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**ALMALAUREA**

# **XV Survey**

# **Graduates' Profile 2012**

# **Survey 2013**

# **Methodological Notes**

Con il sostegno del:



MINISTERO DELL'ISTRUZIONE, DELL'UNIVERSITÀ E DELLA RICERCA

## Methodological Notes

The **2012 Graduate Profile** is based on the combination of the following sets of data:

- administrative records of the 63 universities which became members of the AlmaLaurea before 2012;
- replies to the questionnaires AlmaLaurea administered.

Graduates from the following universities were surveyed: Bari; Bari Polytechnic; Basilicata; Bologna; Bolzano; Cagliari; Calabria; Camerino; Cassino; Catania; Catanzaro; Chieti and Pescara; Enna Kore; Ferrara; Florence; Foggia; Genoa; Insubria; L'Aquila; LIUC Castellanza; LUM Casamassima; Marche Politecnica; Messina; Milan, IULM; Milan, San Raffaele; Modena and Reggio Emilia; Molise; Naples, L'Orientale; Naples, Federico II; Naples, Parthenope; Naples, Seconda Università; Padua; Parma; Perugia; Perugia Foreigners; Eastern Piedmont; Reggio Calabria Mediterranea; Rome, Campus Bio-Medico; Rome, Foro Italico; Rome, La Sapienza; Rome, LUMSA; Rome, Tor Vergata; Rome Tre; Rome UNINT; Salento; Salerno; Sannio; Sassari; Scienze Gastronomiche; Siena; Siena Foreigners; Teramo; Turin; Turin, Polytechnic; Trento; Trieste; Udine; Urbino; Valle d'Aosta; Venice, Ca' Foscari; Venice, IUAV; Verona and Viterbo Tuscia.

Type of Degree Course	Number of graduates surveyed in 2012 Profile
FIRST LEVEL OR THREE YEAR DEGREES (post-reform)	129,279
SINGLE-CYCLE SPECIALIST (OR MASTER'S) DEGREES (post-reform)	22,171
MASTER'S (OR SECOND LEVEL) DEGREE (post-reform)	65,452
NON-REFORMED DEGREE COURSE (SCIENCES OF PRIMARY EDUCATION)	3,208
PRE-REFORM DEGREES	6,689
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>226,799</b>

The Report analyses degree holders of post-reform university courses (that were implemented by the Ministerial Decrees 509/99 and 270/04) and pre-reform degree holders.

Some categories of graduates were excluded from the population analysed in the 2012 Profile since they gained their university qualification as a result of special arrangements. They amount to 2,651 graduates: they are healthcare workers, whose professional experience was accredited by the University to the purpose of a three-year degree in the healthcare subject area or members of the Law Enforcement Agencies and Armed Forces, public officials, and other categories of students who completed one of the courses that had been specifically designed for them. What is more, often these graduates do not complete the AlmaLaurea questionnaire

### **Sources and reference populations**

The documentation analysed here takes into account the following groups:

- **all** degree holders (226,799), in terms of **Personal Details, Secondary School Performances, Academic Performances at University** (with the exception of *previous university experiences* and *motivations for choosing a degree course*). The sources for this information are universities' administrative records, except for information concerning *place of residence* and *high-school leaving certificate* (administrative records were integrated with data collected through AlmaLaurea questionnaires, when available), and for *high-school grades* (when grades were missing in the university records they were retrieved through the questionnaire);

- all degree holders **who filled and returned the questionnaire** (208,478, that is 91.9% of the target population), as regards the sections ***Study Situation, Working Activities during University Studies, Assessment of University Experience, Foreign Languages and IT skills, Further Education Prospects, Employment Prospects*** and for ***previous university experiences and motivations for choosing a degree course*** (***Academic Performances at University*** section).

### ***The 2012 Graduate Profile Report***

The 2012 Graduate Profile Report is available in digital format at the Internet address [www.almalaurea.it/universita/profilo/profilo2012/](http://www.almalaurea.it/universita/profilo/profilo2012/). It includes relevant documents for all graduate groups, which can be identified by **degree course type, university, faculty, degree subject grouping, degree-course grouping** (for the post-reform graduates) and **course type** (both for pre-reform and post-reform graduates).

The *Graduate Profile* shows data for groups including at least five graduates.

### ***Return rate of questionnaires***

The overall number of graduates and the number of those who filled the questionnaire are reported in each sheet and can be viewed in the Profile. The overall return rate was 91.9% in 2012. Whenever the graduates who filled the questionnaire are less than 60% of the overall number, a note will appear inviting users to be especially careful in the interpretation of the documentation gathered from the questionnaires.

