



SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

ITALY (Emilia Romagna)

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Summary

The following article provides an overview of recent social inclusion policies in Italy with a focus on one of its Regions, Emilia Romagna, and on recent developments in the same geographical area that improve the theoretical and practical knowledge of the use of Assistive Technology (AT). The conclusion is that awareness concerning the opportunities offered by AT is growing, that social inclusion legislation is available and in some occasions refer explicitly to AT, but that AT education and training opportunities are not yet widely available and definitely not mainstreamed in programmes leading to professional qualification.

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Introduction

It is difficult to understand the impact of recent policy developments on AT training and education in Emilia Romagna (Italy), without the understanding of certain key features of the administrative context, of key legislation documents and of the AT service delivery system.

Administrative context

In terms of administration Italy is divided into Regions, Provinces and Municipalities. In some areas, such as health, legislative policies are delegated to the Regions which work closely together with the Provinces or Municipalities for the implementation of their policies. At present there is a wide reaching process of devolution in progress in Italy with a consequent transfer of power to the Regions, which results in different service delivery systems and different funding opportunities for aids across the Regions.

Independently of their income, all citizens have until now been covered for their primary health care by the **National Health Service (SSN)**². The SSN is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Health in Rome but most executive and legislative tasks are delegated to the Regions. Local Health Agencies (ASL) deal with the managing and the delivering of public health services. These ASLs, the executive branches of the national health service which usually cover areas ranging from 100,000 inhabitants (rural areas) to 500,000 inhabitants (cities), are autonomous “agencies” working on a semi commercial basis. The ASL provides for services with appropriate staff or stipulates contracts with private care deliverers.

Social services are provided for by the local authorities (Municipalities).

Education in Italy has until recently been provided for by the state. Most schools in Italy are still state schools, although their increasing level of autonomy is leading to them becoming more and more independent. The Provincial and Regional School Offices co-ordinate school policies at a local level, right through from Primary to Secondary school. There are few private schools, which are mainly religious institutes, but their number is destined to rise as the present government has made far reaching changes in the national educational system empowering the Regions to reform education through legislative tools. Since the nineteen seventies Italian educational policies have favoured the integration of children with special needs in mainstream schools, providing the schools that welcome them with extra manpower.³

² Established by Act 833 (23.12.1978)

³ Act 517 (04.08.1977). This law implements the rights of disabled students to attend normal classes in State schools and to be integrated. It abolishes “special needs classes” (classi differenziali) and refers to Act 118 of 1971.



Framework legislation

Most social inclusion policies in Italy refer to the Constitution and National Framework Act 104 (1992), as well as to more recent European declarations and commitments.

The **Constitution** promotes equality for all citizens (article 3) and speaks about support and rights of weaker categories (article 38).

The **National Framework Act 104** (1992) summarizes and collects together in a single text all previous regulations and laws concerning assistance, social integration and the rights of people with disabilities. It also adds a number of others, but it is a framework law and as such does not contain many operative indications, delegating most of the implementation to local authorities. The act covers issues in the field of health/rehabilitation, social inclusion and education. It clearly distinguishes between social and health services and determines principles for Regional Governments to hook their policies onto. Mobility, access to education and access to jobs are considered rights for people with disabilities, although local governments and authorities are not obliged but “invited” to carry out actions to ensure these rights are effectively ensured.

The act recognises the importance of the integration of **health and social services** to make care and rehabilitation effective. The National Public Health Service guarantees the regulation for and provision of aids.

Local authorities and the Public Health Service can set up or fund services to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

The act guarantees access to **education** up to University level. For each child with special needs a personalised dynamic-functional profile has to be formulated and an individual educational plan (PEI) devised. This PEI must include the viewpoint of doctors, educationalists, teachers and parents. Schools, health services, social services and cultural, recreational and sports services need to coordinate their efforts to include children with disabilities in all their activities.⁴

The Regions are further invited to encourage access to the **labour** market for people with disabilities.

Different indications are given concerning the **accessibility** of public buildings and public transport and local authorities which do not undertake action to meet accessibility standards may be subject to sanctions.

⁴ A decree of the Italian Government of 24.02.1994 specifies the tasks of the National Health Service concerning disabled students, especially with regard to drawing up the “functional diagnosis”, the “functional dynamic profile”, and the consequent “individual educational plan”. The last two should be written together with teachers and parents and should provide guidelines on aims and ways to support the learning activities of each student (including the need for assistive devices).



