrated projects between Vocational Institutes and vocational, training agencies, research-action activities with teachers).

- What are the organisations within this region which work to keep students in school / on courses?

We look for cooperation with schools, particularly with Vocational institutes to build "integrated pathways" together with agencies accredited in the field of career guidance and vocational training.

- Can you recommend any current research on this problem which may help with our project?

If duly requested, our future researches may be at your disposal. Past and current researches of our Province on the issue of early school leaving can be seen on our website www.osp-provincia-grosseto.it, under "Pubblicazioni".

- Can you suggest any other areas of research which may help with our project?

In Tuscany, on the basis of the Regional Act 32/2002 and related guidelines, all the Provinces have established the Osservatori Scolastici Provinciali (OSP), which can be a profitable source of information, as well as the del Sistema Informativo Scolastico Regionale (SISR), which coordinates the OSPs.