Graduates whose questionnaires present the following limits were omitted from the 2012 Profile analyses:

- insufficient degree of completion: the questionnaires were empty or too few questions were answered;
- inconsistency: graduates supplied contradictory answers;
- implausibility: in batteries containing multiple questions sharing the sample response format, graduates repeatedly used the same response category (e.g., "definitely yes") for each item;
- excessive haste: graduates completed the questionnaire too quickly (less than 4 seconds, on average, per question) to guarantee reliable responses;.

The criteria and techniques employed to identify inadequate questionnaires are described in greater detail in the report "The AlmaLaurea questionnaire for graduates: completion indices and quality", drafted by Simona Rosa (AlmaLaurea), who developed and implemented the relevant analyses

***The "not specified" category, percentage values and absolute values***

The *Graduate Profile* includes the percentage distribution of graduate groups for each variable. For the sake of clarity, the percentage related to the "not specified" (or "not available") category, which are usually quite low, are not been reported in the tables. Consequently, the sum of visible percentages may be less than 100.

In the printable version of the 2012 Profile (the actual book or a PDF version of the Profile to be downloaded from the Internet at [www.almalaurea.it/universita/profilo/profilo2012/](http://www.almalaurea.it/universita/profilo/profilo2012/)), you find that percentages lower than 3% or relating to the "not-

specified"/"not-available" type of reply have not been reported in the charts.

### ***Empty cells***

Empty cells in the tables, which are identified by the symbol "-", mean that the corresponding number of graduates is zero (in terms of percentage) or that the phenomenon has no valid cases (if the cell is supposed to display average values). Consequently, the percentage value "0.0" indicates that they are valid cases, but with a percentage that is lower than 0.05. All values are represented with only one decimal figure.

### ***Reference to the notes***

For the definition of the following variables, the tables refer to the methodological notes.

- The **average age at graduation** is calculated not only on the basis of the actual age in whole years but also by taking into account specific birth and graduation dates. For the percentage distributions by age at graduation, the age is to be intended as fully achieved.
- The figure indicating **foreign citizens** does not include graduates from the Republic of San Marino.
- As for the graduates' **social background**, we have followed the framework proposed by A. Cobalti and A. Schizzerotto in their book (*La mobilità sociale in Italia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1994). Social class is defined by the socio-economic status of the graduate's father and mother and corresponds to the highest of the two (principle of 'dominance'). Socio-economic status can be defined as *upper-class, employed middle class, petty*

*bourgeoisie* and *working class*. The upper class is dominant over the other three, the working class is at the lowest level, while employed middle class and petty bourgeoisie are substantially balanced. If one graduate's parent belongs to the petty bourgeoisie and the other to the employed middle class, the social class of the degree holder is that of the father (in a situation like the above described one, it would not be possible to choose between the two social classes on the basis of the principle of dominance).

- Socio-economic status of each parent is a function of the most recent job position, as illustrated in the following table.

last job position	socio-economic status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• liberal professionals *</li> <li>• high level managers</li> <li>• entrepreneurs with at least 15 employees</li> </ul>	upper-class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employees with coordinating duties</li> <li>• white collar employees</li> <li>• middle managers</li> </ul>	employedmiddle class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-employed</li> <li>• assistants in family business</li> <li>• members of cooperatives</li> <li>• entrepreneurs with less than 15 employees</li> </ul>	petty bourgeoisie
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manual workers, subordinates, etc.</li> <li>• low-level office workers</li> </ul>	working class

\* Liberal professionals with a lower educational qualification than the secondary school-leaving certificate have been included in the *self-employed people* category.

Graduates whose mother (or father) is a house-keeper belong to the social class of the working parent (either father or mother).

- The **high-school graduation grade** (tables report average values) is calculated for qualifications earned in Italy and graded on a scale from 1 to 100, even for students who finished school before 1999 and were graded on a scale from 1 to 60.

- As regards **Area of upper secondary diploma**, the categories "In the South, but degree earned in the North or Central Italy", "in Central Italy, but degree earned in the North or the South" and "in the North, but degree earned in the South or Central Italy" do not include individuals who earned their upper secondary diploma in a province that borders on the province where they earned their university degrees. • In the question about **previous university experiences**, master's degree holders are asked to replay by mentioning the graduation certification that gave them access to the master's degree course.

- The variable **major motivations for choosing the type of degree course** is a summary of the replies given to the two following questions.

