



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

---

Erasmus + project No. 585961-EPP-1-2017-1-AL-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP (2017 -2926/001 -001)

*Project Title:*

*“GRaduates Advancement and Development of University capacities in Albania”*

*GRADUA*

**REPORT**

**Best practices for internship promotion in Albania**

**(Enterprises and students survey, 2018-2020)**

Tirane 2021

*Project Title:*

*“GRaduates Advancement and Development of University capacities in Albania”*

**GRADUA**

**REPORT**

**Best practices for internship promotion in Albania**

**(Enterprises and students survey, 2018-2020)**

*Authors: Edmira Shahu, Drini Imami, Eglantina Kalluci, Edmond Dragoti, Alma Afezolli, Hyrjana Mocka, Megi Xhaxhi, Laura Uzeiraj, Mavina Istrefaj, Flora Krasniqi, Adela Danaj, Ketrina Cabiri, Elizana Petrela (Zaimi), Ilir Alihmehmeti, Aida Veliaj*

*"The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein"*

## Contents

Introduction .....	5
<b>PART 1 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recommendations and Conclusions.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.1 Enterprises recommendations and conclusions .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.2 Student’s suggestions and conclusions.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.3 Recommendations from universities.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.4 GRADUA Project recommendation for internship.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.5 Conclusions from Survey for the Internship during the pandemic period .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>PART 2 .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Enterprises’ Survey for the Students’ Internships .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>PART 3 .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Students’ Survey for the Internship.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>3.1 AUT evaluation of internships from students .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>3.2 TU evaluation of internships from students .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.3 PUT evaluation of internships from students .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>3.4 UMT evaluation of internships from students .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>3.5 EUT evaluation of internships from students .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>3.6 PU evaluation of internships from students .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>3.7 CUOLGC evaluation of internships from students .....</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>3.8 AU evaluation of internships from students.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>PART 4 .....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Students’ Survey for the Internship during the pandemic period .....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Part 5-Pjesa e pestë.....</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Hyrje.....</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>5.1 Rekomandimet dhe konkluzionet e ndërmarrjeve .....</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>5.2 Sugjerimet dhe konkluzionet e marra nga vrojtimet me studentët .....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>5.3 Rekomandime nga universitetet.....</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>5.4 Rekomandimi i projektit gradua për praktikën profesionale .....</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>5.5 Konkluzione nga vrojtimi për praktikën gjatë periudhës së pandemisë.....</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>154</b>

## Introduction

Internships have been traditionally considered as very important instrument to bring students closer to the (private) enterprises. Development of new study curriculum has typically reflected this importance, by offering substantial space to internships, usually in the last study program. There are several benefits that can be observed from internships. They can implement theoretical knowledge, tools, and concept acquired at university, thereby improving understanding of the knowledge from a more practical prospective viewpoint. Also, students can improve employability opportunities. It happens often, that, when students perform well during the internships, the hosting company provides them employment opportunity. Even in the case when this does not happen, students have better chances to find a job after successful conclusion of the internships, due to acquired experience, reflected in know-how as well as enriched CVs. Student internships enable more intensive interaction between supervising/coaching academic staff and host companies, which can give birth to joint interest for cooperation beyond internships, such as research on solving problems of the company, etc.

Taken in consideration all positive benefits from internships/professional practice universities have always tried to improve these processes. During the past decade the number of students is increased rapidly and this fact should have been accompanied by an increase in the number of agreements between universities and businesses. To this, GRADUA project has a specific focus on this regard. One of the work packages of the GRADUA project, consists on “*Creating sustainable University-Enterprise cooperation through capacity building dynamics*”. The WP is aimed to strengthen relations/cooperation with private enterprises and organize traineeships/internships in a more structured way, with more support, coaching and monitoring from the universities staff.

To have a good internship three components should collaborate with each other all the time: the universities, enterprises, and students. This was the reason that we decided to conduct surveys with enterprises and students, also to ask career offices for their suggestions.

### Organization of the report

The report is divided into 5 parts.

- Part one provides the recommendations and conclusions based on the studies/surveys conducted under GRADUA project.
- Part two provides the enterprise’s survey results about the students’ internships.
- Part three introduces eight special topics related to the evaluation of internships from students of each University.
- Part four provides a section dedicated to the progress of internships and problems encountered by students due to COVID19.
- Part five provides the recommendations and conclusions in Albanian language.

## PART 1

### Recommendations and Conclusions

#### 1.1 Enterprises recommendations and conclusions

One of the activities foreseen in this project, was to carry out a survey with enterprises regarding internships and employability, taking into considerations various sectors and areas of employment (corresponding to various disciplines).

Some of the conclusions and recommendations collected from the surveyed enterprises and meetings organized at UT and UMT are:

- There are different benefits from internships. The main perceived benefit is the “headhunting“ motivation – namely, companies see the internships as an opportunity to identify and recruit future employees. About 1/5 are more motivated by altruistic reasons – simply helping the students to develop their professional capacities. Interestingly, only 3 (or 6%) see the benefit of cooperation with qualified staff (e.g. professors who mentor students) as the main motivation – here there is space to improve.
- Organized internships can incorporate more active involvements of experts or academic staff, who through and in cooperation with students who are part of internships, can assist companies (to improve management).
- Business representatives claimed that students are generally correct when they engage in a company, but the time of professional practice is not always enough to successfully complete this process.
- Often internships last for short period, which is not sufficient for the students to acquire substantial professional experience or for the companies to benefit from the interns. It is understandable, that the first weeks, or even months, serve mainly to the purpose of becoming familiar and in the case when internships last for shorter period (shorter than 3 months), than there is no sufficient time for the interns to provide valuable contribution.
- More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the interviewees suggest that internships should be at least 3 month, of whom more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the sample prefer 6 months. Future internships should take into consideration such views or preferences.
- University structures, such as career orientation offices, play a crucial role to enable internships, in cooperation with the enterprises. However, also informal network, tend to play an important role (second category, as shown in table 8 below), which is quite understandable in the context of the local context, where informal networks are very important (in the case of Albania).
- Business representatives stressed that offering these opportunities to students can be considered an investment not only for them, but also for the company itself, moreover referring to the qualification of employees required in the construction field. On the other hand, they acknowledged that establishing links to enable professional practices to be implemented required commitment and time for the company's staff. So the companies are ready to support any

alternative, platform that would allow less commitment and cost, and more quality and professionalism to provide human resources.

- The opportunities that Albanian companies have to offer partnerships - Whether companies are satisfied with the engagement of students and should the Albanian companies have the capacity to offer a symbolic or full payment to students during their engagement in companies that offer partnership. Whether companies are satisfied with the engagement of students and should the Albanian companies have the capacity to offer a symbolic or full payment to students during their engagement in companies that offer partnership.
- The opportunities companies have to employ internship students beyond practice time. - On the ways companies use to notify students about the partnerships they offer. Regarding the issues raised, local companies are satisfied with student engagement in professional practices, but emphasized that companies engage their staff by consuming time and costs for providing students in conducting professional practices.
- Generally, they emphasized that finding students for realization of professional practices is carried out by the forerunners who have performed the company's precautions, but this is done after some contacts from the company's staff. On the other hand, representatives of financial institutions pointed out that the time for organizing the internships is enough, but they see no payment opportunities as long as they estimate that the students are learning and not offering their work in order to get paid.

## 1.2 Student's suggestions and conclusions

To have a more complete overview of the students' problems as well as a wide range of study profiles covering from universities included in this project, surveys were conducted at each university (Table 1.1).

*Table 1.1. The number of students survey for each university*

University	No of students
Agricultural University of Tirana (AUT)	254
Tirana University (TU)	146
Polytechnic University of Tirana (PUT)	263
University of Medicine in Tirana (UMT)	74
European University of Tirana (EUT)	43
Polis University (PU)	98
Catholic University Our Lady of Good Counsel (CUOLGC)	56
Albanian University (AU)	307
<b>Total</b>	<b>1244</b>

- The survey showed that students are very interested in doing internships abroad. But really only a very small number could.
- It resulted that the most influent obstacles to fulfil an internship abroad are related to the lack of information access, lack of the contacts and financial capacities. It should be mentioned that most of Albanian universities do not have any agreements with businesses abroad regarding the students' internship. This is a dimension to work on.
- It resulted that career offices must strongly improve their role on students' training, internship and employing issues. More specifically, these offices must improve their services ensure opportunities about internships, direct contact with the employer, more information on how to apply for studies abroad, and direct involvement of students on careers' offices activities.
- Yet, students do not feel the role of University's career offices, on finding an internship program. It is obvious that private contacts of the students, through its relatives, friends etc., are the most used method to find the internship.
- The majority of students search for an internship, one month before the internship period starts. Indeed, it is assumed that the more in advance is searched for an internship opportunity, the more chances students will have to find it.
- While the unpaid internship period is a concern, on the other side, students are effectively involved in the business' daily operations during their internship. In other words, internship programs are an effective part of the university's curricula.
- Students agreed that internship served as an opportunity to have a job offer. Thus, internships are an important gate to get into the employment market.
- Supervisors play a significant role on supporting the interns, along the period of the internship.
- Regarding the duration of the internship, the students generally agreed that it would take 3-6 months.
- While regarding the payment possibilities from the businesses, the students stated that they were not paid. Only very few cases are cited by students who admit that the business has paid for them.
- Most of the students have specified that the professional computer programs and the core courses have been useful during their professional practice
- Students who did not wish to complete a professional traineeship/internship abroad, claimed that was mainly because of financial reasons, but also because they were not interested.
- It is recommended to find alternative financial supports (i.e. mobility scholarships), besides the ones that the university already gives to students that go abroad, in order to motivate students to have these international experiences.
- There is a good collaboration between offices responsible for professional traineeship/internships (deans, study program coordinators, tutors, career office) at the University and students. General information, database of companies/institutions, personal assistance in finding a suitable company/institution and career counselling are the services that student feel are offered more.
- Although the students feel that there is still room for improvement mainly about the university contacts with the business companies and the individual career counselling.

- The “Career and Alumni Office” should support more students in finding the company/organization where they will pursue their professional traineeship;
- The university should organize more trainings and activities about applications in traineeships/jobs, since students find these activities very helpful;
- Conduct internships/study visits in some of the courses should be related to the labour market / field / profile;
- Students emphasize that practice should be developed over a longer period of time or have more than 1 professional practice during studies;
- The internship program should have more specific individual tasks;
- The internship period should be flexible or recognized as a professional internship other internships / internships developed at different times, prior to the dates set for the internship calendar.

### 1.3 Recommendations from universities

During the project implementation there were organized different activities, meetings and workshops, for different purposes – such meetings also served as an opportunity to exchange experiences, opinions and to provide recommendations that are relevant to the project scope (especially related to Career and Alumni Office and internships). The main recommendations are listed below:

- Encouraging students to practice in districts where they can have their families, through the implementation of cooperation agreements with companies / businesses / organizations in districts;
- The Career and Alumni Office to expand collaborations with the private and public sectors in order to provide more internship support;
- The Career and Alumni Office to provide more information on public calls and information / application channels for internship opportunities, internships and job opportunities;
- Lecturers and staff who may have contacts / receive information on professional practices in various institutions make connections with students through the Career and Alumni Office;
- Department / Practice Leader in collaboration with the assessor in the company to include more individual tasks in the individual internship program;
- The Department and the Career and Alumni Office to conduct some informative activities/meetings for the realization of professional practice during the last year of studies/year that the internship will take place;
- The Department and the Career and Alumni Office to create a database with sector companies, whether or not they have cooperation agreements, and make it available to students along with other internship materials;
- Department and Career and Alumni Office to organize more extracurricular activities and activities with field experts;
- The Department and the Career and Alumni Office to establish mechanisms to encourage student involvement in extracurricular activities being organized;

- The department should schedule reporting and consulting meetings between students attending internships and their leaders. As far as, several students declare that they did not have the support of the career office (16% of them declared as such), it means that the career office should increase the number of its members or should prioritize its agenda.
- The companies that recently are operating in the Albanian market started to develop specific programs dedicated to the students with the aim of employing them in the near future. Thus, the career office can start to collaborate with such companies in order to increase its efficiency and consequently creating the needed space in the company for the students.

