



Project No: 101056184

## TourX CoVE for the Tourism Industry



Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

## VET system in Italy

Italy's Vocational Education and Training (VET) system is vital for equipping individuals with the skills needed for the labor market. With a focus on practical training, collaboration with industry, and adaptability to regional needs, the VET system aims to enhance employability and support economic growth. It provides a comprehensive framework for educational and training opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors. The system encompasses various types of institutions, qualification levels, and governing bodies. The curriculum includes cross-curricular and specialized modules, practical internships, and state examinations.

### 1. Types of Institutions

- **Vocational Institutes:** Offer three-year and five-year courses such as Enogastronomy and Hotel Hospitality Pathway, Bar Room Services Technician, and Economic Sector - Tourism Pathway.
- **Technical Institutes:** They provide courses in the economic sector focusing on tourism and hospitality, linking education to the job market.
- **Higher Technical Education and Training Courses (HIVET):** These courses are designed to promote the dissemination of technical and scientific culture applied to the planning and development of cultural and tourism offerings.
- **Universities:** Offer degree courses in tourism at different levels, including three-year degree courses and higher technical education and training.

### 2. Entry and Progression:

- **Secondary School Diploma:** Students can access the first level of degree courses in the Italian university system with a secondary school diploma or a comparable qualification obtained abroad.
- **Vocational Institutes:** Students can enroll in vocational education and training courses, which are divided into three-year and five-year courses. These courses provide specialized training in areas such as catering, promotion and reception services, and tourism.

### 3. Pathways:

- **Three-Year Courses:** Offered by vocational institutes, these courses lead to the acquisition of knowledge and skills to operate catering processes with autonomy and responsibility. They emphasize the application and use of basic methodologies, tools, and technologies.
- **Five-Year Courses:** Available in vocational institutes and technical institutes, these courses provide a more comprehensive and specialized curriculum. They include a cross-curricular two-year period, and a further three-year period of study characterized by a more specific curriculum.

#### 4. Certifications and Qualifications:

- **Vocational Diploma (EQF4):** Students who complete the three-year vocational education and training courses are awarded a vocational diploma, certifying their skills and enabling them to enter the world of work or pursue further education.
- **Higher Technical Diploma (EQF Level V):** Obtained from Higher Technical Institutes (ITS) after completing specialized training and certifying advanced skills upon completion of the five-year vocational and technical education courses, students must pass a state examination to obtain a diploma (EQF4), which admits them to university faculties, Higher Technical Education and Training, and Higher Technical Institutes courses. A higher attainment corresponds to Level I and Level II Masters, respectively.
- **Bachelor's Degree (EQF Level 6):** Awarded after completing three-year degree courses with 180 University Educational Credits (CFU) and a thesis discussion.
- **Master's Degree Access:** Bachelor's degree holders can enroll in Master's programs and other second-level courses.
- **Professional Qualifications:** Issued by regional authorities at various levels (EQF 3 and EQF 4) for vocational training, allowing access to further education or the labor market.

#### 5. Governing Bodies

- **Unified Conference:** They are an independent body that approves the unitary model for professional qualification certificates.

- **MIUR (Ministry of Education, University and Research):** Oversees the education system, including funding and regulations for vocational and higher technical education.
- **Regional Authorities:** They authorize and accredit training courses ensuring their alignment with local businesses and labor market needs.
- **European Social Fund (ESF):** An external body that provides financing for vocational training courses, postgraduate training, and transnational exchanges.
- **Accredited Training Organizations:** Manage and organize training courses, ensuring they meet regional and national standards for quality and certification.
- **Public Bodies:** Collaborate with private entities to develop and finance training projects in the tourism and hospitality sector.

## Market needs in tourism sector in Italy

The tourism industry in Italy is a vital economic contributor, but it faces specific labor market challenges influenced by consumer preferences, the COVID-19 pandemic, and technological advancements. In 2021, the sector employed an average of 1,030,116 workers, primarily young—58% were under 40 and 35.25% were under 30, while only 4% were over 60. Women comprised 52.7% of the workforce, reflecting the sector's ability to accommodate work-life balance. Foreign workers made up 23.9% of employees, averaging 246,467 annually. Employment contracts were predominantly open-ended (60.2%), with 39.8% on fixed-term contracts. Part-time work was common, accounting for 54.4% of the workforce. There were 77,583 apprentices, mostly part-time, and 14.7% of apprentices were seasonal. Intermittent workers averaged 98,462, primarily on fixed-term contracts, with an average salary of EUR 9,326.

In addition, before the pandemic, tourism employment was experiencing robust growth, with a 1.4% annual increase in 2019, outpacing the overall economy. However, the sector has long faced issues with low contractual, pay, and qualification protections, along with a high prevalence of irregular hiring practices, including undeclared work. In the HORECA sector, nearly 75% of cases in 2020 reported violations of these protections, totalling 10,472 confirmed violations. From 2020 to 2021, employment rose by 7.8%, adding nearly 75,000 jobs. Nonetheless, this remained 13.5% below pre-pandemic levels. The number of businesses in the sector increased modestly by 2.8%, with over 80% of these businesses in the public sector and 13.3% in accommodation.

