

A Way to Create a New Professionalism: Permanent Training

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Key words: Curricula, education, legislation, professional practice, real estate development, standards, valuation, Italian legislation, training, law, market demands, updating, technological challenges.

SUMMARY

Within the traditional multi-functional role of the Italian Surveyor (a role guaranteed by a solid techno-scientific school education) new activities are getting a foothold, thanks, among the others, to the Italian legislation and the provisions introduced by the European Union.

Today, three are the main fields where a specific training and education are needed. All of them involve the professional activity of the Surveyor:

- the safety on working places: nowadays a true independent discipline that affects every activity in the building and installation sector;
- the saving in energetic consumption, that modifies in deep the way buildings are projected and traditional energetic sources are exploited;
- in comparison with the past, the change in the way we value capitals and real estates, according to international standards (IVS).

Our Professional Category, that in Italy is recognised and protected by Law, has been forced to improve among its members (with great efforts) the knowledge demanded by these new activities.

As a matter of fact, a school education, necessarily generic, (the same education that today gives the right to be inscribed into the Official Registry) is no more enough to face the demands of the market towards the Profession, especially if we consider the self-employed Surveyor. This education must be completed through:

- a specialist knowledge on the subject;
- a constant process of updating during the whole time of the professional activity: that's what we call "permanent education".

In order to achieve the specialisation of its members in the three abovementioned fields (a specialisation that is mandatory in the competition on the market), the whole Category of the Italian Surveyors had been mobilised, organizing courses and masters, together with the scientific community and the University.

This report will show in details the profile of the three new sectors. Moreover, it will present the means that our Category is putting into action in order to face the technological challenges of this century, with a special care for the young professionals.

The text will be circulated among all the members of the Commission.

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An official provision approved by the CNG last November (as this Board has self-ruling powers recognized by law) made it mandatory for all the people registered into the Official Registry of the Category a path of constant and permanent training. In such a way the over 110.000 professionals registered into the National Register for the three main fields of our activity are compelled to a constant updating training in those sectors that would prepare our Category to new specialized competences.

As we all know, in Italy the members of the National Professional Registry carry on three kinds of activities:

- building projects of minor structures and the following supervision of works on the building yards (50.000 professionals);
- topography, cartography and cadastral recording (30.000 professionals);
- assessments and valuation (20.000 professionals).

Those professionals that are members of the National Registry have, even if not exclusively, all the rights to work in this fields.

To be registered on the National Registry someone needs:

- 5 years of education in a Technical Institute;
- 2 years of professional training with a registered Surveyor;
- the getting through a State Exam.

Recently, a reform of the University system provided for a new way to be registered in the National Registry. Such a way is open for:

- who has a L degree obtained after a 3-years university program in engineering (with 6 months of practical training);
- who passed the State Exam after the 5 years of school and the 2 years of training.

After such an innovation, the Surveyors' Category acquired the new name of "Surveyor and Graduate Surveyor". Time passing by, it's likely that the graduate surveyors will become more numerous and there will be only few professionals with a mere certificate by a Technical Institute.

In order to speed this change, even the secondary-school system is under modification: the teaching of scientific disciplines would be increased, while the professional skills would be committed to the University.

Such a law reform introduces the concept of a substantial difference between a secondary-school certificate (Technical Education Certificate), and the professional title of "Surveyor" (applied only to those who are registered in the National Registry).

Within the over 150.000 students yearly licensed from Technical Institutes, only a 10% enters a professional training, and only half of them succeeds in the State Exam. Usually, those who pass the State Exam apply for the registration into the Official Registry only when they start their own autonomous activity (more or less 3.000 registrations by the youth every year: such a number almost matches the one of the professionals that take the retreat).

The reason why our professional qualification is so relevant is that we are all members of a national organisation and we can become part of it only through a post-secondary or university education (both inclusive of a practical training).

Therefore, the two years of professional training represent a kind of “proxy” to create new professionals a role that is conferred to the same Category of the already established Surveyors. Actually, our Category organizes (even during the training time) specific educational courses about the new professional skills that are required by the technological improvement and the present demands by the clients.

As a whole, the Surveyor Category in Italy is still an example of a” multitasking” profession. Nevertheless, the independent professional is fast becoming a specialised expert, according to the needs of the market.

The rules about the mandatory permanent education compel all who are officially registered and are less than 60 years old to attend educational events and to acquire professional training credits (CPF), decreasing according to their years of official registration. One CFP normally means 2 hours of technical courses, or published articles and essays, or the presence at scientific conferences. Trying to avoid these duties might be considered a serious non-performance from a professional and ethic point of view, and might cause a suspension (or even a striking off) from the Registry.

Italian Surveyors are now investing in new technologies and resources, in the hope to improve their traditional competences.

The great number of the deaths at building yards is focusing the public attention towards safety at working places. Being able to valuate all the risks of a specific work and organising means and procedures in order to prevent accidents is becoming a true scientific discipline, obviously strictly related to the building activity. A person legally responsible for the security is required by law at any building yard, no matter what the client’s will is. If someone wants to undertake such a task, it is mandatory to attend a 120 hours course with a final exam. All this is organised by our Category together with all the University, the Security Guard and the Fire Brigade.

Our females colleagues (now almost the 10% registered into the National Registry) are specifically operational into this field, thanks to their sensitiveness about these problems. Recently, when a terrible earthquake devastated L’Aquila, capital city of the Abruzzi Region, more than 500 Surveyors, together with the Security Guard, operated as volunteers for the reconstruction, offering all their professional skills in the evaluation of the damages to the buildings and in the assessment of their habitability.