#### **1.4 GRADUA Project recommendation for internship**

Following the workshops organized during the GRADUA project implementation phase, in two occasions, meeting held at Tirana University on December 2018 and the one held at Medicine University on October 2019, the main suggestions and recommendation in general terms, which can be mentioned, are:

##### **1. Provide interns with real work assignments**

In order to ensure a programme success, companies should provide interns with real work. Students and or graduates that are interns, should be doing work related to their major. It is a challenge activity but it is recognized by the organization as valuable.

If the organization/company goal is to convert the internship in employment contract, the organization should guarantee that there is a referee that provide real work assignments by checking job descriptions. Companies should organize as well a mentor orientation sessions. Enhance the work term!

##### **2. Orientation for all stakeholders**

It's important that everyone "be on the same page," so to enhance the communication between mentors and interns through orientation session for both. Orientations ensure that everyone starts with the same expectations and role definitions. This represent a good investment of time and effort.

##### **3. Provide interns with a handbook**

Handbook is crucial as a guide for interns, so to reach maximum knowledge about organization, rules and work to be done, eventually with a section regarding "frequently asked questions". Organizations can use its own website as a communication tool, with announcements, offers, and feedbacks from former interns.

On the other hand, the Universities should provide their students with handbooks; preferable an on line version that can be linked with the page of internship offers, published inside the University.

##### **4. Accommodation and relocation assistance.**

Are not many hosting organizations that can afford to provide accommodation (for free or reduce price) for interns, but organizations can receive a lot of appreciation if they do so or offer any kind of assistance toward housing expenses. If that's not the case, assistance in locating affordable housing is appreciated. For those students/graduates that should relocate to the job site, the prospect of finding affordable, short-term housing can be daunting. In order to make the companies internship offers more attractive, to find the best students/graduate as intern, than as employee, firms should try to increase the availability of affordable housing and have a broader pool of candidates (eventually by establishing rules for eligibility, etc. to avoid any perceptions of unequal treatment.

## **5. Offer scholarships**

The opportunity of a scholarship is a great way to recruit for internship program. Offering a scholarship can increase your pool of candidates with the desired qualifications.

On the other side, scholarship offered by University to its own students, can represent a tool to reward best students or disadvantages ones.

## **6. Companies intern manager or mentor**

In order to ensure a smoothly and stay focused on criteria for success, companies should have a dedicated manager or a dedicated mentor for intern programme. It is known that often the size and resources available to most internship programs mean that this is not always possible. A solution can be a short-term one: hire a graduate student (look for a student working toward an advanced HR degree) to be your intern, and put this college relations intern in charge of the daily operation of the internship program.

## **7. Career offices staff and faculty visits**

As a best practice, the universities should organize visits by career offices staff and faculty as a regular practice. The HEIs staff have relatively few opportunities to visit employer work sites to see first-hand the types of experiences that their students are getting. In this context, agreement between firms and universities should exist; the practice will enhance relationship among different groups involved.

## **8. Offer training outside classes**

Providing students short training, such as a computer language, or other skills areas represent a tangible way to show students you are interested in their development.

## **9. Ex-post internship feedback**

Feedback on the student's experience is crucial for both categories of stakeholders: universities and hosting organizations! It can be done through a permanent questionnaire on line (as in GRADUA Project case, the questionnaires for firms and students are available on line). Otherwise can be organized short

sessions of focus group with interns in hosting organization or in the sending one (e.g. University, Faculty, department, etc.). Can be assess as well their interest in be hiring by the hosting organization.

### 1.5 Conclusions from Survey for the Internship during the pandemic period

During academic year 2019-2020 while we were preparing the final report on student internships the Albanian society was faced with COVID19 – one of the first countries to be exposed and suffer from this pandemics. Most of the students had been designated to the institutions or companies where they would conduct their internships. To assess the internship process during this academic year, an online questionnaire was developed in July 2020. This questionnaire was also used to evaluate the level of information that students have about the GRADUA project. The main results are listed below:

- The share of students who were not at all informed about GRADUA project (36%) turned out to be almost the same as that of students who were fully informed (36.1%). The most important source were social networks (33%), and the less important source (26 %) was career office. It may be concluded that that one of the factors that has affected the relative low importance of career offices was the lockdown due to the pandemic.
- According to the survey results, 12% of the respondents did not carry out the internship, while 37% did so on partial basis. Apparently, many students could not find a company or institution to host them, and/or some companies were reluctant to host students for internships due to COVID19 situation
- 48% of the respondents claim to have carried out the internship at the company/institution facilities, 18% state that they did the internship online while 29% though a mixed approach.
- 27% of the surveyed students answered that they were at work during the internship period. As expected a large share (63%) of students who were employed during the internship period had done the internship at the same institution/company. Only 3.4% of the students who were not employed during the internship period were paid. Thus, internships are rarely paid, unless are combined with existing working relations.
- Comparing the information from the two different datasets (corresponding to two different years), students appear to be less likely to develop the professional skills during the internship. The percentage of students who agree or strongly agree that during the internship they had the opportunity to develop their professional capacities in 2020, is significantly lower when compared to 2019.
- In the case of AUT, based on 2020 survey, it resulted that the share of master students who received a job offer was much lower when compared to bachelor students (19% vs 45%). One possible explanation could be that master students are more likely to consider only highly qualified jobs, for which there was scarcity of available options during and due to Covid-19.
- The average evaluation of respondents for the internship was about 7.5 (SD=2.8, from 1 to 10), indicating an overall satisfaction related to the internship program, but lower than the evaluation during (pre-Covid-19) 2019 survey.
- It appears that online internships have been less effective

## PART 2

### Enterprises' Survey for the Students' Internships

#### Abstract

This report was prepared in the context of the GRADUA Project, which aims to support the advancement of graduates and development of higher education institutions (HEI)'s (higher education institutions) capacities in Albania through building a graduates' data platform for matching the educational supply and the demand for qualified labour, enhancing university-enterprise cooperation and building related institutional capacities in partner HEIs.

One of the activities foreseen in this project, was to carry out a survey with enterprises regarding internships and employability, taking into considerations various sectors and areas of employment (corresponding to various disciplines).

Since the early transition, Albanian economy has grown at high pace. Despite constant growth, industrial and trade performance still show lack of competitiveness of the economy. Among the key factors elements hampering competitiveness are lack of specialized and skilled labour force. According to the Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016, Albania ranks in the 93rd position of 140 countries, losing 4 places from 2012-2013<sup>1,2</sup>.

Strengthening the education system and its links to the labour market is expected to contribute towards reduction of unemployment, especially among youth, which is important also in the context of Albania's EU integration (Albania is a country in transition whose main priority is the EU integration). In order to strengthen the linkages and orientation of the education market towards the labour market requirements, it is necessary to monitor the employability of graduates across disciplines, sectors, and educational institutions. This is also the aim of the GRADUA project – to establish a platform to fill in this gap, including the use of the very important tool of “internships” by strengthening the scheme of internships in the context of different study programs, through strengthening cooperation with the private sector.

Internships have been traditionally considered as very important instrument to bring students closer to the (private) enterprises. Development of new study curriculum has typically reflected this importance, by offering substantial space to internships, usually in the last study program. There are several benefits, that can be observed from internships – they can improve employability opportunities, by bringing closer students (potential employees) with potential employers, while also contributing to achieving more

---

<sup>1</sup> Schwab, K., & Sala-i-Martin, X. (2016). The global competitiveness report 2015–2016, Geneva. In The World Economic Forum (Vol. 403, pp. 1-92).

<sup>2</sup> GRADUA (2018) Employment, skills and education in Albania, technical report.

intensive interaction between supervising/coaching academic staff and host companies, which can give birth to joint interest for cooperation beyond internships, such as research on solving problems of the company, etc.

In this context, Gradua project conducted a survey, to assess private enterprises views and perceptions about internships. The survey findings confirm that most enterprises are strongly interested in internships, and one major motivation is to identify future potential employees. There are different views or preferences about the length of the internships, but there appears that it should be at least 3 months, and preferably 6 months. However, that can vary by type of study program (eg. Bachelor vs Master) and type of studies and companies. The findings of this survey can serve as a useful guidance for universities when they design their internship programs.

### **Introduction and approach**

This report was prepared in the context of the GRADUA Project. The 3 year (2017-2020) GRADUA Project aims to support the advancement of graduates and development of HEI's capacities in Albania through building a graduates' data platform for matching the educational supply and the demand for qualified labour, enhancing university-enterprise cooperation, and building related institutional capacities in partner HEIs. One of the activities foreseen in this project, was to carry out a survey with enterprises regarding internships and employability, taking into considerations various sectors and areas of employment (corresponding to various disciplines).

Since the early transition, Albanian economy has grown at high pace. Despite constant growth, industrial and trade performance still show lack of competitiveness of the economy. Among the key factors elements hampering competitiveness are lack of specialized and skilled labour force. According to the Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016, Albania ranks in the 93rd position of 140 countries, losing 4 places from 2012-2013 (Schwab & Sala-i-Martin<sup>3</sup>, 2016; Gradua 2018<sup>4</sup>). Strengthening the education system and its links to the labour market is expected to contribute towards reduction of unemployment, especially among youth, which is important also in the context of Albania's EU integration (Albania is a country in transition whose main priority is the EU integration). In order to strengthen the linkages and orientation of the education market towards the labour market requirements, it is necessary to monitor the employability of graduates across disciplines, sectors, and educational institutions. This is also the aim of the GRADUA project – to establish a platform to fill in this gap, by using a combined set of tools to collect and process information about students and graduates' position in relation to the labour market. Another important tool, is to strengthen the scheme of internships in the context of different study programs, through strengthening cooperation with the private sector.

Being aware of the role and importance of the internships, in the context of the nature and objectives of our Project, it was necessary to conduct a survey, to assess private enterprises views and perceptions

---

<sup>3</sup> Schwab, K., & Sala-i-Martin, X. (2016). The global competitiveness report 2015–2016, Geneva. In The World Economic Forum (Vol. 403, pp. 1-92).

<sup>4</sup> GRADUA (2018) Employment, skills and education in Albania, technical report.

about internships. The survey was implemented in collaborate with Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tirana and share among the companies.

The questionnaire contains questions about the profile of the company, interviewee (profile, including education and role/position within the company), and aspects related to employment and internships. The sample consists of 65 enterprises. The data were entered into excel and analyses through descriptive statistics (e.g. tables and figures).

### **Analysis of the companies – profile**

The sample targeted enterprises operating in different fields/sectors, as shown in table 2.1 below. Most companies operate in production, construction, and trade (using the standard classification applied also by INSTAT).

*Table 2.1. The structure of the enterprise survey sample by sector*

<b>The main sector</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Production	11
Construction	9
Wholesale and retail trade	10
Financial activity, banking, insurance	6
Education and training	3
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	3
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2
Accommodation/hotels, catering, restaurants etc	4
Health services	3
Transport	3
Other such as: telecommunications, travel agency, agriculture, fishing forests, etc.	11

Source: Enterprise survey

In order to obtain informed opinion, the aim was to target senior management or key employees from the surveyed companies. Indeed, table 2.2 below shows the interviewees’ professional profile or position within the enterprises.

