

Chapter 35

Strategies and Technologies for the Future Success of Students at School

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ABSTRACT

The reasons why drop out in the EU countries is so widespread are different in places and contexts. The Member States have therefore undertaken to identify the triggers and implement effective policy choices. In this chapter, the authors show, even in a local context, how wrong choices made by pupils at the end of middle school are one of the causes of school/educational failure. In order to get in front of all this, the authors' school has applied for a method three years, improved day by day and supported by new technologies, which stimulates and guides the students towards a rational and informed choice about their future employment / training.

INTRODUCTION

The educational guidance is a practice that helps a student to find the best solutions for his/her own educational and professional future (Suleman & Paul, 2005), but it is also a process associated with the growth of the person in a social, educational and business contest. Its activities are different

in each industrialized Country and this is due to different educational systems or the objectives and /or procedures/ criteria in determining: academic performance, procedures for the classification of students (exams, standardized tests, knowledge and / or assessments by teachers) and personal / professional trends (Guichard & Huteau, 2005). For example, in the U.S.A. the educational guid-

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ance aims to the reduction of ‘early school leavers’, to promote the best students and to improve the idea that each student has of him/herself (Guichard & Huteau, 2001). Even in Europe the vocation guidance is varied: in Spain it is a right for each student and for this reason specific services have been created in schools, in Denmark there is the National Council for Vocational Guidance, which makes recommendations on guidance and, finally, in Germany the decisions in guidance are issued by the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education of the Länder (German: der Konferenz Ständige der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Kultusminister Deutschland - KMK) (INRP, 2008).

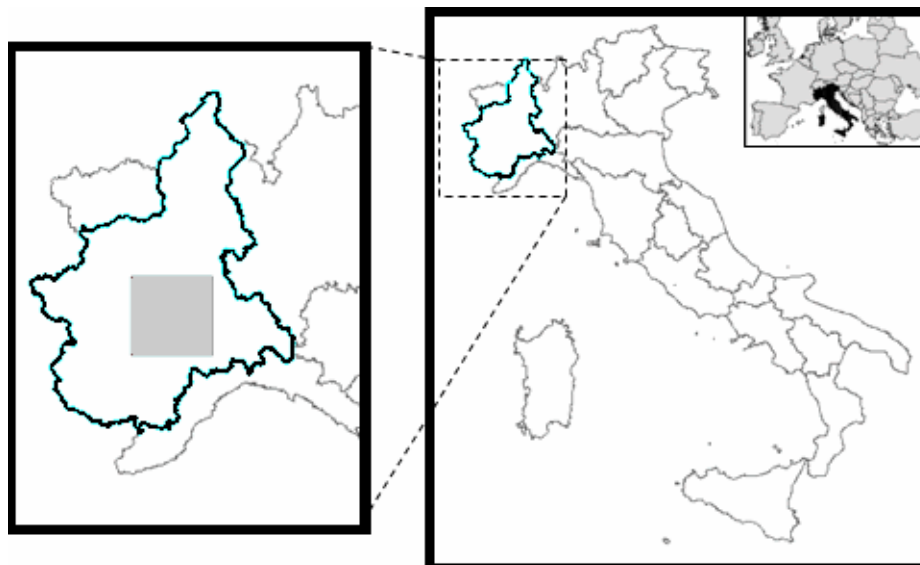
In Italy students, who finish their studies of first (Junior High School) or second (Senior High School) cycle of education, are oriented through a ‘policy advice’, literally called recommendation for the future school, determined on the basis of several factors: commitment and performance at school. At Junior High School, this ‘advice’ acts as a strong anchor for each student. This is because it is the age where children live many changes, look for a personal identity and feel the need to plan their future.

The territory (see Figure 1) where it’s settled the Institute “Giovanni Arpino” is characterized by families with low-average level of education and significant families from North African and Balkan regions. There are extra-curricular educational agencies such as libraries, sports fields, town halls and a consortium that are working actively on the territory and that provide a valuable support for integration of disadvantaged and disabled students at school.

The school is divided into three sites, and it has three levels school (childhood, primary and secondary levels); the average school population is of 1100 students (3% disabled and 15% foreigners) coming from three neighbours towns, and annually about 360 pupils, of which about 120 of the last class, participate in the policy process.

Our school is testing a new method of vocation guidance (at the moment only for students of Junior High school) integrated and innovative where each student’s future choice is not considered as an occasional act, but as a continuous and complex process that begins with childhood and through adolescence continues in the next period too. New method of vocation guidance connects

Figure 1. Grey’s catchment area of the “Giovanni Arpino” Istitute



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