

JEWELLERY IN TUSCANY

How the sector operates

The main production areas for jewellery are Florence, having a deep-rooted tradition of niche craft workshops, and Arezzo, which has developed into an industrial district during the post-war period. In recent decades, the general decrease in the number of employees and units has caused a shift towards more high-quality and fashion-based products, more export-oriented policies and more appropriate competition strategies. Florentine workshops have partly applied technological solutions to their artefacts so as to better reach their selected international clientele. The Arezzo firms switched to entirely different materials – often non precious – and fashion accessory labels suitable to different seasons and cultures, thus creating their own brands or working for major brands. At all events, the district organization requires a high degree of flexibility, achievable through engineered industrial systems and a deep expertise in jewel creation.

Skill needs: strategic competencies and job profiles

Because of the sector's different peculiarities at regional level, the needs of personnel are varied. In general, the economic crisis has drawn attention on staff training requirements.

The vocational courses necessary for Florentine goldsmith are on the traditional techniques of jewellery creation and making. The present personnel needs can be described in terms of:

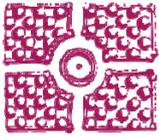
- (a) providing updating **support to micro-enterprises** concerning the *new economy*, the online markets and, in general, the opportunities offered by the new technologies and social media;
- (b) training and mentoring to favour intergenerational turnover, by teaching the **manual art of jewel-making** and its connections to national history.

In the case of Arezzo goldsmith, the present and near-future personnel needs pertain to three areas:

- (a) **computer science** (3D prototyping, engineering software systems, manual modelling of jewellery hand-making);
- (b) **chemistry** (electroplating and base metal treatment against oxidation, allergenicity risk and harmful materials, defined according to the specific provisions of the target markets);
- (c) **mechanics** and **electronics** (production process control and optimization).

A taxonomy of the required professional qualifications

The table below combines data from three sources: the mandatory employment notices from firms to job centres, introduced in 2008; the IRPET survey on the training needs of the Tuscan firms having recorded higher-than-average turnover and employment rates after the crisis; the focus groups with firms belonging to strategic sectors for regional growth. The quantitative and qualitative data collected were used to classify occupations by employment capacity (number of newly employed), and job stability (combination of days worked and contract type).



Overview of the most sought-after and in-demand jewellery jobs*

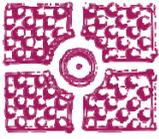
		Job stability	
		Medium-high	Medium-low
Employment capacity (number of newly employed)	Medium-large	Goldsmiths, jewellers and related workers Welders and flame cutters Tool-makers and related workers Industrial designers and related workers Artisan and industrial painters Application technical experts	Metal finishers, and metal finishing-, plating- and coating-machine operators Non-qualified industrial workers and related workers Painters, sculptors, designers and restorers of cultural goods Production planning technicians Automated and semi-automated machine-tool operators Moulders, blast furnace-, converter- and metal refining-furnace operators (steel industry)
	Medium-small	Electrical welders and ASME operators Freight administration clerks Metal moulders and coremakers Industrial machinery mechanics and fitters, and related workers Metal plating operators Chemists and related professionals	Manufacturing technicians Composite products assemblers Operators of machines and equipment for basic and fine chemicals Mechanical technicians Information and reception clerks Software analysts and designers Stone cutters and polishers, stone splitters and stonemasons

*Key professional qualifications, whatever class they belong, are highlighted in bold.

The analysis of recruitment capacity resulted in two occupation groups (medium-large and medium-small), depending on the number of newly employed (larger/smaller than the median value). The analysis of job stability resulted in two occupation groups (medium-high and medium-low), depending on the value of the composite indicator (higher/lower than the median value).

Territorial localization

The map below shows the location of local units in the sector, highlighting the most dynamic firms in terms of turnover rate and number of workers for the period 2007-2011. This graphical representation allows to appreciate the degree of diffusion/concentration of production activities on a regional basis.



The jewellery firms