Social inclusion policies and legislation relating to vocational training and education in AT

The following is a brief overview based on a detailed analysis of recent policy and legislation initiatives in Italy and in Emilia Romagna.

In the area of **health** education and training has been heavily determined by Legislative Decree 229 of 1999. The aim of this decree is to rationalise the Public Health Service, including the education and training of health professionals. It attributes the task of planning and organising on-going training opportunities to the Regions, while Universities are identified as institutions for initial education, higher specialised education and for issuing diplomas. Professionals working for the Public Health Service or for private health services which operate under an arrangement with the Public Health Service regularly need to update their knowledge and demonstrate their attendance of courses. In consideration of this, an accreditation system has been set up which awards training credits for specific courses. Although no indications are given concerning the content of the education and training -training needs will be identified on a yearly basis by the Ministry in accordance with professional bodies, local authorities and health authorities-, the decree is an important step forward towards the professional development and the life long learning of health workers, and an it offers an important framework for those who wish to organise training in the field of AT.

In the field of **education** there are no recent pieces of legislation that promote the AT training of professionals working in education, although the fact that children with disabilities tend to learn in main stream schools and the fact that there are clearly defined professional categories as “insegnanti di sostegno” (support teachers) and “educatori” (educators), makes “Education” a major field of training in AT. In other words there is legislation on inclusion⁵ and some mention of technology, but no concrete initiatives to promote training in this field, unless we consider the possible implications of the “Legge Stanca” on the field of education.

The attention for **technological innovation** has brought the Italian government to release an important act. National Act 4 (2004) was prepared by an “Interministerial Commission” set up in 2002 for the development and use of information technologies for disabled people. The Commission has published a white paper “Technologies for Disabilities”, in which it defines a comprehensive picture of the problems concerning accessibility to information technologies. It provides a concise picture of the situation in Italy, a list of all the main European Laws on “e-accessibility” and a list of all the main projects for AT development. The aims of the Act, drafted in the above mentioned white paper, are to safeguard the right to access all sources of information and related services and in particular to grant the right to access electronic Public Administration resources and online services for the disabled.

⁵ National act 17 (1999), governmental decree Of 9.04.2001, Regional Emilia Romagna Act 12 (2003)



The Act is addressed to Public Administrations, Public Economic Agencies, private enterprises distributing public services, transport and telecommunications agencies operating with public capital and enterprises contracting electronic services.

The possession of accessibility requisites is NECESSARY for: a) contracts stipulated by public administrations. for the creation and modification of internet sites and b) the concession of Public funds to private subjects for the acquisition of goods and ICT services for use by disabled professionals. Moreover it is a preferential condition for public contributions to private subjects for the purchase of resources and electronic services.

The accessibility criteria are applied to all learning tools used in all schools. All didactic content purchased by public school libraries should be accompanied by a digital copy of the same, which is made available to disabled students and their remedial teachers.

The Act is expected to have a POSITIVE IMPACT on social environments: school, work, services, training of public employees. The act clearly states that those public employees involved should be trained in AT and accessibility related issues. It further intends to promote projects, programmes and initiatives for the diffusion of AT and the concept of accessibility, including funding for AT awareness and information and AT related research. Finally the Act aims at bringing together end users, developers, administrators and companies for the exchange of experiences and the joint development of new products.

At a Regional level (Emilia Romagna) the **social inclusion** of people with disabilities has been pushed forward by the Regional Act 29 (1997). This regulation aims to encourage opportunities for disabled people to lead an autonomous life and to be socially integrated. The regulations promote activities aimed at awareness and guidance. These activities include putting information on line as well as services concerning appropriate technological aids, to be implemented with associations, moral bodies and local authorities. The law provides funding for AT devices for independence (mobility, communication, day to day activities) which are not funded through other national or regional laws. Grants are also awarded to assist with studies, work, and rehabilitation. All is to be documented with studies and research; the planning should be carried out together with relevant and professional associations.

Another Regional Act, n° 2 of 2003, establishes norms for the promotion of social citizenship and for the realisation of an integrated system of social services and actions. Particular attention is dedicated to the assistance provided to people with severe disabilities. The act further designs specific models of coordination and integration between rehabilitation services, local services and local authorities to encourage continuity in care between clinics and home care situations. The act recognises the necessity of the adaptation of the domestic context for people with disabilities and the aging population. A multi professional team is identified as a key element in the definition of an effective life project.

