



Stride4Stride

Stride for stride for skills
adaptation/anticipation
in European Regions



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Workshop #4 Report

Tuscany



September 2023

Tuscany's Skills Ecosystems

The last study workshop within the [Stride for Stride](#) Erasmus+ project took place from 25–28 September 2023 in Tuscany. The Stride for Stride project works on building an understanding of different regions' Skills Ecosystems and of how skills are provided on the ground. The purpose of the study visits in Tuscany was to understand how skills transmission varies across the diverse sectors in Tuscany, including Cultural Heritage, Life Sciences, Wine and the Crafts Ecosystem. The visits provided a unique opportunity for the partnership to conclude the project's workshops, exploring how the region encourages skill development with modern strategies and tools.



Fashion Ecosystem



On the first day of study visits, partners visited [ITS MITA](#), a fashion institute within the local crafts ecosystem, situated in Scandicci, Tuscany. ITS MITA stands for 'istituto tecnologico superiore, Made in Italy and Tuscany'. Partners were welcomed by the head of training at the institute. She highlighted the importance of networking as part of the ITS MITA experience. ITS MITA is an institute that provides higher VET qualifications (EQF 5) as well as micro-credentials and short courses. The EQF 5 courses accept around 100 students a year, between 19 and 35. Students partake in a 6-month internship and exams, along with classes in fashion and product creation. The institute is a public-private foundation, that seeks to respond to local skills needs through strong relationships with world-renowned fashion brands, placements of students within these companies and 80 per cent of the teachers coming directly from partner companies.

[Learn more about ITS MITA](#)



Life Sciences Ecosystem



On the second day of visits, partners visited the ITS VITA (also an ITS institution, focusing on life sciences) as well as TOSCANA LIFE SCIENCES FOUNDATION. Partners were introduced to the Toscana Life Sciences Foundation by Vivica Gentile head of HR and Chief of Staff at the foundation. She outlined the importance of life sciences in the Tuscany region's economy, as a leading region in pharmaceuticals, biotech and medical sector. Toscana Life Sciences is a public-private foundation that is non-profit and is also a strategic partner of ITS VITA.

Stefano Chiellini, Director of ITA VITA, introduced ITS VITA as a higher technical institute, created to meet the demand of companies. The strength of the institute is its strong network, with 150 business contacts in the industry. At least 50 per cent of the teaching comes from companies for 700 hours of learning. The institute also is unique in providing work orientation, not just focusing on hard skills and competencies, but also providing adequate guidance to students. One of the unique aspects of this institution is its use of Industry 4.0 technologies, including the use of virtual reality equipment. Stride4Stride partners were able to explore this technology and interact with it.



SKYLA presented to S4S Partners

Within the premises of the ITS VITA, partners were introduced to the SKYLA - Smart Specialisation Skills Ecosystems for the Twin Transition - Interreg Europe project by Lorenzo Sabatini, head of Research and Development and EU projects at the lead partner Agenzia per lo Sviluppo Empolese Valdelsa (ASEV, Tuscany). Mr Sabatini began by introducing SKYLA as a 'sister project' to Stride for Stride, as it is a project which seeks to support regions in improving how they put skills at the centre of regional strategies. These similarities are shown in the mission of the SKYLA project, particularly as one of the goals is to encourage interregional learning on policy adaptation required to adapt VET systems and facilities and integrate them into S3/S4 processes and innovation ecosystems.

SKYLA takes the mission of interregional learning one step further by focusing on how public policy can address these needs and challenges in each territory and by compiling a policy needs' analysis for each partner, and an exchange on these needs. The interregional exchange will result in the design and implementation of policy improvements to integrate skills into the twin transition, with a new role for VET systems/facilities and better capacity among public authorities to implement approaches. Mr. Sabatini outlined the progress of the project, in particular within the Tuscany region. In Tuscany, SKLA presents a new step in the process of exchange with Europe on region skills ecosystems in support of the twin transition.