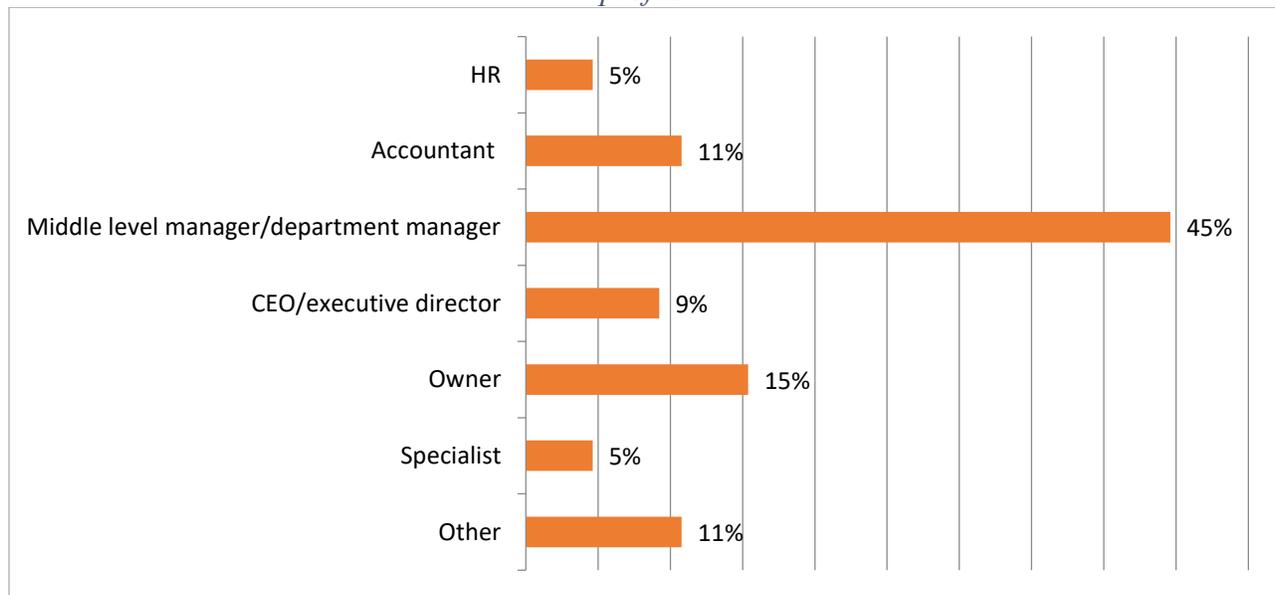
Table 2.2. Distribution of the enterprise survey sample by interviewees' position or professional profile

Position of the interviewee	Frequency	Percent
HR	3	5%
Accountant	7	11%
Middle level manager/department manager	29	45%
CEO/executive director	6	9%
Owner	10	15%
Specialist	3	5%
Other	7	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Enterprise survey

As the figure 2.1 below depicts, the sample was dominated by middle level managers, such as department heads. Overall, more than 2/3 of interviews are either high level managers or owners, which imply that most interviewees could provide informed answers.

Figure 2.1. Distribution of the enterprise survey sample by interviewees' position or professional profile



Source: Enterprise survey

Except for 2 interviewees (3% of the sample) all the other interviewees have university education.

Table 2.3 below shows the highest level of education achieved by interviewees.

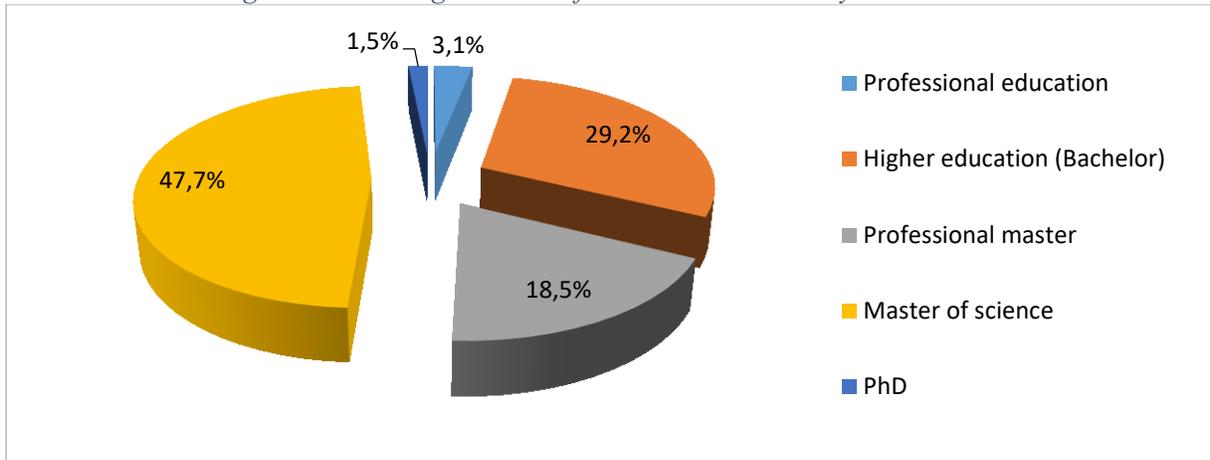
*Table 2.3. The level of education achieved by interviewees*

Highest achieved education	Frequency
Professional education	2
Higher education (Bachelor)	19
Professional master	12
Master of science	31
PhD	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>

Source: Enterprise survey

Figure 2.2 below depicts the highest level of education achieved by interviewees.

*Figure 2.2: The highest level of education achieved by interviewees*



Source: Enterprise survey

Less than half of the sample companies have limited local operations, in terms of offices or branches. Most companies have various branches within or outside Albania.

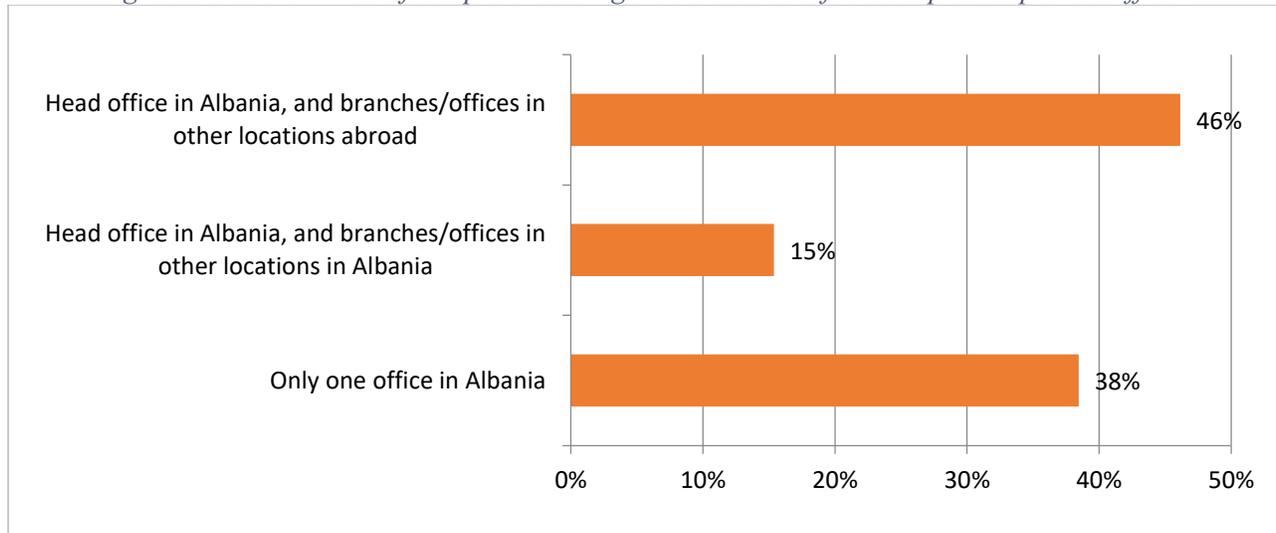
*Table 2.4. Distribution of sample according to the location of the sample companies' offices*

Location of the company	Frequency
Only one office in Albania	30
Head office in Albania, and branches/offices in other locations in Albania	25
Head office in Albania, and branches/offices in other locations abroad	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>

Source: Enterprise survey

More specifically, 38% of the surveyed companies have various branches within Albania and 15% have offices/branches outside Albania, as figure 2.3 below depicts. This distribution is related to the nature of sectors and size of the sampled survey – overall, there is a diversity of companies that have been included in the survey.

*Figure 2.3: Distribution of sample according to the location of the sample companies' offices*



Source: Enterprise survey

Another important aspect which reflects the size of the company but also the potential for hosting interns (for internship programs) is the number of employees. As table 2.5 below shows, most companies hire 10 or more employees, which imply that they are better positioned to hoist internship students when compared to small companies.

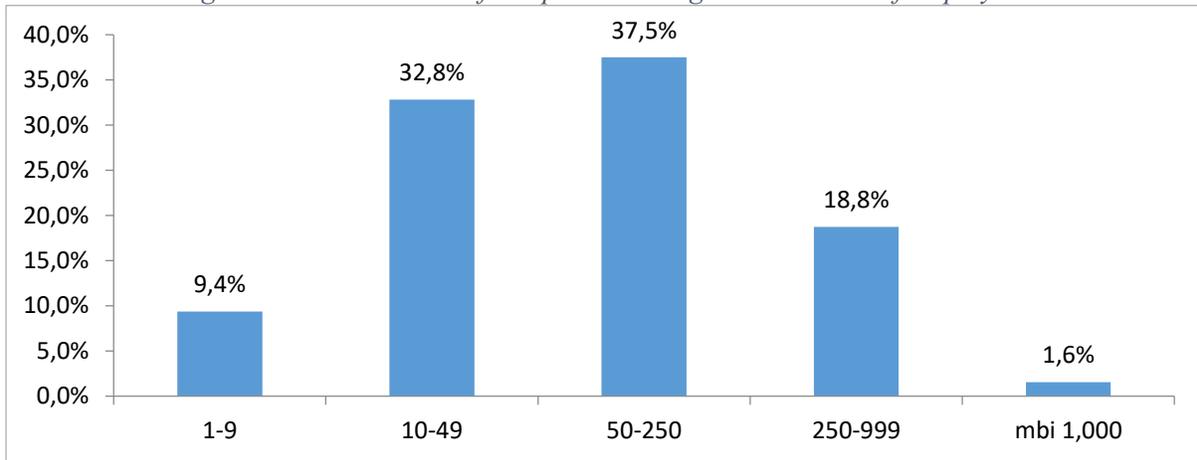
*Table 2.5 Distribution of sample according to the number of employees*

Number of employees	Frequency
1-9	6
10-49	21
50-250	24
250-999	12
1,000 and above	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>

Source: Enterprise survey

More specifically, Figure 2.4 below shows, that more than 90% of the companies hire 10 or more employees, and more than 20% of the sample companies employ more than 250 employees, which can be considered rather big – such companies can host multiple (many) interns (students) simultaneously.

Figure 2.4: Distribution of sample according to the number of employees

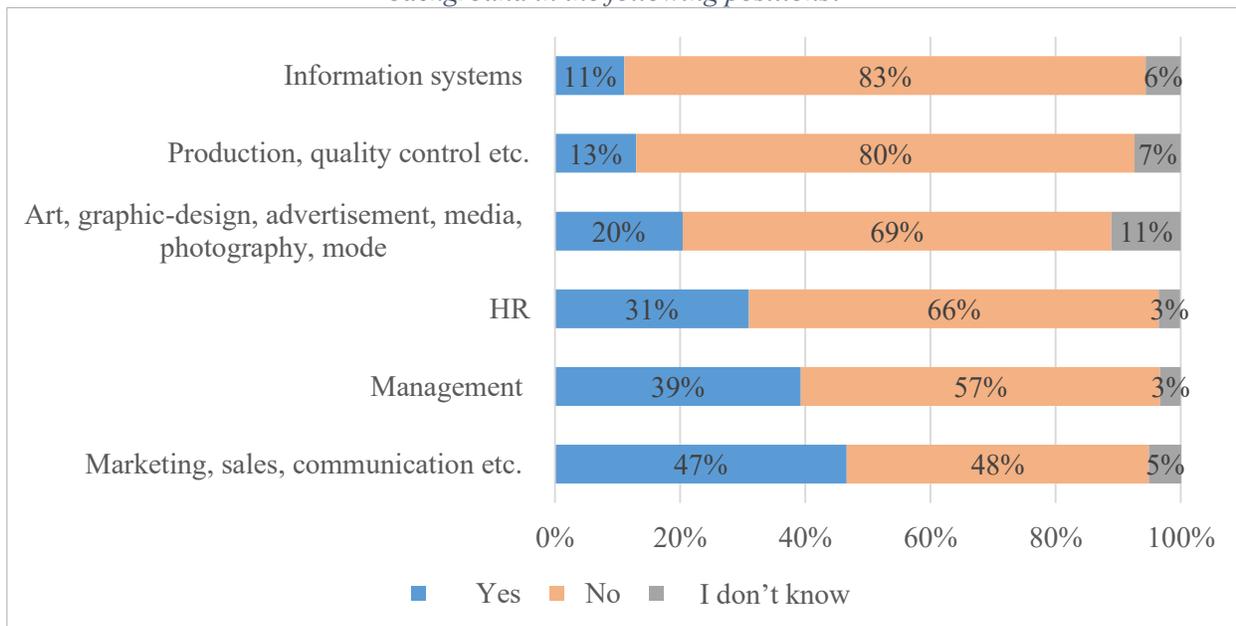


Source: Enterprise survey

Overall, there is observed a mismatch between demand and supply in the labor market. However, there is lack of systematic quantified estimation of such gaps, which Gradua intends to fill. In order to get some insight through this survey about the (miss) match, in terms of major (graduation) and type of job. The interviewees were asked if they employ staff to carry out tasks or work outside their study background (degree major).