In the field of **employment** National Act 68 (1999) regulates the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market. Italian companies and institutions of a certain size are already obliged to employ a certain percentage of people with disabilities, but the



innovative nature of this law lies in the fact that it establishes the necessity of appropriate placement by matching a person's abilities to the job description. The Regions will have to provide for funding for services, adaptation to work places and telework solutions. As a matter of fact a year later, in 2000, the Region Emilia Romagna has released Act 14 (2000). The regional programme is based on the integration of training, support and promotional activities. The Provinces will have a primary role in mediating between workers with disabilities and employers. Some training is foreseen for the staff of the Provincial Offices responsible for carrying out the matching of workers' competences and employers' needs. This act is recently substituted by Regional Act 17 (2005) in which the right of people with disabilities to access jobs is channelled into a general law on the quality of work, without substantially modifying it.

Finally National Act 13 of 1989 is worth mentioning. This act regards the overcoming and elimination of architectural barriers in private buildings. The act makes funds available (through local authorities) and fixes the criteria of access to funding. Requests for funding need to be presented with a declaration of conformity by an accredited professional. No mention is made of the training of these professionals.



Current actions taken to improve theoretical and practical knowledge of the use of Assistive Technology in Emilia Romagna

Quality and quantity of AT training programmes

The picture that emerges from a recent survey on AT education and training opportunities in the Emilia Romagna Region shows that training opportunities for professionals assisting people with disabilities are scarce⁶.

The principle demand for training comes from (in order): educational services, health services, social services and voluntary organisations.

The number of requests for training conducted with a multidisciplinary approach is raising. Most AT training modules/courses are short and target specific groups of professionals or students. They tend to be introductory (foundation level). Many local authorities (Regions, Provinces, Municipalities) promote seminars or study days on disability and more and more AT issues are included in the programme.

Generally speaking the production of information on AT is growing and the awareness of AT is growing among professionals, although this attention is not yet developed into a wider availability of well structured education and training opportunities.

Most training is delivered by independent AT Centres (Ausilioteca/Centro Regionale Ausili and ASPHI) and companies marketing aids. In some cases AT Centres and companies collaborate in delivering training.

Some training is delivered by education and training providers, especially by resource centres in the field of inclusion at school.

Some health care providers have begun to include AT in their on-going professional development courses, although AT training is not yet mainstreamed into ordinary programmes.

With the exception of occasional specific modules in initial education not a lot is done at University level, although recently some interesting master courses have been identified. An important opportunity for being updated on recent developments in AT is offered by major events (fairs and conferences), among which the biannual national conference "Handimatica" is the most important one organised in Emilia Romagna.

See Appendix for a brief description of recent AT training opportunities in Italy.

Promotion of e-learning

In Emilia Romagna at the moment there are no distant learning initiatives in AT, while at national level this way of delivering course content is not unknown (f.e. the Master of the University of Trieste).

Web without barriers: an example of materials for e-learning, is the title of a collection of materials for web accessibility developed under a project funded by the Regione Emilia Romagna and developed with the involvement of an AT Centre (ASPHI). The CD is an interesting tool that can be used for training purposes.

⁶ The survey has been carried out within the framework of the KPT project. Of the 220 questionnaires sent out to different types of organisations, 18 organisations have reported their delivery of 35 different courses over the last two years.



Promotion of mandatory training for AT professionals

To the best of our knowledge there are no initiatives aimed at making training mandatory for members of professional categories. There are institutions which also require their staffs to be trained in AT or Accessibility related issues specifically to improve the quality of the service for end users. In two cases this training is related to specific legislation: namely, the training of the staff of the Bologna Provincial Office dealing with inclusion in the work place and the training of professionals working in the provincial centres for the accessibility of the domestic environment. The two related courses are described above.

Improvement of the knowledge of general practitioners

Following a legislative decree of 1999, health care professionals need to regularly update their knowledge and follow specific course. In some cases these courses involve AT issues and their number is rising. Nowadays there are different training programmes on AT for doctors, therapists and rehabilitation engineers. Most of the time these are short courses (one day or so) delivered at a foundation level, and promoted by companies, private care deliverers or employers (Local Health Services).

