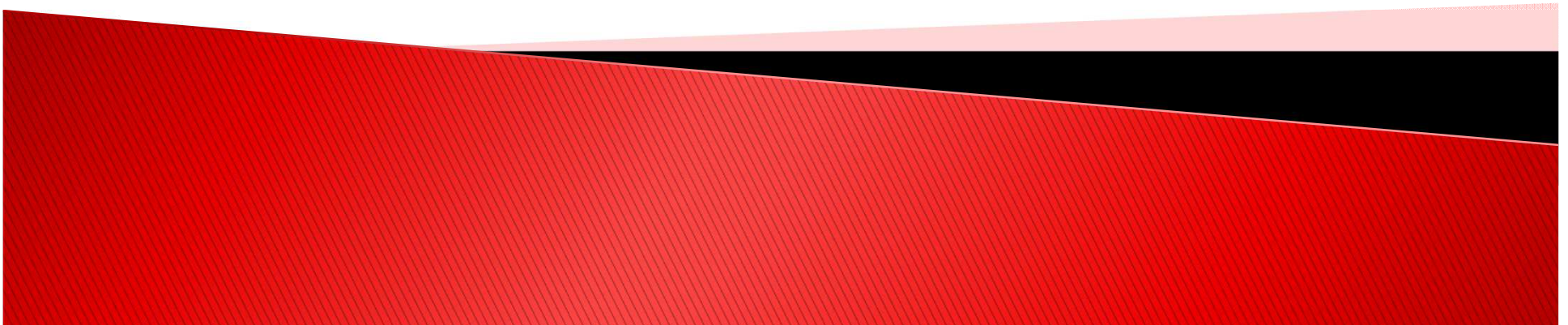




# FirstStep Overview



# About Us

- ▶ FirstStep is a non-profit association under the patronage of the Italian Embassy in Abu Dhabi.
- ▶ Its aim is to help Italian graduate students to find their first opportunity in the job market through an internship in a company or institution in the UAE.



# Vision

- ▶ FirstStep was founded to encourage this generation's positive attitude towards the future - realized by offering an internship, a first chance for this generation facing today's working world.
- ▶ FirstStep is not a way out from Italy. The experience accumulated aboard has to be interpreted as an enrichment that helps to be more competitive in the Italian work environment
- ▶ FirstStep supports the development of more tolerant, meritocratic, international, and more competitive society.



# FirstStep as one part of a complex agreement

- ▶ During the “Missione di Sistema” in 2010 attended by the Chair of Confindustria Ms. Marcegaglia together with the Minister of Economic Development, the Italian Embassy to the UAE and Abu Dhabi authorities, it was agreed not only to cooperate in the pure business sector but also on a cultural level promoting as long term investments the training of students
- ▶ The idea of FirstStep was accepted and supported within this framework

# Patronage of the Italian Embassy in Abu Dhabi



*The Ambassador of Italy  
To the United Arab Emirates*

Abu Dhabi, December 2010

**To Whom It May Concern**

FirstStep is a non profit organization, whose activity is encouraged by the Embassy of Italy to the UAE, created on voluntary basis with the scope of helping Italian students and young graduates to find internship opportunities in Italian and foreign companies operating in the United Arab Emirates.

Therefore we encourage companies and media to cooperate with FirstStep in order to improve the bilateral relationships between our countries through a mutual flow of students between Italy and the UAE.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Giorgio Starace

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giorgio Starace', written over a light blue horizontal line.

# Our activities

- ▶ Bring together who offers and who search a job
- ▶ Find funding for travel or housing costs and salary
- ▶ Assist in the first phase of acclimatization in the UAE reality
- ▶ Encourage a network between graduates
- ▶ Make the companies aware of the potential of this collaboration



# Our success

- ▶ We have more than 20 interns in the most important areas of the UAE business as Construction, Energy, Finance, and Tourism
- ▶ Students are working for example at Impregilo, Saipem, Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, Mubadala-GE, Millennium Hotel and many other companies
- ▶ The students are coming from the top universities of Italy as Bocconi, Luiss, Politecnico di Torino, Politecnico di Milano, Politecnico di Pisa etc.