As it is shown from figure 2.5 below, it is common for companies to employ staff without relevant study/university background in the sectors of sales/marketing, while this is rather rare in the case of Information Systems.

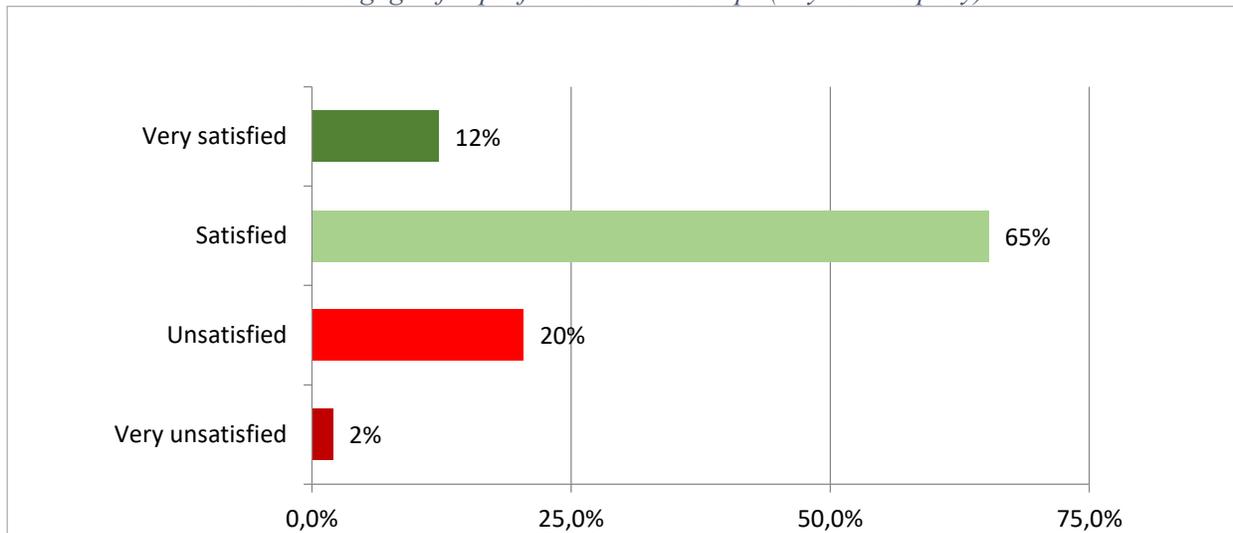
Figure 2.5: Answer to the question “do you have employees that work mainly or exclusively outside their study background in the following positions?”



Source: Enterprise survey

Most interviews state that they are satisfied with the students or graduates who are engaged for professional internships – only one interview states that he/she is not at all satisfied, as shown in figure 2.6 below. This implies/confirms the interest of the surveyed companies to further utilize or host interns (internships). thus, not only, that can be considered as indicative for the view other companies too (that were not part of the survey), but also, implies that the specific companies that have been included in the survey can be targeted to increase the number of students who are engaged in internships, especially those companies that state that they are satisfied with interns.

Figure 2.6: Answer to the question “In general, what is the level of satisfaction with the students or graduates who are engaged for professional internships (at your company)?”



Source: Enterprise survey

There are different views regarding the (perceived) benefits from internships. The main perceived benefit is the “head hunting” motivation – namely companies see the internships as an opportunity to identify and recruit future employees.

Table 2.6. The main perceived benefit from internships

Category	Frequency	Percent
Cooperation with qualified staff (professor or interns)	3	6.1%
Support graduates to develop their professional capacities	10	20.4%
Possibility of carrying out tasks for which there are no resources available, thus contributing to addressing human resources scarcities.	4	8.2%
Opportunity for update with innovation, know-how, methods etc.	4	8.2%
Opportunity to assess future potential employment of the students	22	44.9%
Direct understanding of the level of qualification	2	4.1%
Implement projects that cannot be implemented without internships	1	2.0%
Implementing/developing joint projects with universities 0	3	6.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Enterprise survey

About 1/5 are more motivated by altruistic reasons – simply helping the students to develop their professional capacities. Interestingly, only 3 (or 6%) see the benefit of cooperation with qualified staff (e.g. professors who mentor students) as the main motivation – here there is space to improve. Organized internships can incorporate more active involvements of experts or academic staff, who through and in cooperation with students who are part of internships, can assist companies (to improve management).

University structures, such as career orientation offices, play a crucial role to enable internships, in cooperation with the enterprises. However, also informal network, tend to play an important role (second category, as shown in table 2.7. below), which is quite understandable in the context of the local context, where informal networks are very important (in the case of Albania).

*Table 2.7. Answer to the question: “What are the channels of communication or cooperation to ensure internships at your company?”*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
Through university (e.g. career offices, other relevant offices or professors)	65%	35%	49
Through friends/acquaintances or other companies that host internships	31%	69%	49
Through public institutions or organizations who are involved with recruitments.	8%	92%	49
Through interns (students – e.g. direct contacts)	35%	65%	49

Source: Enterprise survey

The period of internship is very important. Often internships last for short period, which is not sufficient for the students to acquire substantial professional experience or for the companies to benefit from the interns.

*Table 2.8. Answer to the question: “How long should the internships be?”*

<b>Number of months</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
2 or less	11	23.4%
3	12	25.5%
3-6	5	10.6%
6	12	25.5%
12 or more	7	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Enterprise survey

It is understandable, that the first weeks, or even months, serve mainly to the purpose of becoming familiar and in the case when internships last for shorter period (shorter than 3 months), than there is no sufficient time for the interns to provide valuable contribution. More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the interviewees suggest that internships should be at least 3 month, of whom more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the sample prefer 6 months. Future internships should take into consideration such views or preferences.

## **Conclusions**

Unemployment is one of the major socio-economic challenges faced by the Albanian society, which is more common among young – unemployment is also one of the drivers behind mass migration. There have been observed a deep mismatch between skills demanded by the business and the ones provided by the workers has been occurring in Albania, mainly due to the education performance and structure, which has been causing gaps in the labour market.

Considering the above developments, the Albanian Government (AG) adopted an Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020 in order to achieve a competitive economy and an inclusive society that are built on: “Higher skills and better jobs for all women and men”. Great importance is attached to the linkage between employment and the VET system focusing the governmental actions on facing this challenge. Internships can serve as an important platform to strengthen cooperation between universities and the labour market.

This report was prepared in the context of the GRADUA Project, based on a survey with enterprises regarding internships and employability, taking into considerations various sectors and areas of employment (corresponding to various disciplines).

There are several benefits, that can be observed from internships – they can improve employability opportunities, by brining closer students (potential employees) with potential employers, while also contributing to achieving more intensive interaction between supervising/coaching academic staff and host companies, which can give birth to joint interest for cooperation beyond internships, such as research on solving problems of the company, etc.

The survey findings confirm that most enterprises are strongly interested in internships, and one major motivation is to identify future potential employees. There are different views or preferences about the length of the internships, but there appears that it should be at least 3 months, and preferably 6 months. However, that can vary by type of study program (e.g. Bachelor vs Master) and type of studies and companies. The findings of this survey can serve as a useful guidance for universities when they design their internship programs.

## PART 3

# Students' Survey for the Internship

### 3.1 AUT evaluation of internships from students



#### Introduction

Recently, universities are taking a new role to facilitate the contact of students with the market. However, Albanian universities deal with a several challenges on this issue. This is due to the lack of human resources that advise students to contact with the market (career advisors/mentor), high-level market informality, lack of cooperation between academia and employment market etc. This has led to the lack of data and information about students' internship and employment after they are graduated. However, referring the Career and Alumni Center (2019), 55% of students at Agricultural University of Tirana resulted employed on the moment they are graduated, and up to 62.6% of them are employed one year after their graduation. This is an inspiring figure considering the average rate of students' employment (roughly 52%) for Western Balkan Countries<sup>5</sup> (Bartlett et al., 2016), and the European countries (81% up to three years after their graduation) (EU union, 2019). However, not all Albanian universities has this figure. This is due to the lack of Universities' human capacities and or structures specifically dedicated to the students' career development.

Aiming to address about the university role on students' employment, is indisputable. This is due to that the highest is the students' employment rate, the more valuable is the diploma issued by university. In addition, this imposes that students are equipped with the right knowledge and skills to afford the requirements of the market.

Generally speaking, the first contact of the students with the market is along their internship period, which in turn might serve as a gate for the full-time job. To this, universities might play a crucial role on this, by advising, guiding, and providing the internship opportunities for their students.

In sum, although the importance of the university role on students' internships and later for their employment, there is a lack of researches and/or projects that examine and address these issues. To this, GRADUA project has a specific focus on this regard. Therefore, the aim of this report is to reflect the results of the GRADUA project about the internship program of AUTs' students.

#### **The role of AUT on facilitating the first contact of students with the employment market**

The vision of higher education institutions is education, postgraduate education, research, and professional training in order to provide to the market the right human capacities. Virtually, universities

---

<sup>5</sup> Albania, Serbia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo

aim to furnish the market with human resources, equipped with skills and knowledge required by enterprise, organizations, and public administration.

AUT's role for its students is in many dimensions but its foremost engagement is to support students' career development. Therefore, since 2013, part of the AUT structures is the Career & Alumni Center (CAC). CAC has five career offices, at each five Faculties, which has direct relationships with the students regarding their career needs. CAC through its five career offices serve as the mediator of students' first contacts with the employment market. To do so, CAC organizes each year the career fair. CAC continually facilitates direct contact with the businesses, organizing trainings, open lectures, workshops, internship opportunities, and providing information about other career development opportunities. In addition, through ALUMNI, students can maintain their relationship with AUT after their graduation, and furthermore, transfer their experiences to the other new generations. CAC has a small group of AUTs students, which are directly engaged on the activities organized by CAC.

## **Methodology**

In order to examine the issues foreseen on this report, a structured questionnaire was prepared. In order to assess the clarity of the questions and to check for biased or confusing questions, this questionnaire was subjected to a pre-test with academics and with five students, who were part of the target group. The final questionnaire was comprised of four sections: general information about the students, information about internship abroad, career offices, and the internship experience.

The questionnaire was administered to the students of five faculties at AUT, who were obligated to fulfill an internship program. Thus, the preliminary condition to select the target group was the internship program. Finally, a number of 1811 students, on third year of Bachelor level and to the second year of Master level, were targeted.

The technique used to gather the data were face-to-face interviews with the students who were targeted. Using this method, 260 face-to-face interviews were conducted, and thus, a response rate of 14.3%, is achieved. Finally, after purification of the data, 254 valid questionnaires were obtained using this technique.

