

LOGISTICS IN TUSCANY

How the sector operates

Although it includes many highly specialized phases, logistics crosscuts and combines with all production supply chains. Global trade and production outsourcing have recently triggered the need for in-depth restructuring, a clear example being the introduction of ITC systems connecting carriers and local agents. Huge investments are necessary to enhance the infrastructural capacity (spaces, facilities, equipment and tools for the management and preservation of goods), and improve information in view of customer satisfaction.

Livorno, with its port and interport, constitutes a hub for Tuscany's logistics sector and production system, and several tangible and intangible infrastructures have been implemented in order to bring it up to the requirements of globalized markets. The main challenge is to maintain the efficiency of facilities (constant vehicle maintenance and repair) and, at the same time, offer a more and more varied range of services (retrieving, labelling and cross docking of goods, document management and other import–export related activities, such as customs transit procedures, tax warehousing or plant-health checks). The supply chain now covers specialized services and the production of soft products (e.g. for final assembly and packaging). All these transformations require public interventions (especially from the Region and the Port Authority), high business competitiveness, and synergy between institutional and economic actors.

The planning of innovative services requires a new generation of workers, and consequently medium- to long-term training programmes, a need all the more urgent after the 2008 crisis has hindered generational turnover, and so the acquisition of fresh human resources.

Skill needs: strategic competencies and job profiles

The new personnel skills should be upgraded through **higher educational training in performance audit, procurement management, quality control and environmental sustainability**. The identified profiles should acquire transversal competencies in management engineering, computer science, economics, management, and transport law (particularly in the area of customs legislation). The **University Centre Logistics Systems** of Livorno, funded and supported by the Municipality, the Province, the Chamber of Commerce, the Foundation “Cassa di Risparmio” and the Port Authority, offers a three-year degree course and a Master course, whose purpose is to train professionals for medium-high level logistics jobs.

In order to implement the introduced innovations, fast-moving firms should provide **lifelong learning** programmes to their employees. Also, the hired personnel should learn competencies through in-house coaching, in particular technical and operational workers like **crane and trailer operators, unloaders, dockmen and drivers**, who must get more familiar with technology than in the past. The same applies to the production jobs in ancillary logistics services, which vary depending on the specialization: for example, in vehicle import–export there is a demand for **bodyshops and mechanics**.

Management reorganization and the introduction of highly-specialized services led to an increased demand for middle-level workers with general skills covering the whole logistics chain, such as **intermediate supervisors or line managers**. Also in-demand are **inventory controllers, or warehouse operators**, capable of optimizing incoming and outgoing inspection; for them, a professional–technical training should be sufficient, if accompanied by field experience and use of novel technologies.

In what concerns the administrative–managerial tasks, some companies use to enrol their former and newly-hired employees in training courses outside the region, for the learning of software for data management and analysis, like **Excel** and **Access**, or specific operational software like **RFID** and **BARCODE**.

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 logistics jobs*

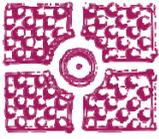
| | | Job stability | |
|--|--------------|--|--|
| | | Medium-high | Medium-low |
| Employment capacity (number of newly employed) | Medium-large | Porters, deliverers and related workers Freight administration clerks Ships' deck crews | Car, taxi, van and other vehicle drivers Heavy-truck and lorry drivers Non-qualified industrial workers and related workers |
| | Medium-small | Lifting-truck operators Ship's captains and officers Marine mechanics and technicians | Packaging equipment operators and industrial packaging workers Civil construction labourers and unskilled workers, and related workers Artisan mechanics, vehicle maintenance and repair and related workers Earth-moving plant operators |

*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 logistics firms

