

## The ISFOL Specialised Documentation Centre: an important tool for operational research

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This paper aims to present the ISFOL Specialised Documentation Centre (CDS) and its activity in the production and management of grey literature in the field of vocational training and labour policies.

There are many services offered to researchers and operators related to GL:

- The database of all ISFOL documentation (which includes a large number of GL documents)

- The LOGOS database, including all documentation (published and grey) collected by the SDC multimedia library

- The implementation of the ISFOL GL in the SIGLE database

- Co-ordinating the publishing of periodicals on documentation, carrying out specific projects for the publishing of handbooks, guides and thematic catalogues

- Promotion of ISFOL/SDC documentation products and services on the Internet.

- Managing a specific documentation system aimed at promoting information on EU policies with particular reference to FSE.

We will demonstrate how the SDC has an important role in the dissemination of information and documentation (mainly grey literature) on vocational training and labour policies and on the European Social Fund for which ISFOL is the institutional body for the Ministry of labour and social policies in Italy.

### Introduction

With this paper we would like to present the ISFOL Specialised documentation centre GL services and documentary products in the context of ISFOL institutional activities and in the framework of European union policies and strategies for the European social fund.

We will show how they represent a fundamental tool for research in the field of vocational training and labour policies in Italy and on the European social fund.

Grey literature and in particular public sector grey literature is today a preferential means for the diffusion of information and communication on specific topics and ISFOL recognizes its key importance.

Especially in the context of the development of new technologies GL has found new and faster means of diffusion and improved its visibility and efficiency. At the same time next to the numerous traditional GL documents new forms of GL are developing in the Internet.

ISFOL through its SDC is taking fully advantage of these new opportunities and is active in exploiting the Internet for improving the visibility of its GL and for providing new services.

### The ISFOL Specialised Documentation Centre

A brief introduction of the ISFOL, Institute for the Development of Vocational Training for Workers, of which the Specialised documentation centre is a project, is necessary.

ISFOL created in 1973 is a state-owned scientific research institution engaged in promoting and developing vocational training and labour policies in Italy. It carries out its activities in collaboration not only with the Ministry of Labour and social policies, but also with Regional authorities, Social partners, State departments, the European Union and several international organisations.

Between its institutional tasks we find the promotion of study, research, documentation and information activities and the exploitation, diffusion and transfer of the results of its activities.