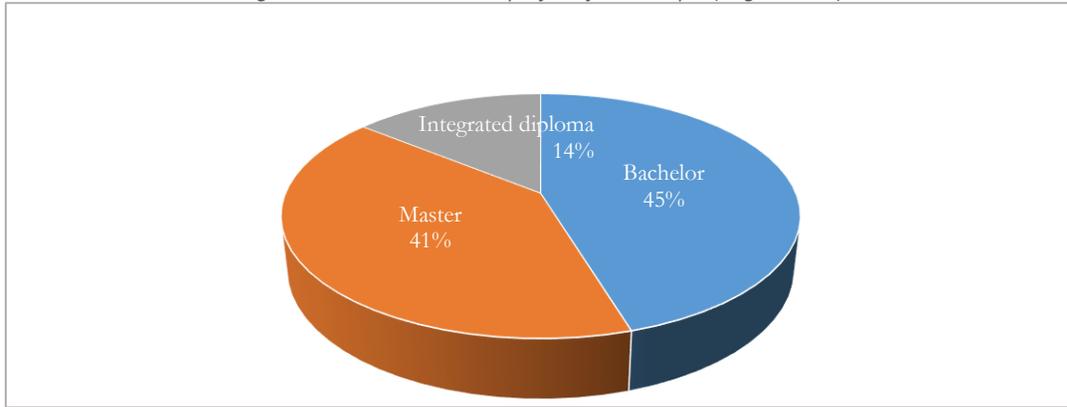
## **Results and discussions**

### **Participants' profile: the education background**

All students of Agricultural University of Tirana (AUT) were targeted. However, the final response rate of the survey was 14.3% (254 valid cases). All five Faculties at AUT represented the sample.

As indicated in the Figure 3.1.1, the major respondents (45%), had fulfilled the first level of studies (Bachelor), followed by Master level of studies (41%), and those who had completed an integrated diploma (14%).

Figure 3.1.1. The education profile of the sample (degree level)



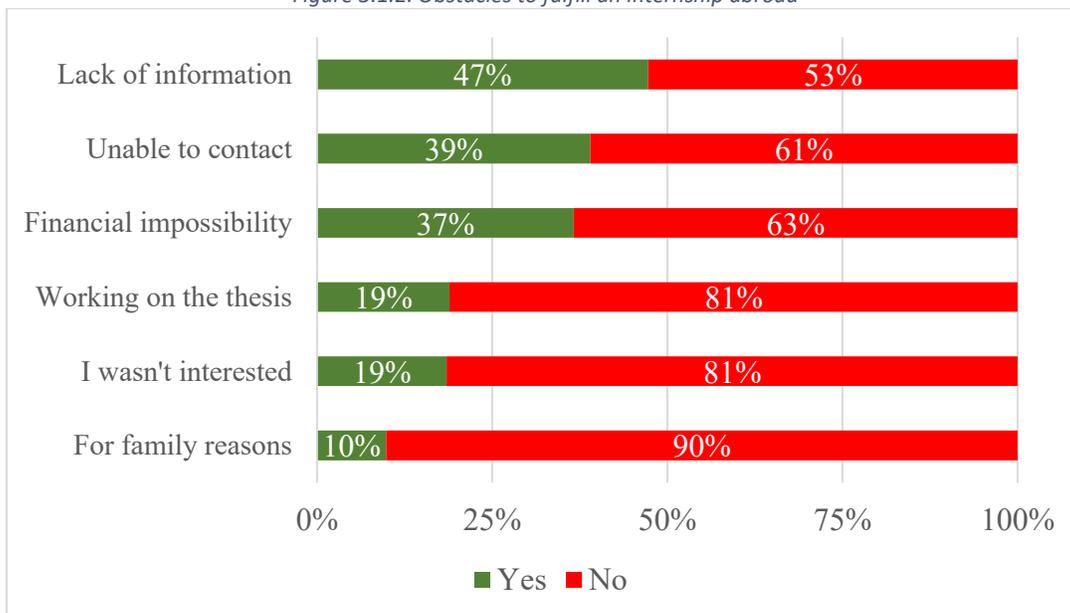
Source: AUT students' survey

### Obstacles for conducting an internship abroad

All participants were asked about the obstacles to fulfil the internship abroad. The valid cases was 254.

Through the first session, students were asked about the city where they fulfilled their internship. It turned out that 82% of them have developed the internship in the city of Tirana and its suburbs, while the rest did fulfill it in different cities, mainly in their hometowns. Only 3 out of 254 students claimed to have completed their internship abroad, mostly in the framework of Erasmus programs. However, up to 36% stated that to fulfill the internship abroad, is a positive opportunity. In addition to the issue of internship abroad, students were asked about the reasons/obstacles that has prevented them.

Figure 3.1.2. Obstacles to fulfill an internship abroad



Source: AUT students' survey

As shown in the Figure 3.1.2, the most influent reason is related to the lack of information access (47%). In addition, lack of the contacts (39%), and financial capacities (37), are determinants on the inability to fulfill an internship abroad. On the other side, obstacles such as engaged on the thesis writing (19%), family reasons (10%) and lack of interests (19%), are less influential.

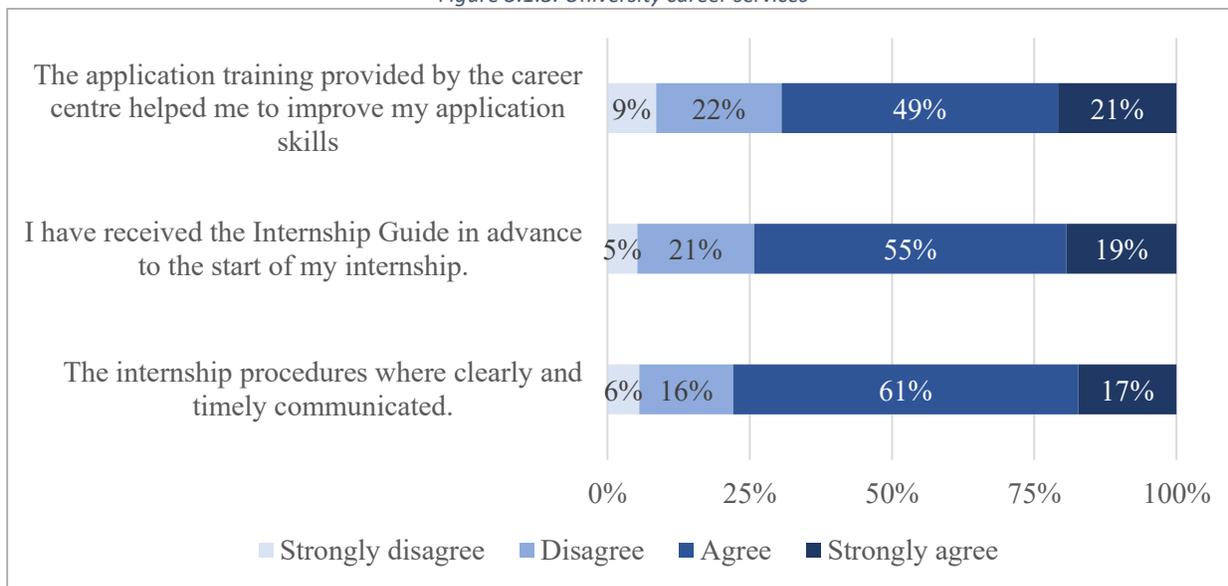
It is important to mention that AUT does not have any agreements with businesses, NGO and or public institutions abroad for the students’ internship. This is a dimension to work on. However, referring to the CAC (2019), there are several cases, when career offices has directly mediated the contacts between students and recruitment organizations, in order to facilitate students’ internship abroad. For example, along the year 2019, 8 students went to Italy, specifically at touristic resorts for their internship along a 3 month period.

### The role of AUTs’ career services for the internship

An important section of the questionnaire was about the role of the Career offices at AUT on supporting the students to find an internship opportunity. The career services are rated using a 4-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree to 4 being strongly agree (see Figure 3.1.3).

Roughly 78% of the participants agreed (i.e., agree and strongly agree) that career office has effectively communicated the internship procedure, while only 22% of respondents disagreed. In addition, up to 74% of the students agreed that career offices has guided them in advance about the starting time of the internship period. The trainings provided by the career offices has helped the most students (up to 70%), how to find and apply for an internship program. In sum, career offices has well performed on supporting students about internship programs.

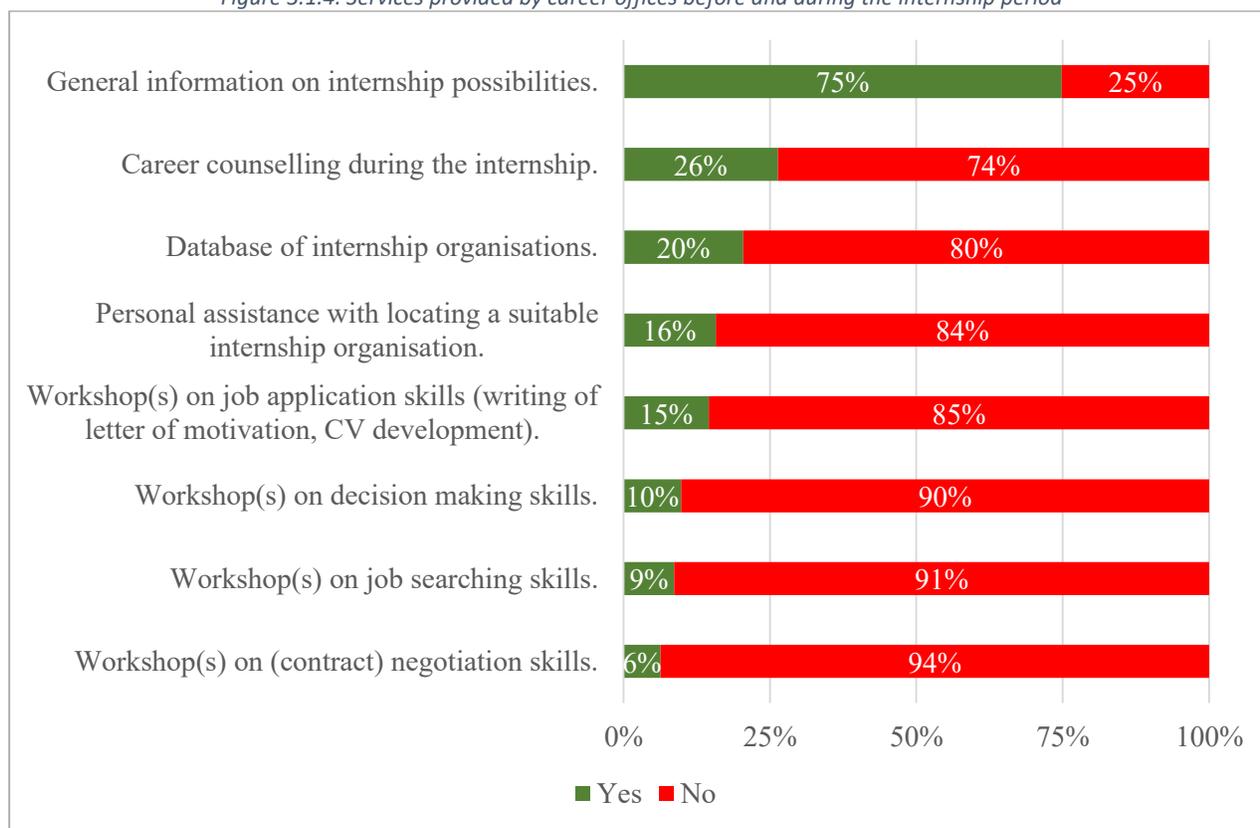
Figure 3.1.3. University career services



Source: AUT students’ survey

Although the general support of the Career offices, students that participated on the questionnaire were also asked about specific interventions of Career offices on helping them to find an internship program. As indicated on the Figure 3.1.4, students are not enough supported by career offices about specific topics such as contracting, decision making, searching and applying for a job etc. In addition, along the internship period, career offices are not effective on career advice in-group and/or individually. The most worst perceived performance of career offices are about the lack of workshops on the topics of how to search and apply for a job, negotiations skills and decision-making processes. However, while in career offices are perceived as not supporting students about specific issues, on the other side, most respondents (75%), answered that these offices does provide the general information about internship possibilities.

Figure 3.1.4. Services provided by career offices before and during the internship period



Source: AUT students' survey

It is important to note that the AUT Career and Alumni Center in collaboration with the career offices of each faculty in the last 3 years has developed 5 workshops to improve students' ability for job's application, make decisions, write a CV, etc.. But often students remain indifferent to these activities. Also, most of the study programs offered by AUT have in their curriculum in the third year of bachelor level the Career Management module as an optional one.