In some cases AT modules have been included in post graduate masters for doctors, for example a 50 hour module on "Hi Tech Aids" in the Master on Pediatric Rehabilitation, organised by the Local Health Agency of Bologna (2003-2004).

Some Universities include a module on AT in the initial education of students in Educational Studies, or organise seminars within refresher courses for professionals or specialisation courses.

At Bologna many of these modules are entrusted to Ausilioteca.

Introduction of mandatory certificates for AT professionals

There is no official body in Italy that releases certificates for AT professionals. Accredited certificates for AT professionals do not exist in Italy.

Promotion of the recognition of education and training

GLIC

The GLIC Association, a national network of independent AT Centres, promotes at various levels the development of AT by supporting the recognition and diffusion of AT Centres, the professional development of their staff members and awareness on AT for inclusion among professionals.

As in Italy there are no intermediate or advanced level courses for AT specialists, GLIC each year organises an interactive training session for its members: during a one day programme a specific area of AT is examined (for example remote control devices, communicators, key board emulators, etc.) by exchanging experiences among the centres. The training follows a evaluation protocol defined beforehand by one of the board members. At a political level, GLIC interact with the Ministries of Health, Welfare, Education and Technological Innovation, to promote the inclusion of AT in the education curricula of professionals working in the field of disability.

Region Emilia Romagna



The Region Emilia Romagna has designed and implemented a network of provincial centres for the Adaptation of the Domestic Environment and two Regional centres of excellence (one on AT and one on accessibility). The professionals that work in these centres have had specific training. On the basis of a specific mandate of the Regions the two Regional Centres promote AT and accessibility related training in Emilia Romagna.

Conclusions

Although there is more focus on opportunities offered by AT for the social inclusion of people with disabilities, access to AT and AT services is still not easy for the majority of end users in Italy.

Awareness of the opportunities offered by AT is increasing at all levels:

- among people directly involved and their organisations;
- among professionals, professional bodies and organisations and service deliverers;
- among administrators and policy makers.
- among the aids producing and selling companies.

Information is available at various levels, especially over the Internet. Web portals and data bases offer information on devices and user experiences. The recent launch of the Eastin Information Network (www.eastin.org) is yet another step forward.

Legislation is not particularly standardised at the various policy making levels. Only recently have AT and AT service provision been clearly identified as fields of action, and generally as factors for the full exercise of rights of people with disabilities (access to education, work, information and so on).

The weak link in the chain is the level of commitment and AT support provided by professional carers in public services. The Italian public sector has attributed an important role to public services in supporting and empowering people with disabilities. This has definitely led to a democratic model of widely available general services which are relatively easy to access. Professionals working for those service providers are important focal points for people with disabilities, but on the down side their position of "power" in decision making processes could lead to them being obstacles if they are not sufficiently well trained. Specialised public AT services to fall back on for support are available in some regions, but their professional development also has to be further supported. Very little legislation clearly identifies training as a necessity. Very few training initiatives are the direct result of actions undertaken at a policy making level.



APPENDIX

Overview of recent and significant training opportunities in Italy with a focus on Emilia Romagna.

1. Examples of general AT courses targeting a national audience with various professional backgrounds

Master⁷ in Assistive Technology at the University of Trieste

The first level master course "Assistive Technology: aids for different categories of end users" is open to students with different disciplinary backgrounds and aims at educating experts in AT able:

- to conduct complex and interdisciplinary assessments
- to handle not every day problems with end users, aids producers and institutions
- to accept responsibility for the choice and purchasing of technologies and aids
- to develop project management skills in AT
- to collaborate with professionals of different backgrounds
- to participate in technology oriented R&D projects funded by the EC.

The following "topics" are included in the programme.

1. Introduction to AT; group work and interdisciplinary skills; analysis of the needs of the user.
2. Disability and independence (autonomia).
3. Aids for the exchange of information and introduction to aids for communication (PC access HW and SW)
4. Aids for independence in urban and domestic environment for elderly. Safety. Domotics.
5. Aids for learning and working.
6. Aids for personal care and mobility, sport, tourism and leisure. Safety.
7. The consumer with special needs: social and economic implications. Funding AT projects.
8. Elements of industrial design, innovative technology and evaluation of aids.
9. Elements of man-machine systems and science of materials.

Course: "Technology for independence and the social integration of people with disabilities"

This course delivered by SIVA (Fondazione Pro Juventute Don Gnocchi) in collaboration with the Università Cattolica di Milano, aims at providing the students a wide overview on available technologies for rehabilitation, independence, social integration and integration in education and work, taking into account various aspects of AT (from technology to actual use of AT in daily life).

