

The insertion of young people into the world of work and current trends

The case of Italy

Technological innovation and globalization strongly influence the competitiveness of companies, their positioning in the market and their ability to create and absorb work.

Companies need updated skills and to exploit technological and digital innovation for the development of their business. From this point of view, the new generations, the so-called "digital natives", are advantaged. However, despite being good connoisseurs of the digital world and users of technology, they are at the same time poor in experience and in moral, cultural and technical personality, a fact which can devalue them. The road young people must take to enter the job world is therefore not easy.¹

Italy, today, presents a scenario of youth unemployment and inactivity. As Milena Gabanelli writes, in the Corriere della Sera (08/02/2018), among the causes of this youth unemployment are the economic crisis, the precariousness and the lack of a meritocratic system, which certainly do not favor the growth of jobs. *"Part of the responsibility must be also sought in the Ministers of Education of the 80s, who have not committed themselves to understand what prospects students should have in today's world, investing in their formation. In the global reading of possible future developments in the labor market, the higher the level of education and specialization in a sector, the greater the possibility of working"*.²

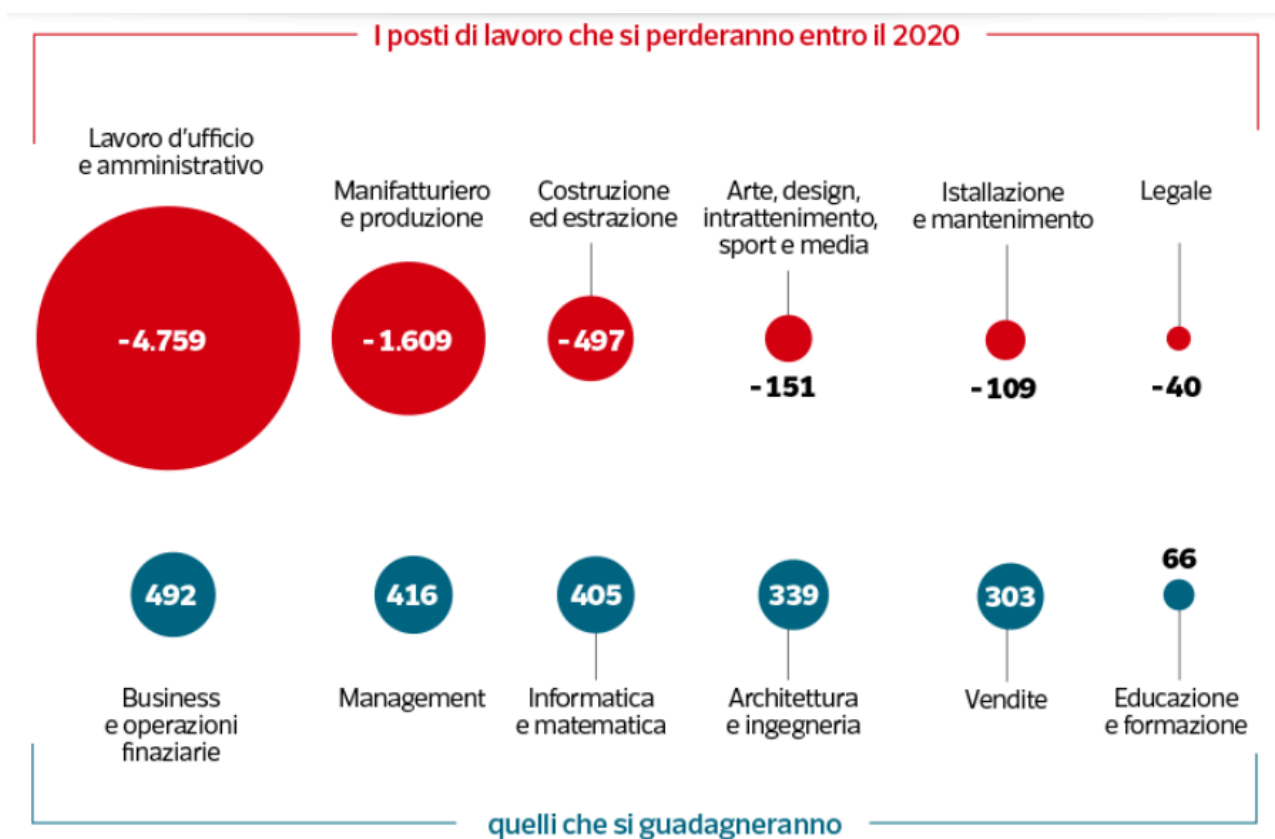
According to the latest ISTAT report (December 2017), in March last year unemployment among young people between 15 and 24 years was 34.1% at the minimum for five years. Istat points out that to find a lower figure, in fact, , we must go back to February 2012 (33.4%). The employment rate in this age group has also increased, although it is still 17.2% lower in March 2017, increasing by 0.8 percentage points compared to March 2016. There is therefore a decline in youth unemployment rate and an increase in the number of employed people, above all in dependent work.³