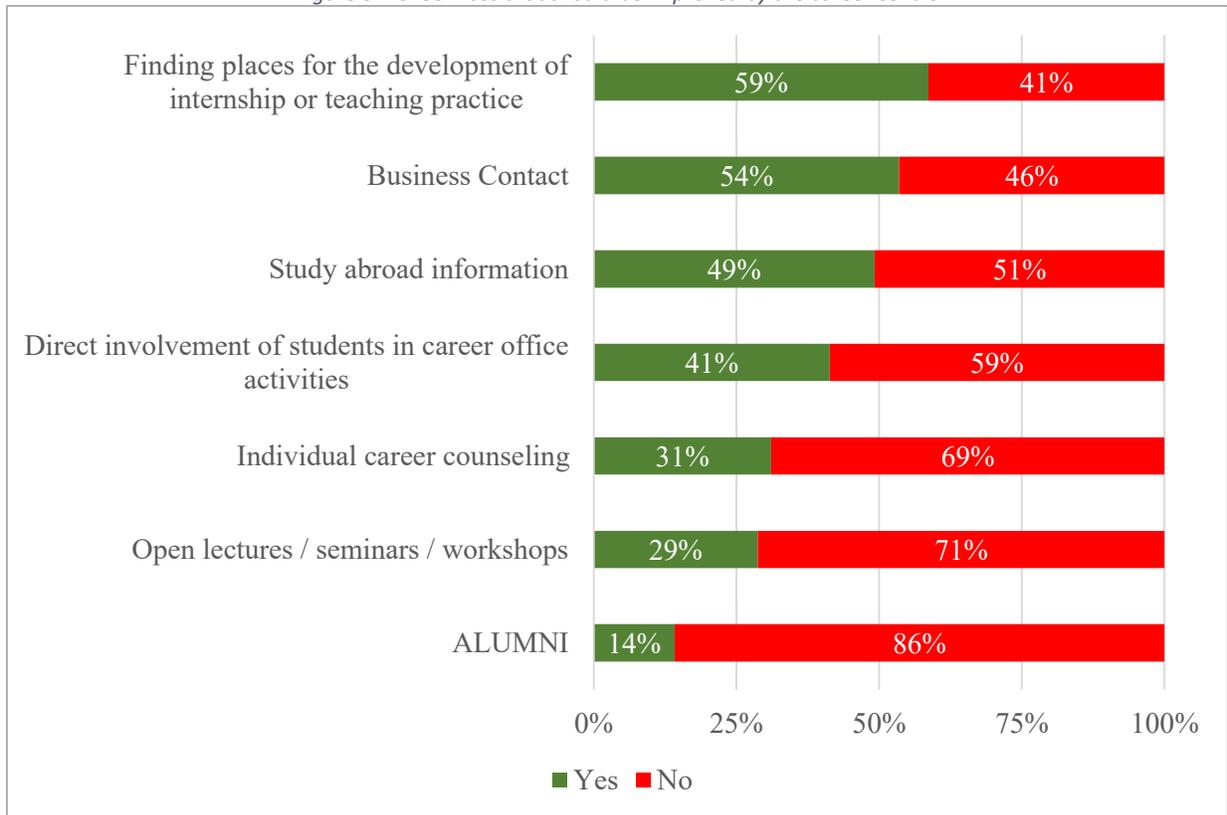
During this module, students will explore information for a wide number of problematics listed below:

- Definition of Career planning, self-assessment to reveal weak and strong points.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) preparation. Preparation techniques- Uses of CV, types of CV, CV Contents, Samples of CV, Cover Letter Design Purpose.

- Preparing for interviews process (preparing-managing-practicing)

Responding participants were also asked about the Careers' offices services (figure 3.1.5). The majority (86%) of them stated that services about the Alumni is not necessary to be improved. This is obvious because this issue is not directly related to their actual interests. On the other side, up to 59% of respondents required intervention on services that ensure an internship opportunity (59%), direct contact with the employer (54%), information to apply for studies abroad (49%), and direct involvement of students on careers' offices activities (41%).

Figure 3.1.5. Services that should be improved by the career centre



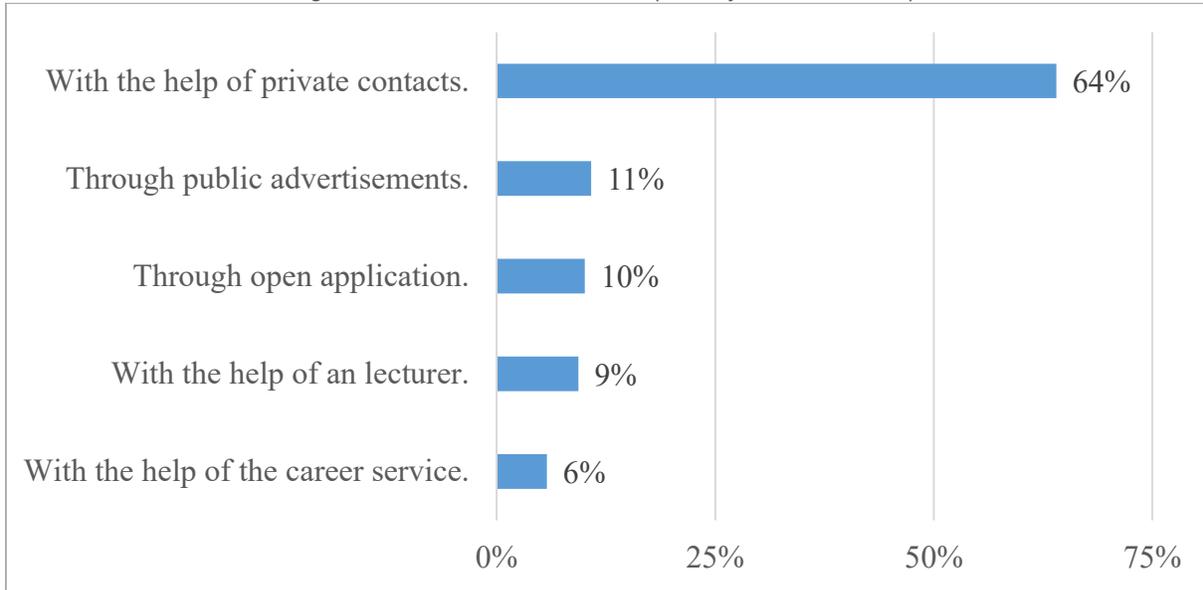
Source: AUT students' survey

Up to the 75.6% of the students that responded to the questionnaire, required that career offices should add training activities on their services package, while 24.4% considered as not necessary. Although its efforts, it's seems that career offices must strongly improve their role on students training on the internship and employing issues.

### Students' internship

About 64% of respondents stated that through their private contacts found the internship opportunity. The rest of the respondents (out of 254), stated that other sources such as career offices, lecturer support, open application, and public advertisement, served as the opportunity to find the internship (see Figure 3.1.6).

Figure 3.1.6. Sources that students exploit to find their internship

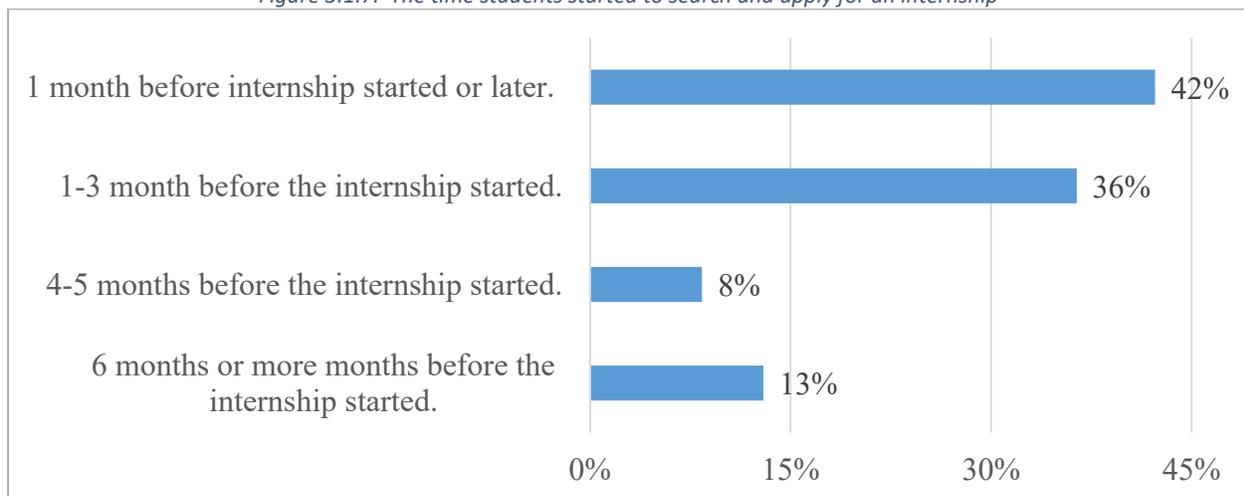


Source: AUT students' survey

Again, it resulted that students are not virtually supported by University's career offices to find an internship program. It is obvious that private contacts of the students, through its relatives, friends etc., are the most used method to find the internship.

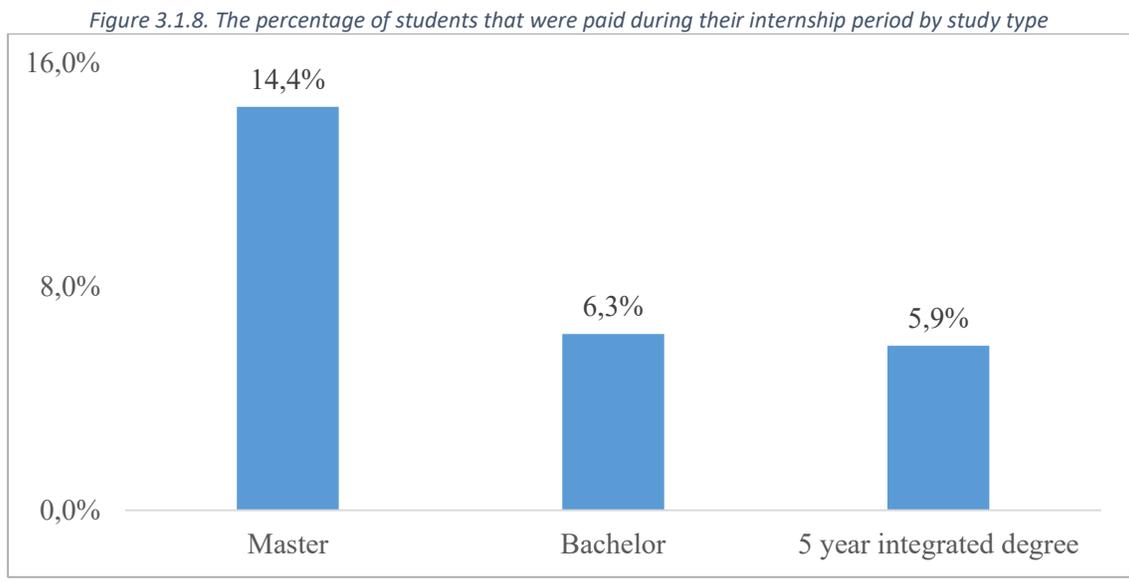
Regarding the time when students started to search and apply for an internship, the majority of respondents (42%) stated that up to 1 month before the internship period starts, followed by 36% of respondents who apply roughly 1-3 months before the internship period starts. The rest of the students' participants declared that starts to search and/or apply for an internship more than 4 months (21%) before the internship virtually starts.

Figure 3.1.7. The time students started to search and apply for an internship



Source: AUT students' survey

It resulted a concern the unpaid internship period. Thus, based on 242 responded to this question, the majority of respondents (90%) stated that along the internship period they are not paid at all, while only 10% of them are paid. But when we analysed this question by study type, we found that the percentage of master students that are paid (14.4%) during the internship period was greater than the percentage for bachelor students (6.3%) (Figure 3.1.8).