*When you decided to enrol at the university degree course you are about to complete now, which of the following motivations influenced you more?*

*Interest in the course curriculum (mainly cultural factors)*

- Definitely yes
- More yes than no
- More no than yes
- Definitely not

*Interest in the job opportunities the course provides for (mainly employment factors)*

- Definitely yes
- More yes than no
- More no than yes
- Definitely not



The degree holders who chose their course being driven by both cultural and employment factors replied "Definitely yes" to both questions. The graduates who were motivated mainly by cultural factors replied "Definitely yes" only to the question about their interest in the course curricular teachings. Similarly, the graduates who were motivated mainly by employment factors replied "Definitely yes" only to the question about their interest in the job opportunities provided for by the course. Finally, the type of reply "neither these nor those" includes students who replied other than "Definitely yes" to both questions.

- Degree holders with **standard enrolment age** are defined as those who entered the university when they were 19. For instance, a student who was born in 1985 (or later) and enrolled in a first-level or a single-cycle degree course in 2004/05 is to be considered having the standard age at enrolment. For **master's degree courses**, the standard age at enrolment has been set at 22 (on the assumption of totally regular educational careers both in secondary school and at university).
- As for the **individual examination grades**, both 30/30 and 30/30 with distinction have the same value (30).
- The **degree grade** is expressed on a scale from 1 to 110 even for pre-reform graduates of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Bologna (where grades were expressed on a scale from 1 to 100). The highest grade, 110 with distinction, has been set equal to 113 for the purposes of calculating averages.

- **Time-to-graduation** is to be referred to courses completed in 2012; for master's degrees only the two years pertaining to the master's programme alone are taken into consideration.
- The **duration of university studies** of each degree holder is given by the time interval between the conventional date of November 5<sup>th</sup> of the enrolment year and the graduation year. For master's degree courses, the time interval is calculated between November 5<sup>th</sup> of the enrolment year for the two-year final course and the graduation date.
- **Delay in graduation** of a degree holder is the extra time necessary to complete the course beyond its prescribed duration (for master's degree courses, it is the extra time needed beyond two years), and it takes into account the number of months and days passed between the completion of the university year (April 30<sup>th</sup>) and the graduation date.
- The **delay in graduation index** is the ratio between graduation delay time and prescribed duration of the degree course.
- **Student-workers** are degree holders who state they had a full time job for at least half of their university career, regardless of their overlap with classes. **Working students** are degree holders who had some work experiences during their university studies.
- The possible answers to the question "**Would you enrol on the university again?**" depend on the type of programme that has been completed.

### **First-level degree holders, single-cycle and pre-reform specialist degree holders**

*If you could go back in time, would you enrol on university again?*

- *yes, in the same degree course at the same university*
- *yes, in a different degree course at the same university*
- *yes, in the same degree course at another university*
- *yes, but in a different degree course at another university*
- *no, I would not enrol again at any university.*

### **Master's degree holders**

*If you could go back in time, would you enrol on university again?*

- *yes, in the same degree course at the same university*
- *yes, in a different degree course at the same university*
- *yes, in the same degree course at another university*
- *yes, but in a different degree course at another university*
- *no, I would not enrol again at any university.*

- The group of graduates intending to continue their studies with an academic degree (**Higher Artistic or Musical Training**) includes individuals who wish to earn a first- or second-level academic diploma or a research training qualification.

### **Other special classification patterns**

**Place of residence** is broken down into the following categories:

- Same province of the attended university;
- Other province of the same region;
- Different region;
- Abroad.

This classification takes into account the province in which teaching activities are based, regardless of the province in which the university has its main headquarters.

- As for the variable **educational qualification of degree holders' parents**, the parent with the higher qualification was taken into account and a distinction was made between situations where both parents, or only one, is a university graduate.
- Degree holders who have at least a "good" **knowledge of foreign languages** "native speakers", or claim to have a "very good" or "good" level of knowledge within a range of entries including also "fairly good", "limited" and "no knowledge at all" (both in writing and speaking).
- Among degree holders who have at least a "good" **IT skills**, many of them replied that they have a "very good" or "good" skills within a range of entries including also "fairly good", "limited" and "no skills at all".
- The Min. Decree (MD) 270/04 reorganised the degree course groups, which had been introduced by the Min. Decree 509/99, and it also matched the new degree-course groups (MD 270) with the old ones (MD 509). The two types of postgraduate degrees were divided into "single-cycle specialist degree courses" and "master's degrees", and they were changed names. The post-reform 2009 graduates belong mostly (more than 97%) to MD 509 courses. In the Graduate Profile Report, the distinction between graduates under the MD 509 and MD 270 courses will not be taken into account.