## Current Demand for Skills and Qualifications

The labor market in Italy is currently seeing strong demand for skills such as customer service, adaptability, and a readiness to take on seasonal positions. At the same time, there are challenges in recruitment and evolving expectations among workers. Below are the various situations of the labour market in detail.

**1. High Demand for Specific Professions:** The most requested professional profiles in the Veneto region include restaurant waiters, retail shop assistants, chefs, bartenders, receptionists, and cleaning personnel in accommodation services. This indicates a strong demand for roles directly related to customer service and hospitality.

**2. Seasonal and Non-Seasonal Employment:** There is a notable demand for both seasonal and non-seasonal workers. In 2022, the tourism sector in the Veneto region saw a significant increase in seasonal hirings, surpassing pre-pandemic levels. This suggests that skills related to seasonal tourism activities are highly sought after.

**3. Youth Employment:** The recruitment of young people in the tourism sector has increased, with over 23,000 young individuals hired in 2022, marking a 16% rise compared to 2019. This trend highlights the importance of entry-level positions and the need for skills that appeal to younger workers.

**4. Challenges in Recruitment:** Despite the demand for workers, there are challenges in finding suitable candidates. The tourism sector is experiencing difficulties in recruiting seasonal workers, with an estimated employment need of around 300,000 to 350,000 workers, of which about 40% are hard to find. This indicates a gap between the demand for skills and the available workforce.

**5. Shift in Worker Preferences:** The pandemic has led many workers to seek more stable and less demanding jobs, resulting in a loss of staff in the tourism sector. This shift emphasizes the need for skills that can adapt to changing job market conditions and worker preferences.

### 1. High-Demand Professions:

Key roles include:

- Restaurant waiters
- Retail shop assistants
- Chefs
- Bartenders
- Receptionists

- Cleaning personnel
  - Counter clerks
  - Porters
2. **Skills in Demand:**
- **Customer Service:** Essential for enhancing guest experiences.
  - **Language Proficiency:** Important for interacting with international visitors.
  - **Digital Skills:** There is an increasing need for expertise in digital marketing and e-commerce.
  - **Technical Skills:** Proficiency in property management systems and booking software.
3. **Qualifications:**
- Many roles require vocational qualifications from VET programs or specialised training, especially for chefs and hospitality managers.

The tourism sector in Italy, while facing a high demand for skilled workers, is also experiencing a shortage of professionals. This situation highlights the changing dynamics of the industry and underscores the need for a qualified workforce to address new challenges and opportunities. The following elaborates further on the shortage of professionals and the areas where new opportunities are emerging.

**1. Hospitality and Service Roles:** There is a significant shortage of professionals in hospitality roles such as restaurant waiters, chefs, bartenders, and receptionists. The demand for these positions has increased, especially in the Veneto region, where the tourism sector is rebounding post-pandemic. The recruitment of seasonal workers has risen, indicating a need for skilled personnel in these areas.

**2. Digital Skills:** The pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation in tourism, leading to new opportunities in roles that require digital skills. This includes positions related to digital marketing, online customer service, and the management of virtual tourism experiences. The shift towards digitalisation suggests a growing need for training and qualifications in these areas.

**3. Tourism Management and Planning:** As the tourism sector adapts to new consumer behaviors and preferences, there is an emerging need for professionals skilled in tourism management and strategic planning. This includes roles focused on sustainability, crisis management, and innovative tourism solutions that can respond to changing market dynamics.

**4. Health and Safety Compliance:** With ongoing concerns about health and safety in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a growing demand for professionals who can ensure compliance with

health regulations in tourism and hospitality settings. This includes roles focused on sanitation, safety protocols, and risk management.

**5. Youth Employment Opportunities:** The tourism sector is increasingly hiring young people, with a notable rise in recruitment for entry-level positions. This trend presents new opportunities for youth to enter the workforce, particularly in roles that require less experience but offer pathways for career development.

**6. Seasonal Employment:** The seasonal nature of the tourism industry continues to create opportunities for temporary and seasonal employment. As tourism rebounds, there is a consistent need for workers during peak seasons, which can be an entry point for many into the labour market.

**Key Areas of Shortage are summarised as follows:**

**1. Seasonal Workers:**

- A shortage of 300,000 to 350,000 seasonal workers, with 40% hard to find, worsened by the pandemic.

**2. Skilled Professionals:**

- Shortage of management-level roles like hotel managers and event coordinators due to industry attrition during the pandemic.

**3. Culinary Professionals:**

- High demand for skilled chefs, particularly in gastronomically rich regions, with many establishments struggling to find qualified candidates.

**Emerging Opportunities**

**1. Sustainable Tourism:**

- Growing need for professionals focused on eco-friendly practices and sustainable hospitality.

**2. Digital Transformation:**

- New roles in digital marketing, online customer service, and data analytics as businesses enhance their online presence.

**3. Health and Safety Compliance:**

- Increased demand for professionals ensuring compliance with health regulations and safety protocols.

**4. Cultural and Experiential Tourism:**

- Rising interest in authentic local experiences creates opportunities for professionals managing cultural tours and events.



# TourX

[www.tour-x.eu](http://www.tour-x.eu)