Source: AUT students' survey

Participants are also asked about another important dimension of their internship period. More specifically, they were asked about their engagement along the period of the internship. Their opinion was rated using a 4-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree to 4 being strongly agree. As indicated at the Figure 3.1.9, it resulted a strong positive feedback about the effective involvement of students along the internship period. In other words, internship programs are an effective part of the university's curricula. More specifically, up to 87% of the students agree and strongly agree that university has given the necessary theoretical knowledge to succeed the internship. Major respondents agreed that along the internship period, they had the chance to apply their skills (89%) and knowledge (86%) gained at the university. To this, some of the courses, part of the study programs (curricula) that resulted valuable for the internship period, were Vegetables, Orchards, Field crops, viticulture and subtropical plants, wood processing, Tourism Basics, Tourism Management, Human Resource Management, Joinery Design, Rural Development Extensions, Finance and Accounting, Public Administration etc.

Up to 67% of the respondents stated that they had the opportunity to manage their own project. In addition, internship has strongly served as an opportunity for direct contact and interaction with the potential employer. Thus, participants stated that their employer has had regular check upon their progress and development (82%), appreciation when they had good performance (94%), and effectively integrated in the regular work process of their internship (94%).

Some of their strength along the period of internship, were commitment, collaborative attitude communication skills, convincing skills, organization, dealing with clients, correct and accurate on-time, attentive, determined, teamwork, ambition etc. On the other side, students stated some of their weakness such as lack of experience, lack of the right knowledge, dealing with new methods of work process, untrained, lack of information, lack of security, use of economic applications.

Figure 3.1.9. Students' involvement on the working process along the internship period



Source: AUT students' survey

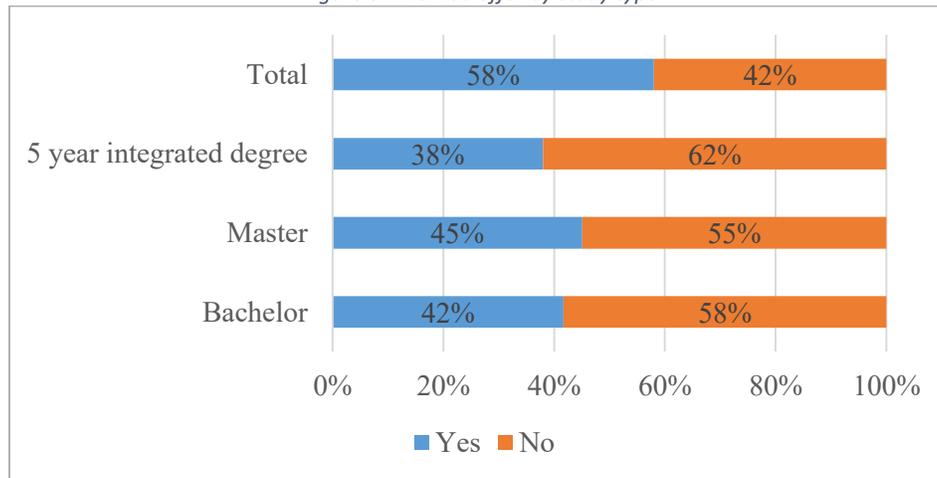
This study examined also the students' opinion about the importance of the internship program. Their opinion was retrieved using a 10-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly unsatisfied to 10 being strongly satisfied. For this question, we had 192 valid responses. It resulted that the average evaluation of respondents was about 8.7 (SD=2.006), indicating a good satisfaction from internship program.

While discussing about the internship programs, it is indisputable to examine if these programs served as a gate to get a full-time job. In this vein, students that participated on this study, were asked if they received any job offer from the organization where they did the internship. Thus, roughly 58% of the respondents, did not receive any employment offer, while the rest (42%) received an employment offer. Considering the study level of those responders who received an employment offer along the internship program, it resulted roughly the same for those at bachelor level (42%) and master level (45%) (Figure 3.1.10). This is due to that the majority of students did find the internship by their relatives, which means that they will have a great probability to receive an offer for employment. In addition, recently most of

the companies are trying to recruit students at the Bachelor level, because they aim to equip and inject into them the right culture that fit to the objectives of the company.

In addition, participants were asked also, if they would like to be employed on the same profile of the job as the organization where they fulfilled the internship. Results indicated that the majority did agree on this (87%), and the rest wanted a different employment profile (13%). Those that wanted to be employed on the same profile of the job as the organization where they fulfilled the internship, stated as follows: *I want to be employed to the same company because I found I can do it; because I understood the process; it is what I want what; I like because it matches my profile; I feel good with the staff; I have experience on this field etc.*

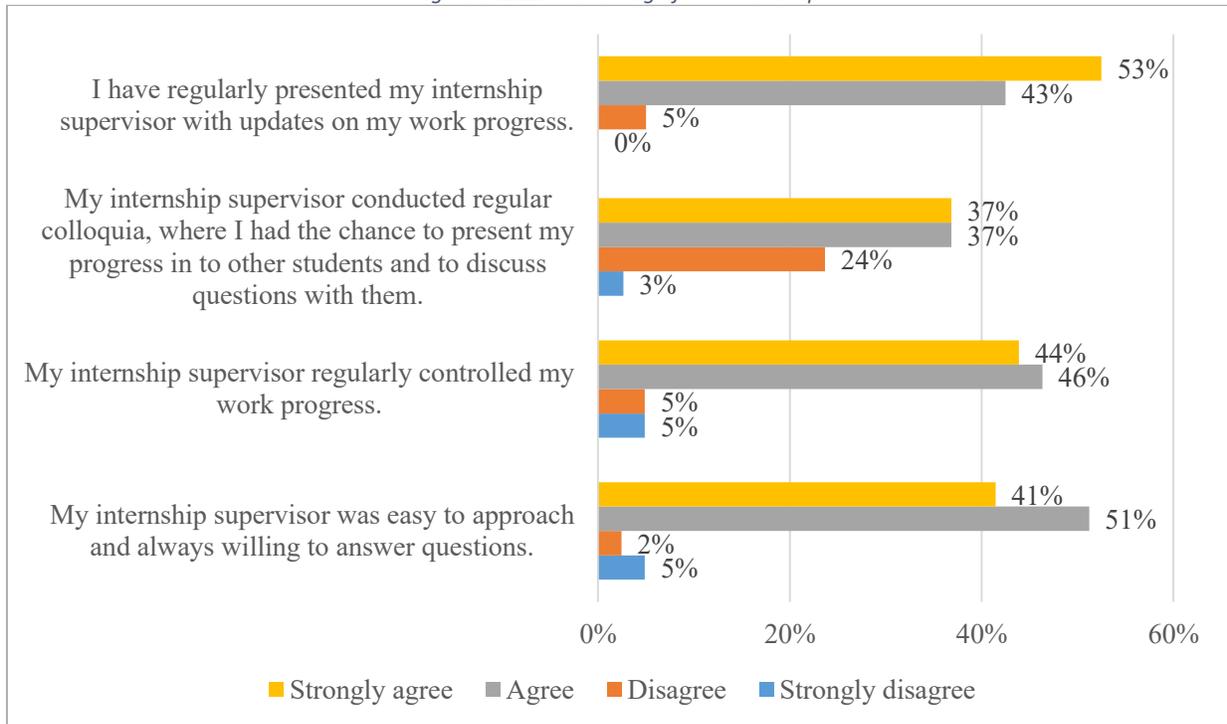
Figure 3.1.10. Job offer by study type



Source: AUT students' survey

Although the students' performance at the internship, it is of the utmost importance to examine the supervisor of the students along the internship period. In this framework, participants on the study, were asked if they had a supervisor from university. Up to 214 of the students, responded. Interestingly, the majority of responded did not have a supervisor (80%). Secondly, the rest of responded that had a supervisor from university for the internship (20%, n=43), agreed and strongly agreed for their positive role (see Figure 3.1.11). Thus, participants answered that their supervisors were ready to respond to their needs, to control their progress, promote them, and read the prepared reports about the internship. Up to 96% of them have regularly presented their internship progress to the supervisors. In addition, 92% of respondents stated that their supervisor was willing to answer to their questions.

Figure 3.1.11. Mentoring of the internship



AUT students' survey

## Conclusions

Although the importance of the university role on students' internships, and later for their employment, there is a lack of researches and/or projects on these issues.

AUT has a dedicated structure to the students' career development. CAC through its five career offices serve as the mediator of students' first contacts with the employment market.

However, it should be noted that career offices do not have full competences about the internship process. Students formally has to deliver information and documents at their respective department.

AUT has a high percentage of students employed after one year they are graduated. This is an inspiring figure considering the average rate of students' employment (roughly 52%) for Western Balkan Countries, and the European countries (81% up to three years after their graduation).

It resulted that the most influent obstacles to fulfill an internship abroad are related to the lack of information access, lack of the contacts and financial capacities. It should be mentioned that AUT does not have any agreements with businesses abroad regarding the students' internship. This is a dimension to work on.

While in career offices are perceived as not supporting students about specific issues (e.g., organizing workshops, specific information about an internship opportunity etc.), on the other side, most respondents

(75%), answered that these offices play a significant role on providing the general information about internship opportunities.

It resulted that career offices must strongly improve their role on students' training, internship and employing issues. More specifically, these offices must improve their services ensure opportunities about internships, direct contact with the employer, more information on how to apply for studies abroad, and direct involvement of students on careers' offices activities.

Yet, students do not feel the role of University's career offices, on finding an internship program. It is obvious that private contacts of the students, through its relatives, friends etc., are the most used method to find the internship.

The majority of students (42%) search for an internship, one month before the internship period starts. Indeed, it is assumed that the more in advance is searched for an internship opportunity, the more chances students will have to find it.

While the unpaid internship period is a concern, on the other side, students are effectively involved in the business' daily operations during their internship. In other words, internship programs are an effective part of the university's curricula.

For 42% of interns, internship served as an opportunity to have a job offer. Thus, internships are an important gate to get into the employment market.

Supervisors play a significant role on supporting the interns, along the period of the internship.

## 3.2 TU evaluation of internships from students



### Entry

Ever since Albania embarked on the path of democracy, the labour market has gained its true meaning and has put the phenomenon of unemployment at the forefront of Albanian society. To combat this phenomenon, each government undertakes passive policy programs and develops active labour market policy programs. The difference between them is that the latter are more understandable to implement and require greater commitment, monitoring, and evaluation to measure their success. Active labour market policies are diverse ranging from job brokering, job counselling and information services, employment promotion programs, self-employment, small and medium business promotion policies, vocational training, prevention and regulatory policies to youth etc. In the face of this reality, the government plays a major role in the formulation of these policies, represented by the Ministry covering the field of employment. The Ministry is responsible for drafting general national employment strategies to reduce unemployment and job seekers. General national employment strategies need to take into account the changing reality so over the years there have been times when a strategy did not reflect the programs, ways, steps for employment of young people, it does not have a national youth employment policy, which may to be another cause for the phenomenon of young people leaving Albania.

### Reflection on practice

Donald Schön (1983) suggests that the capacity to reflect on practice as a continuous learning process is one of the critical features of professional practice. Reflective practice is a way to study your experiences, to improve the way you work. This will help you understand what you are doing and why you are doing it. Involving a continuous reflective practice will help you improve the quality of your work and fill the gap between theory and practice.

Developing your ability to reflect on practice is an important part of learning during practice and you will be helped to perform this task by the Practice Supervisor: supporting to critically reflect is an important aspect of supervision. There are many models and tools available online that promote the development of reflective practice.

### Phases of the Report

This report is organized in three phases:

Phase one: Getting acquainted with similar assessments made earlier and specifically, three are listed:

- 1) Identification and selection of similar studies, reports, and evaluations.
- 2) Study of the employment of graduate students in the FNF, started in 2016 and on.
- 3) Employment strategy for graduate students at the University of Tirana (2013-2016).

Phase two: Completion of the questionnaire "On student satisfaction during professional internships" from a random selection of students from all study programs offered by the University of Tirana.

Phase Three: Spreadsheet and graphical processing of the data obtained from the questionnaire and compilation of a detailed analysis of the results obtained.

### Results of the questionnaire

Students' demand for the development of a professional internship as part of the curriculum has always been increasing, dictated by the demands of employers for increasingly specific tasks. This has led to the inclusion of professional internships to a greater extent in the study programs offered by the University of Tirana.