As reported by M. Gabanelli in the Corriere della Sera of the 8th February, by 2020 the loss of 7.1 million jobs is expected. At the same time, however, there will be an increase of up to 2 million jobs. Among the lost and earned positions, there remains a balance of 5.1 million less jobs.

¹ <https://www.aclodi.it/adulti/giovane-e-lavoro-globalizzazione-ed-innovazione-tecnologica>

² Milena Gabanelli; Corriere della Sera, 8 febbraio 2018

³ http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2017-05-02/istat-marzo-tasso-disoccupazione-risale-all-117percento-101557.shtml?refresh_ce=1



4

We can see, from the table above, that the jobs which will be lost (circled in red) are particularly related to administrative roles, office work, the manufacturing and production sectors. The jobs which will be gained (blue) will be in technology, mathematics and engineering sectors. Therefore we must focus on dematerialization and innovation. On IT and management. The future is technological, it is no longer based on the manufacturing, manufacturing, but on the digital world.

Fortunately, in our country, for several years, to make up for the difficulties encountered by young people in finding employment, alliances have been established between schools and businesses. For example, in middle school, as I remember from my own personal experience, guidance projects are implemented to guide students in choosing the best high school for them. In higher technical institutes (such as the industrial or economic technical institute), school-work alternatives are now compulsory, very useful for allowing young people to get direct contact with the work environment. In fact, in my case, having attended a technical economic institute, I was given a very welcomed opportunity to

⁴ <http://www.corriere.it/dataroom-milena-gabanelli/lavoro-futuro-cosa-conviene-studiare/7e1797e2-0c1d-11e8-ac00-e73bcae47d08-va.shtml>

carry out these training internships in the company that led me to mature different skills, to relate with the public or with the staff and to put in practice the knowledge learned at school.

An added value for the purpose of entering the labor market is a degree. A recent INAAP research (National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies) has shown that studying improves the employment prospects of young people under 35. The problem, however, is that in Italy the number of young people with a degree is small: according to the OECD report (September 2017), our country is below the European average for number of graduates. Among those who have a degree, the majority are graduates in humanities, while there are no graduates with appropriate skills to the needs of companies, which at this time would be favored.⁵

Excluding school qualifications, another useful mean for allowing young people to join the working world can be curricular or extra-curricular internships or educational activities of various kinds, such as those provided for by the Youth Guarantee Program.

Youth Guarantee is a European plan to fight against youth unemployment, to which I myself would have enrolled after my graduation if I had not continued my studies, because I think it can provide welcoming, guidance, work support and different opportunities for young people, as an internship. This European plan, as explained on its website⁶, is accessible to young people between the ages of 15 and 29, who are resident in Italy but are not working, or in a school or training course. Today we live in a digital, computerized society, where the use of mobile phones and computers is indispensable, both at home and at work, so millions of data are created, stored and shared every minute. Often it is also sensitive data. Therefore, I can only share the suggestion given by M. Gabanelli in *Corriere della Sera* (2018), according to which it is useful to form "Data Scientist", ie people capable of handling this information. According to a report promoted by Miur, in the public universities there are currently only two three-year degrees in Data Science and three master's degree courses.

Currently, the task of companies is to adapt to the effects of climate change, which we are witnessing. It is therefore necessary a "green economy" that can recycle waste and adopt sustainable development, generating additional jobs in all sectors: the Green Jobs.

⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/innovazione-e-occupazione-giovanile-nellera-40-luca-candido>

⁶ <http://www.garanziaigiovani.gov.it/ScopriComeFunziona/Pagine/default.aspx>

Green jobs are those jobs that are committed to minimizing any form of waste and pollution and efficiently use raw materials, such as water, and to reduce the environmental impact of companies, improving their energy efficiency.

Among today's young people the role of researcher is becoming increasingly important, even though it is characterized by precariousness. The PhD program trains young researchers, often forced to emigrate abroad, because in Italy they do not find adequate opportunities. The researcher's employment is considered precarious because it ends with the conclusion of a research project, and the young researcher may be forced to move to another country to obtain a new contract.