An ongoing process of exchange...

In Tuscany, SKYLA represents a new step in the process of exchange with Europe on the new challenges of the programming period that has just begun, such as regional skills ecosystems in support of the twin transition, facilities for higher education, Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)

An ongoing process of growth ...

Particularly, starting from a more extensive need to support a stronger integration of the vocational training systems (and policies) in the development and implementation of the S3/S4 strategies and in the regional innovation ecosystems, the Tuscan working group focused on themes and support measures to:

- Identification and development of regional skills ecosystems for the forecasting and mapping of the skills of tomorrow in local and territorial production systems
- Identification and development of new professional profiles and skills for an evolving working world, with particular emphasis on digital and green transitions.
- Upgrading the processes for integrating new professional figures into enterprises by using new modern quality apprenticeship processes (dual) that combine the specific demands of a company with the professional growth of the apprentice.
- Development of higher technology education and higher technical training policies through the consolidation of ITS Academies and the strengthening of advanced open territorial training laboratories for advanced technological education and vocational training.

[Download the SKYLA Presentation](#)

Cultural Heritage Ecosystem



In the afternoon, partners moved their attention to the Cultural heritage ecosystem in Tuscany, starting at the Liceo Artistico Duccio Di Buoninsegna. Giovanni Pala, Deputy Director of the school, showed partners around the oldest school in Siena, focusing on creative education, including painting, sculptures and mixed-medium art.



Afterwards, the partners went to the Scuola Edile Siena, a local building and construction institution that is made up equally of entrepreneur associations and workers' trade associations. Monica Brogi, Head of Evaluation Processes and Instructional Design Function, as well as Alessandra Pieri, Head of Administrative and Job Placement, introduced partners to the school. The mission of the institution is to provide high-quality VET courses for the building sector. The institution has a high rate of employment following the completion of studies because of the opportunity for students to work in internships in companies. To ensure the skills that students learn are directly applicable to the local needs, students work on learning and applying their knowledge on statues and buildings located in Siena, particularly for restoration work.

In addition, partners visited On the last day of study visits, partners went to Colle Vilca to learn about The Art of Crystal Blowing Artex and ITS Energia E Ambiente.

[**Download the School Presentation**](#)



Wine and Food Ecosystem



On the third day, partners learnt about skills provision in the local wine ecosystem. In the morning, partners visited the Casa del Chianti Classico - Radda in Chianti and Azienda Agricola il Castello di Radda and were explained the cultural and financial significance of wine creation in the Tuscany region. Afterwards, they visited the Istituto B.Ricasoli, a local agricultural institute. The director of the school, Nadia Riguccini introduced the institute that welcomes 800 students each year. The school cooperates with restaurants, farmers and hotels and allows students to learn while providing real services and products.



Students partaking in a dual apprenticeship at Azienda Agricola «La Selva», a school company belonging to Istituto B. Ricasoli, presented their knowledge as wine experts. Their dual apprenticeship program allows them to spend half of their time within companies in the wine sector and half of their time in the classroom learning their discipline.

[Learn more about the institute](#)



Exchange with Siena Food Lab

In the afternoon, partners were introduced to the Fondazione SIENA AGROFOOD LAB at the Monte dei Paschi di Siena Foundation. Angelo Riccaboni, research director at the Siena Food Lab introduced the strong living lab system and innovation in Tuscany. The Food Lab works on creating agricultural innovations and systems that are fit for the future of climate change, working in cooperation with research institutes, agricultural workers' associations, and institutes such as the Istituto B.Ricasoli.



Regional skills ecosystems

The study workshop in Tuscany was an opportunity to discover Tuscany as a regional skills ecosystem, across four different sectors. Different stakeholders were gathered to see how Vocational and Educational Training responds to different sectors' needs, combined with the local business landscape. Partners left the visits interested in further exploring the development of regional skills ecosystems in their territories, and with renewed impetus to work on a follow-up to the Stride4Stride project.



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