Particular attention is dedicated to the correct methodology in identifying the most appropriate technological solution with end users, taking into account all relevant factors. Importance is given to the strategies and tools to keep knowledge updated. The course lasts 200 hours and is open to professionals from different backgrounds.

⁷ A Master is a postgraduate scientific qualification or a permanent and recurring higher education qualification that follows a first or second level degree course. Master's degree courses are divided into two levels: for a first level master's degree course it is necessary to have a first level degree; for a second level master's degree course it is necessary to have a second level degree.



Master course "Technology for the quality of life", organised by the Faculty of Education of the University of Bologna.

The first level Master course is promoted by the Faculty of Educational Science of the University of Bologna and has been created by the need to extend skills which are both socially and technologically important for the quality of life to professionals working in schools, social cooperatives, care centres, local authorities, citizens' help centres, research centres and companies. It is open to graduates of all faculties. Fees are partially covered by a grant from the Emilia Romagna Region through FSE funds .

The duration of the first edition of the course is 1500 hours for the 2005-2006 academic year, of which: 215 hours of up front lessons, 35 laboratory hours, 30 hours development, 820 hours of distance training and individual work and 400 hours training in a specialist facility. The number of participants is limited to 15 who will be selected according to qualifications.

The subjects included in the course are the following:

- Sociology and economics of technological innovations for the quality of life
- Elements of special pedagogics
- Psychological aspects of computer assisted communication
- Communication aids
- IT for disabled persons
- Aids for mobility and independence
- Electronic democracy
- E-government for socio-educational services
- Domotics for disabled persons
- Technologies for the domestic environment
- Planning a city for everyone

The composition of the course's teaching staff will be characterised by a close link between humanistic/social knowledge, technical/scientific knowledge and between academics and field specialists.

2. Examples of specialised vocational courses targeting a national audience, focussing on a specific discipline, but open to professionals from various backgrounds

School of AAC

Since 1996 the Centro Benedetta d'Intino in Milano organises this programme each year. It consists of first level course and second level development seminars. It is open to professionals in rehabilitation, health and social services.

The aim of the school is to teach theoretical and practice competence for the development of the communication skills of children with disabilities. The teachers are national and international experts in AAC.

The annual course has the following components: introduction to AAC, systems and codes for communication, access to play and literary, dynamic assessment and implementation strategies, AAC in specific contexts and for specific pathologies, AAC and the use of the computer. The course lasts 220 hours.

The second level development seminars go deeper into:

- designing and realising activities for AAC users
- AAC strategies in "early communication".

The school organises as well training opportunities for AAC facilitators and parents.



3. Examples of courses in Emilia Romagna focussing on specific disciplines or for specific groups of professionals

Vocational course for professionals of the first level Provincial Centres for the Adaptation of the Domestic Environment in the Emilia Romagna region:

The course is promoted and run by the Bologna Regional Aid Centre (CRA) and by the Regional Centre for Information on Barriers and Accessibility (CRIBA). Its aim is to provide professionals in different fields (physiotherapists, social workers, building and electronic engineers, ...) with the basic skills to be able to work in the provincial centres for information and consultancy for the adaptation of the domestic environment for the disabled and the elderly. The centres were set up by the Emilia Romagna Region with Council Resolution n. 2248 of 10/11/03. The course began in October 2004 : the first cycle ended in June 2005 and the second will be held from December 2005 to May 2006. There will be 150 hours of up front teaching distributed in the following topic areas:

- Cultural approach to disability and services
- Regulations relating to aids and accessibility
- Traditional aids and technological solutions for the adaptation of the domestic context
- Accessibility of the domestic environment, furnishings and design
- Service provision: team work, providing information for end users
- Service provision: consultancy and inspections; services network.

The course is only open to professionals from the provincial centres, in which the working team is generally made up as follows: a social worker (social assistant or educator), a welfare worker (physiotherapist), a technical expert (architect, engineer or surveyor).

The course has a two level structure: at the first level (basic training) all the participants study the entire range of course contents; at the second level (development) the training is addressed to those more directly involved in specific topic areas. Each subject constitutes a formative module which entitles the participant to training credits for Ongoing Medical Education (ECM).