In today's scenario, young researchers feel thrown into a competitive, ruthless and stressful arena, writes Olmo Viola. They are *"forced to fight every day for scarce funding, see their career chances decrease, collide with bureaucratic and administrative bureaucracies. The obsession with publications leads to the development of safe research projects that can guarantee further publications, regardless of research results and social implications, leading science to a vicious circle where the end of the activity is publishing itself. This is what emerges from an online survey recently promoted by the journal Nature."*⁷

The State to help the growth of Italian research and make it competitive even at international level, should value young researchers and create the conditions to allow them to do research and innovation independently.

Starting in 2008, the law establishes that 10% of the total resources made available by the Ministry of Health to finance research activities, is destined to projects presented by researchers under the age of forty. *"Since the adoption of the law, more than 500 projects have been financed for around 160 million euros. Considering that the research projects finalized last three years and allow to allocate up to 50% of the funds to research contracts, the resources provided so far have enabled the activation of about 2100 contracts lasting three years"*.⁸ The 2016 Targeted Research Announcement puts in place 54 million euros for projects presented by young researchers.

The Budget Law of 2018, among its various objectives, will try to facilitate the innovation of companies and encourage them to hire young people. In fact, a measure envisaged by the maneuver is the "bonus for young people recruitment", which for under-35s provides a contribution reduction

⁷ http://lameladinewton-micromega.blogautore.espresso.repubblica.it/2016/12/07/giovani-ricercatori-una-vita-sempre-piu-dura/?refresh_ce

⁸ http://www.salute.gov.it/portale/temi/p2_6.jsp?id=908&area=Ricerca%20sanitaria&menu=finalizzata

of 50% for the first year and for under-29's permanent hiring contracts, with a remission at 50% for three years. For assumptions in Southern Italy, the relief becomes of 100%.⁹

In conjunction with tax discharges, recruitments need to be accompanied by anti-dismissal rules, to prevent companies from firing the young person, after three years of employment.¹⁰

Also in the Budget Law 2018, a measure is implemented for industry 4.0 and it is also planned to hire 1,500 university researchers in universities and research centers.

In addition to the emerging role of the scientific researcher, technological innovation sees the birth of a figure that did not appear in the early 2000s, "the social media manager", that is the specialist in the management of social networks, such as Facebook and Instagram, which play a central role in the daily lives of individuals nowadays.

A current trend among young people is that of the "fashion blogger", now considered a real profession, which involves the constant updating of an online profile, in which the person sponsors, often wearing them, high fashion clothes or cheaper and trendy outfits, recommending what purchases to make or what "outfit" to wear. The fashion blogger becomes an icon of style and a source of inspiration, especially for today's generations, which therefore tend to imitate these fashion bloggers, often considered icons of beauty and subjects to imitate. For this reason, it is necessary that those who choose to take this path, must be aware that they can't give the followers of their blog online, wrong ideals. The young people who open these blogs should try to always lead a positive example, also and above all not to increase the problem of eating disorders, which increasingly affects many girls, who reject their physicality, focusing on prototypes of "extreme" beauty, trying to resemble some icons on the screen.

To date, about 2 million fashion bloggers are estimated, according to Technorati (a search engine dedicated to the world of blogs).

An Italian example of success in this field is the thirty-year-old Chiara Ferragni, who made her debut in 2009 with the creation of the blog "The Blonde Salad". In just six years, the young woman managed to bill more than ten million dollars, so much so that she was named, by the American magazine Forbes last year, as *"the most important fashion influencer in the world"*¹¹.

⁹ <http://www.altalex.com/documents/news/2017/10/16/legge-di-bilancio>

¹⁰ <http://www.societaefamiglia.com/legge-di-bilancio-2018-si-punta-su-innovazione-e-occupazione-giovanile/>

¹¹ <https://www.forbes.com/search/?q=chiara%20ferragni#453b8e06279f>

As highlighted, the Italian scenario in terms of youth employment is not to be considered positive, although in these years some position will be gained, many others will be lost. Mechanisms adopted by our country to make up for this situation, are already born within the schools, with orientation projects and training internships. A high level of education certainly enhances employment prospects. We have seen how some scholars throw themselves in the field of scientific research, to look for job opportunities even outside the country, while others, less oriented to study, focus on the exploitation of technological and digital innovation to establish themselves in the world of social networks.

In short, given the current Italian situation, I hope that any party going up to the government is interested in the issues concerning the employment of the younger generation, like mine, guaranteeing us more opportunities to become part of the world of work, to allow us in this way to look to our future with hope and with better prospects.

Sitography

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