We can say that, in the last three years, more than 20.000 Surveyors were certified as Security Experts. Almost all of them are working together with designers and building-works supervisors. Moreover, it is significant the co-operation effort with all those topographers that have to survey territories and buildings, and to assert possible risks, presence of polluting substances, air pollution or dangerous sources of noise.

As there is a strong need to reduce energetic costs and to use re-chargeable sources of power, building projects had changed. A new profession had been created: the “the certification expert”. He is the one who has to assign to every building parcel (both new, and old) an “energetic score” (essential to the commercial and fiscal value of the building). Such a new

activity (and the Italian Surveyors are being trained for it, and are gradually acquiring a certified specialisation) needs the knowledge about all the characteristics of the building materials (structural components, framework systems, etc.).

All these expertises, together with the strict rules requiring minimal levels of energetic efficiency (that are different according to the location) lead to a new way of designing and of realising all the buildings (a way quite different from the one used even in the recent past!).

Energy-saving is strictly related to the CO₂-emissions reduction. This is still a sector that needs the improvement of the present production facilities and the control over the emissions coming from all the operational systems. That represents a new field of activity for those who survey industrial plants and regular buildings in order to assess their level of CO₂-emissions reduction.

If we consider their global impact on the territory, new buildings, old structures to be restored, civilian and industrial facilities require by the technician a widest knowledge than the one that is offered by the Public School System.

All these competences need to be joined together into a single professional identity: the “environmental technician” has been so born. The Public Administration asks for his opinion before releasing building permits.

The Surveyor, who has a deep knowledge of the territory, of its inhabitants, of its culture and its traditions, could unite the demand of a permanent settlement advanced by the population and the imperative need for a safe-guarding of the urban, rural and forest environment.

Educational courses in order to become Environmental Experts are especially meant for the youth, much more sensitive towards this problem, and able to understand the enormous opportunities offered by this field.

Today, the world-widespread economic crisis (banks didn't consider the real value of real-estates offered as guaranties in financial transactions) makes much more strict all the rules about real-estate and exchangeable goods valuation. Respecting the international standards (IVS), approved by the UE in several treaties, means to create a new educational course for all the professionals, most of all for the Surveyors.

Our Category has to make official valuation for:

- private transactions;
- societies' balance sheets;
- Judicial Courts and Public Administration;
- Banks.

There is the increasing perception that to value something, especially a real-estate, is a sort of “sentence” that could be applied only if it is “objectively proved”. Such a prove has to rely on a scientific and demonstrable calculation. That's the real novelty: no more unacceptable valuations made by slapdash “experts” that would not consider the commercial value at a specific time and within a specific economic situation. The elements that we have to consider in order to value a real-estate is always increasing, and we need to consider them all in order to establish mutual relationships among them.

Here we have a new profession: the “Certified Valuator”. He can be the only independent expert, free from all conflicts of interest. His training and certification has to come from an independent structure, such as the competent Professional Organisation.

Of course, this new valuation procedure requires the utilisation of a data-base of the real-estates values (those that are certified by existing deeds or required assessments with a specific motivation).

In Italy, the value of a real-estate is classified by the “Territory Agency” for fiscal purposes, and by the “Trade Board” in order to supervise the whole situation. Nevertheless, all their reports are written on the basis of the Builders Association’s suggestions and according to the Real-estate Promoters’ Union’s valuations.

Anywhere, both for the way data are collected, and for their source, we can not entirely trust them: they are often imprecise (they refer to a maximal-minimal range of identification in a specific territory).

Together with the Territory Agency and the Authorities that represent the Bank System, we are trying to create a database that can show the actual value of real-estates and its presumed income. As a lot of professionals are financially supporting this structure, it will become a useful resource for the improvement of the valuation expertises that establish the real market value of every real-estate.

Educational Courses about this are been carried on in every Italian county, with the help of many Universities and Surveyors specifically trained for that.

After all, I’m proud to say that in Italy our Category is still carrying out its original tasks, with all the necessary quality of performance. Through our education and training we are prepared to face all the challenges that a changing world would present.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Born on 16 February 1945 in Brescia, where he lives and works as a free-lance surveyor.

July 1965: graduates and obtains a diploma as Surveyor at the Istituto Nicolò Tartaglia in Brescia.

1966: Lieutenant in the Infantry Corps of the Italian Army.

November 1966: participates in the emergency campaign during the flood of the city of Florence, coordinating the operations of his unit for saving the artistic heritage of the historic city centre.

1967: enrolls in the Registers of Surveyors of the Province of Brescia and begins to work as a free-lance professional.

From 1969 to 1978: is elected member of the Provincial Governing Council of the Board of Surveyors in Brescia and is appointed Secretary from 1975 to 1978.

From 1978 to 1983: is elected member of the National Board of Surveyors.

From 1985 to 1997: elected for the first time as Delegate to the Italian Social Security Fund for Surveyors, representing the Lombardy region.

From 1989 to 2008: officiated as the President of the Provincial Board of Surveyors for the Province of Brescia – a professional order with 3,000 professional members enrolled.

April 1997 to 2008: is elected President of the Italian Social Security Fund for Surveyors, an organization with 95,000 enrolled members that issues 24,000 pensions, with movable goods and real estate property amounting to €1,400,000,000.

2005: is nominated by the Mayor of Brescia as Member of the Board of Directors of the Brescia Mobilità SpA, a company with capital of the Brescia Municipality and the ASM of Brescia for the construction of the urban subway network.

2007 to present: Member of the Board of Directors of F2i, a fund for the creation of infrastructures which stands third in the world for its capitalization.

2008 to present: is elected President of the Consiglio Nazionale Geometri e Geometri Laureati

2008 to present: FIG Commissions 1 and 2 Italian Delegate

2008 to present: Member of the Council of European Geodetic Surveyors

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