# UAE press

## Italian job is goal of intern scheme

Student tells how work experience led to PhD sponsorship

Hussein Dajani

ABU DHABI // When Barbara Quaranta came from Italy to work for the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), she did not realise it would help her become one of only two people to win government sponsorship for a PhD programme back home.

The 28-year-old student was the beneficiary of a programme that provides internship and work opportunities for Italian graduates in the UAE.

Ms Quaranta was the first intern enrolled in the FirstStep pilot programme in 2009. It launched full-scale eight months ago. The

scheme is run by volunteers and supported by the Italian embassy.

"The problem is that in Europe and especially Italy, it is very difficult for fresh graduates to find a job, because everyone wants experienced people, and how can we get experience if we are not getting accepted to work? So I felt I needed to move to a different part of the world," she said.

During her six months at HCT, Ms Quaranta taught English and Italian, and did some translation.

"It was a perfect experience, but I had to leave after six months because my future husband and my parents wanted me to go back to Italy. Otherwise I would have stayed because all my interests were here ... and it gave me the confidence I needed to go on, it made me stronger."

The UAE internship helped her get another at the Leonardo da Vinci project in Europe, and then

in London with the Alfanar philanthropic organisation. Only then was she able to take the first step in fulfilling her dream to teach in a university.

"In Italy you have to have a PhD to teach in a university. And in each faculty only four people get accepted and only two of them get government sponsorship ... my experience in the UAE helped me in being chosen as one of those two people," she said.

**FirstStep has provided 10 students with internships so far**

FirstStep sends program beneficiaries by Trenord 196,000 times in Europe. The report of 10 seriously seasonal "Young establish because end, which volunteer Schmid a why they the alumni and After the ment last three times unemploy FirstStep training cluding finance in for the p the co-fin Italian getting in banks, fo



Veronica Schiold, right, is the president of FirstStep, which helps Italian graduates get work experience in UAE, with Paolo Bedelli, the intern Nicolo Barcolonia and Francesco Caruso, and Paola Martini, Daloon Johnson / The National

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ITALY



## FirstStep helps Italian graduates

FirstStep, a non-profit association aims to provide free internship opportunities in companies or institutions in the UAE to top qualified young graduates from the best universities in Italy.



would that time out of 10 Italian graduates were seriously worried about their professional perspectives.

In order to help Italian university graduates, FirstStep, a non-profit association aims to provide free internship opportunities to private companies or institutions in the UAE to top qualified young graduates from the best universities in Italy.

Through this voluntary initiative it aims to increase the movement of highly skilled students and graduates between Italy and the UAE. The association aims to create a positive attitude about the future among today's generation.

This can be realised by offering an internship, a first chance for the graduates facing today's working world. Being a non-profit organisation, FirstStep does not charge any fee for its services. It is completely free of charge both for the companies and for the graduates.

The mission of FirstStep is to collect the dream of graduates (business, en-

gineering, social sciences, etc.) coming from the most prominent Italian universities and to look for internship opportunities for them in the UAE. On the other hand, it also makes companies more aware of the potential of collaboration, facilitating business internships offers and demand. A big part of the association's work is to make it the first choice of universities in the UAE, and to encourage graduates to be part of a network through monthly meetings. The Italian Embassy in Abu Dhabi encourages the association in carrying out its activities.

These are advantages not only for graduates but also for companies like getting an extremely motivated workforce with a solid academic background. Companies have the chance of concretely testing graduates with the prospect of hiring them after they successfully complete their internship.

By following the mutual objectives, companies can avoid losing investment staff. They also have access to human resources for specific projects for a limited time and the benefit of new ideas from select graduates coming from the most competitive academic contexts. Graduates can be made aware of the company's corporate social responsibility and the care shown for the professional education of future generations.

www.firststep.it



# FirstSteper welcome party by the Italian Ambassador



# Further information / Contact

For further information please contact our website [www.firststep.it](http://www.firststep.it)