The subjects are dealt with following a multidisciplinary approach which favours the analysis of difficult situations from the points of view of the various skills of the professionals working in the teams.

Vocational course for the staff of the Office for the Inclusion of Disabled People at Work of the Province of Bologna:

This is a specific training course for professionals dealing with the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market and supplements existing skills (the operators are professional educators). The Province of Bologna has specifically asked Ausilioteca to pass on its knowledge and experience regarding technological aids, environmental adaptation and work stations to the staff of the Office for the Inclusion of Disabled People at Work. The Office is responsible for matching competences and employers' needs with regard to disabled persons. The Office also deals with providing the technical solutions for the adaptation of work stations, as provided for by Law n. 68/1999.

It is a specifically designed course, which could, however, be reproduced for similar scenarios and professional fields. It is designed in five modules with the following topic areas;

- Technological aids: categories of products and their characteristics
- Solutions for personal autonomy
- Accessibility and barriers
- The main groups of disabling pathologies (characteristics and functional implications)
- Reading the diagnosis and interpreting the need
- Methodology of research and proposal of aids for: the person, the environment, tasks)
- Adaptation of the work place (environment, work station, tools and accessories)
- Legislation and services (funding, safety regulations, service network)
- Drafting of a working protocol between Ausilioteca and the Province of Bologna

AT in Education

The course offered by the Faculty of Education of the University of Bologna is part of the curriculum of the study programme of educationalists. The 30 hour course is run by AIAS Ausilioteca and is offered each year. The approach is multidisciplinary and sees the involvement of university teachers and AT centre staff



members. Each issue is dealt with at a theoretical and practical level. The issues that are part of the course programme:

- General concepts in disability and AT
- Communication
- Children, Disability and Play
- Aids for environmental control and access to the computer
- Educational software and software for rehabilitation
- Assessment procedures and the proposal and use of AT
- AT information resources in Internet and AT centres

Accredited specialisation course for teachers to children with special needs

This course, organised by the SSIS (Scuola Specializzazione Insegnamento Secondario), a collaboration between 4 Universities in Emilia Romagna, leads to a qualifying diploma for teaching children with special needs. The 400 or 800 hours course, depending on pre qualifications of the student, is open to all people with university degrees and already in the possession of a qualifying diploma for teacher. The course offers a variety of learning strategies, including stages and web delivered modules. There is some specific attention for AT, although the issues are not very systematically explored or included in the course content. Ausilioteca has contributed with a module on AT and a workshop. Issues: Disability and play, Software, Communication, AT in the classroom, Legislation, Funding opportunities, AT Centres. The workshop has been focussed on Clicker and the use of programmable keyboards.

Students with hearing impairments: inclusive didactics and technology

This course was delivered in 2004/2005 by ASPHI and the Gualandi Foundation in Bologna, targeting teachers with children with hearing impairments in their classrooms. Topics covered: Verbal and non verbal communication, software for the creation of conceptual maps, technology in the classroom.

4. Training promoted by private health care providers

Some private health care providers have started to qualify their rehabilitation staff (physiotherapists, SLT, doctors) by AT related training opportunities. Internal and external courses are organised to introduce issues as communication, access to the pc, environmental control and domotics. The trainers tend to come from AT Centres, public health or from the companies. An example is the Montecatone Rehabilitation Institute (specialised in spinal cord injury and stroke) who has organised a course for its clinical team.



5. Training by companies

Companies tend to organise half day or one day seminars focussing on products and the related problem fields.

- *Introductory courses on specific market segments: domotics, access to PC, Educational software....*
- *Courses for the use of specific products, normally those that require a high level of personalisation (overlay keyboards, authoring systems, etc...)*
- *Courses targeting the network of distributors (including orthopaedics).*

An example is the course promoted by INAIL and Otto Bock targeting psychiatrists, orthopaedics, physiotherapists. The course aims at demonstrating how people with sever disabilities, thanks to technology can gain independence in communication, environmental control, mobility. Also in this case the approach is multidisciplinary and highlights the importance of team work in identifying solutions. The course lasts 9 hours and touches the following topics:

- The multidisciplinary team and the its role in a rehabilitation project.*
- Aspects related to the pathology*
- Designing accessibility: norms and personalisation's*
- The "sistema ausili", the project and the role of AT Centres*
- Possible solutions for Environmental control*
- Environmental control and domotics*
- Visit to demo apartments.*