



ENERGY TO LIFE

Media Relations

Ph. +39 06 8305 5699
Fax +39 06 8305 3771
ufficiostampa@enel.com

enel.com



Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca

Press
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ENEL AND MIUR: GO-AHEAD FOR 145 STUDENTS TO TAKE PART IN HIGH-SCHOOL SANDWICH COURSE PROJECT

- *Young people from seven Italian technical high schools will be alternating their school studies with periods of practical and theoretical workplace training.*

Rome, September 8th, 2014 – A pilot scheme has been launched for a sandwich course aimed at students in their final two years of technical high school. The course has been devised by the Italian Ministries of Education and of Employment, regional authorities, trade unions and Enel.

145 young people from seven Italian regions will be taken on by the Enel Group under an advanced training apprenticeship contract to start at the beginning of their fourth year of technical high school. At the end of their fifth and final year at school, having obtained their school-leaving diploma and taking into consideration assessment of their performance on the workplace course, it is planned to offer them a second stage higher apprenticeship lasting one year.

This sandwich course project was inspired by the need to place qualified school-leavers in technical and operational positions within companies rather than forcing them to undergo lengthy periods of post-school training. This project, involving cooperation between the participating companies and schools, will enable students to enter the workplace earlier, providing an education whose theoretical content is more in tune with the needs of industry, combined with practical work designed to provide all-round individual training.

*“Education and employment cannot be seen as two separate worlds. In fact, one of the chapters of our Plan, ‘The good school’ has, in its title, ‘Employment at its foundation’.” Stated **Stefania Giannini**, Italian Minister for Education, University and Research. “Education can and must become the most effective structural policy against unemployment. Strengthening practical work experience during school years will be one of the pillars of our action starting from now, as this initiative clearly shows. We must involve students from all high schools and, in particular, those who choose technical institutes. The sandwich course project, in which we strongly believe, represents an absolute innovation for the Italian system. Participation in this scheme will be positively acknowledged during the final high school exams.”*

*“This is one of the first advanced training apprentice schemes born of the synergy between education and training institutions and the corporate world. Aimed at students at technical high schools, it represents a major investment in human resources in Italy”, stated **Francesco Starace**, CEO of the Enel Group. “We are convinced that we have selected a group of enthusiastic students keen to have this new experience that will open the way to an extremely satisfying career path. These apprentices will come into immediate contact with latest generation equipment and technology and receive specific prior training on matters of workplace safety, an issue that our company considers of primary importance”.*

The technical high schools participating in the pilot scheme are: “Avogadro” in Turin, “Pacinotti” in Mestre, “Marconi” in Piacenza, “Meucci” in Florence, “Marconi” in Civitavecchia, “Gadda-Fermi” in Naples and “Giorgi” in Brindisi.

This project has been made possible by the legislative framework set out in Italian law 128/2013 (Article 8-bis) on education in schools and by the subsequent inter-ministerial decree of June 2014, implementing



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this law, making it possible to launch a pilot scheme for the final two years of grade 2 secondary schools involving periods of in-company training with the option of entering into apprenticeship contracts. While the sandwich course was being mapped out, the company and the electricity workers' trade union organisations established the rules for the application of this new model with an innovative framework agreement. In July 2014 a memorandum of understanding was signed by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, the Ministry of Labour, the participating regional authorities and Enel, leading to the agreements between Enel and the technical high-schools involved in the project.

The scheme will involve an overall flexibility of 280 hours on school attendance, contents jointly planned by teachers and Enel trainers, presence of school and company tutors constantly following students in their educational and work activities. During their school years, students will spend one day per week in the company and will continue to work during summer. The knowledge and expertise acquired by participating students during their work experience will be valued also through credits at the final high school exams as well as being certified to build up their professional experience.

The aim of the pilot scheme is to enable students to obtain a school-leaving diploma in technical subjects after already having had some work experience, a prerequisite for a subsequent professional or vocational qualification. Enel will initially be placing students in company facilities dealing with the generation and distribution of electricity.

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