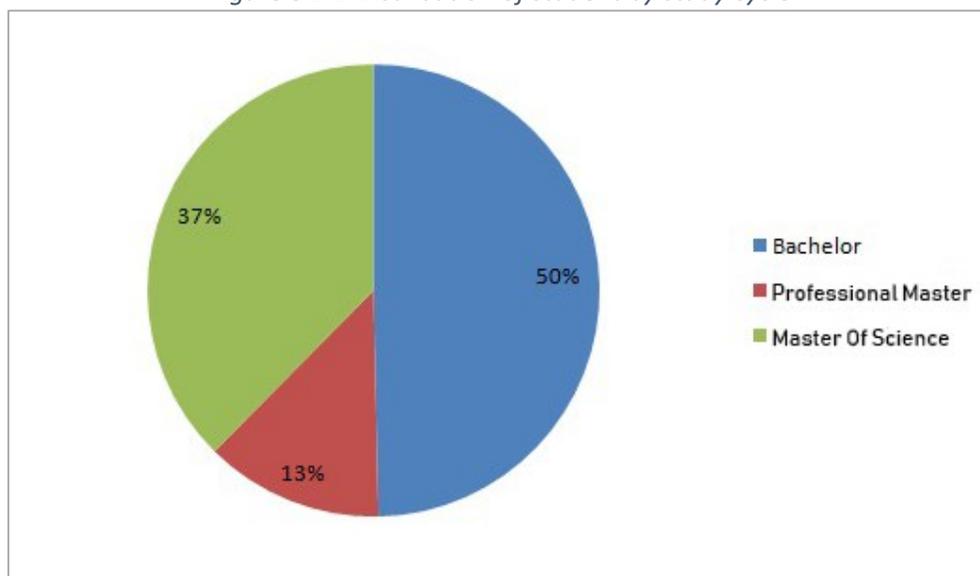
For this questionnaire a random sampling of 100 was assigned to the questionnaire according to the guidelines provided in the trainings conducted under the GRADUA project. In our case, 149 students completed a random distribution from its six faculties. The questionnaire was completed via an on-line application over a period of 2 months and the database (material attached) was obtained. The questionnaire is closed, so one of the alternatives should be selected.

Table 3.2.1. Distribution of student by study cycle

What is your study cycle? (Bachelor / Master)	Frequency
Bachelor	74
Professional Master	19
Master of Science	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>

Source: TU students' survey

Figure 3.2.1 Distribution of student by study cycle



Source: TU students' survey

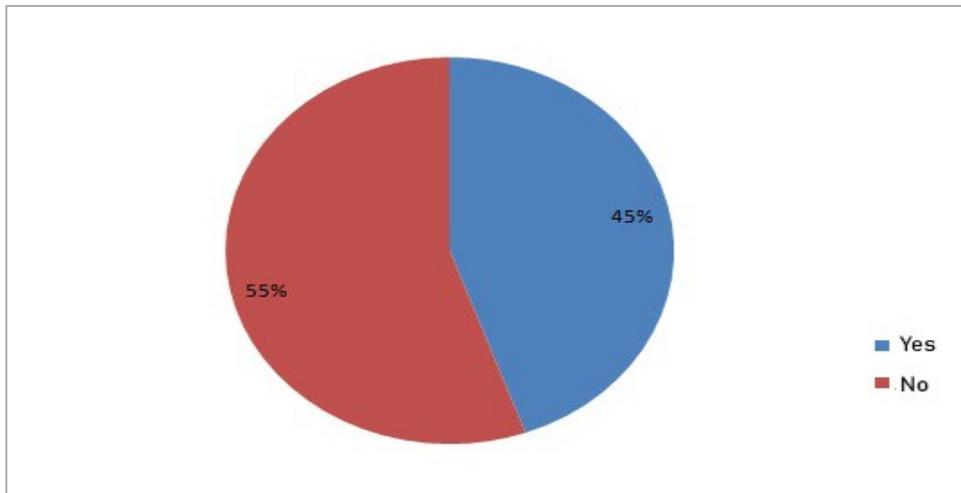
The figure above shows the distribution of students according to the study cycle they are following during the survey. 50% of the students attend the first cycle of studies, the bachelor, and 50% of the respondents follow the second cycle of studies, respectively 37% attend the master's degree and 13% the professional master's degree.

Table 3.2.2. Have you ever considered doing professional practice/internship outside of Albania?

Have you ever considered doing professional practice outside of Albania?	Number of students
Yes	65
No	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>

Source: TU students' survey

Figure 3.2.2. The percentage of students that have considered to do professional practice/internship outside Albania



Source: TU students' survey

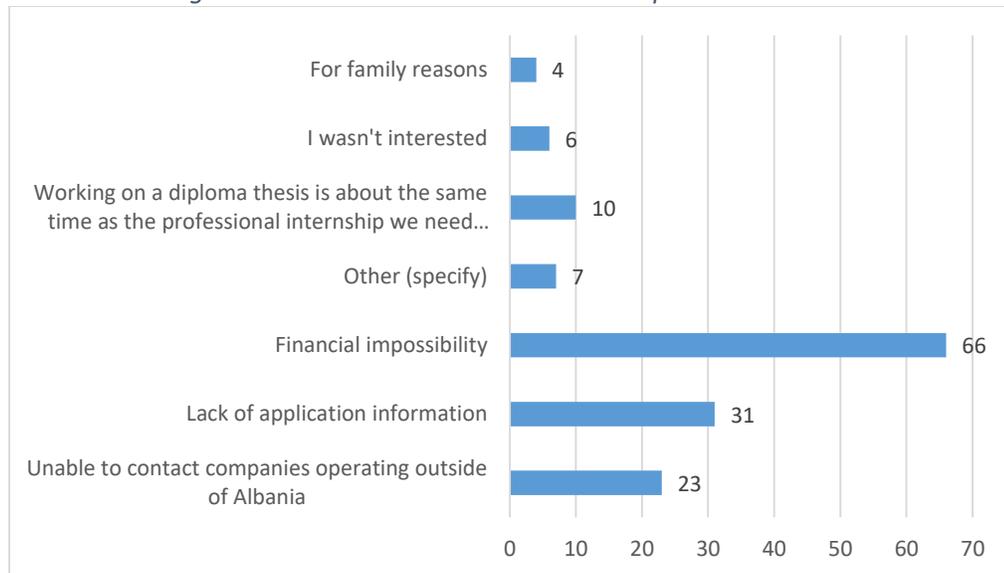
In the figure above, more than half of the respondents, 55% of students consider to do professional practice abroad.

Table 3.2.3. The reasons for not doing an internship abroad.

Please explain why you chose not to conduct your professional practice outside of Albania?	Number of students	Percentage
Unable to contact companies operating outside of Albania	23	15.64626
Lack of application information	31	21.08844
Financial impossibility	66	44.89796
Other (specify)	7	4.761905
Working on a diploma thesis is about the same time as the professional internship we need for contact with the leader.	10	6.802721
I wasn't interested	6	4.081633
For family reasons	4	2.721088
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: TU students' survey

Figure 3.2.3. Obstacles to do an internship abroad



Source: TU students' survey

In the table above we have a list of the reasons students have stated that they would consider doing internships abroad. Financial impossibility is the major specific burden as the main obstacle to not doing so. The second reason is the lack of information as an obstacle for not doing so, 18% of students have chosen this alternative. The third reason is the inability to get in touch with companies operating abroad, with 13% of students claiming this option. The rest of the students stated that they were not interested or

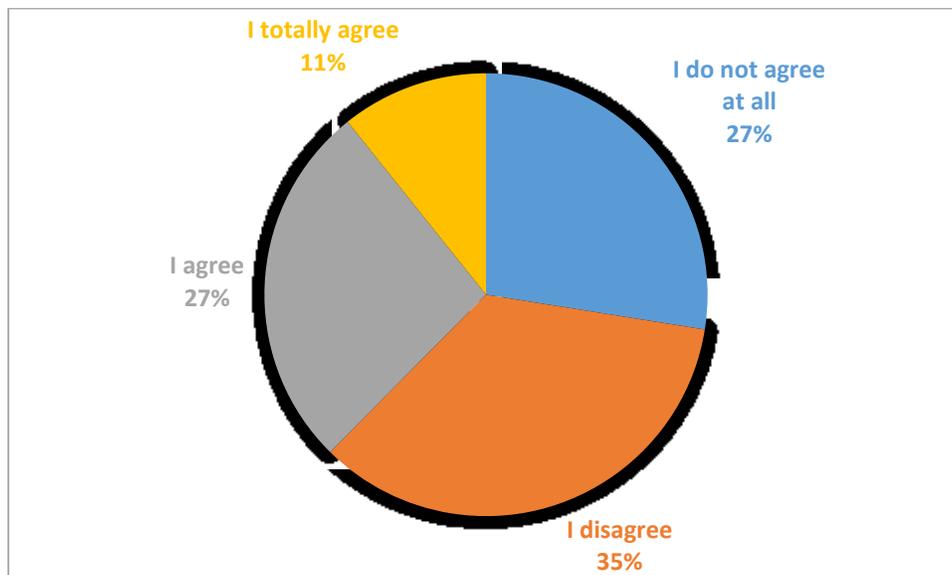
had family reasons or obligations to the study program as an inability to conduct professional practice abroad.

Table 3.2.4. Answer to the statement: “The procedures for providing professional internships at your university are timely and very clearly communicated”.

The procedures for providing professional internships at your university are timely and very clearly communicated.	Frequency
I do not agree at all	41
I disagree	52
I agree	40
I totally agree	16
Total	149

Source: TU students’ survey

Figure 3.2.4. Answer to the statement: “The procedures for providing professional internships at your university are timely and very clearly communicated.”



Source: TU students’ survey

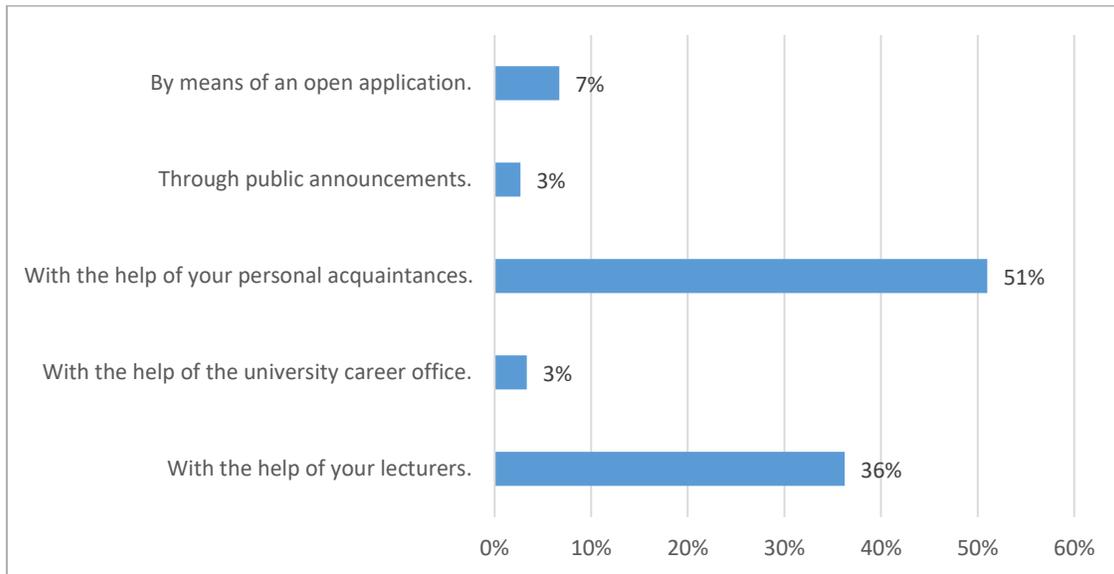
According to the data presented in the figure above, there are differences of opinion among respondents regarding the procedures for providing professional internships by the university, and disagree on the timing of communication, also stating that these procedures are unclear. The majority of students surveyed 35% disagree and 27% disagree with the above statement. The rest agree with the assertion.

Table 3.2.5 Sources that students used to find the company/institution for their internship.

Answer to the question: “How did you find the company/institution in which you conduct internship?”	Frequency
With the help of your lecturers.	54
With the help of the university career office.	5
With the help of your personal acquaintances.	76
Through public announcements.	4
By means of an open application.	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>

Source: TU students’ survey

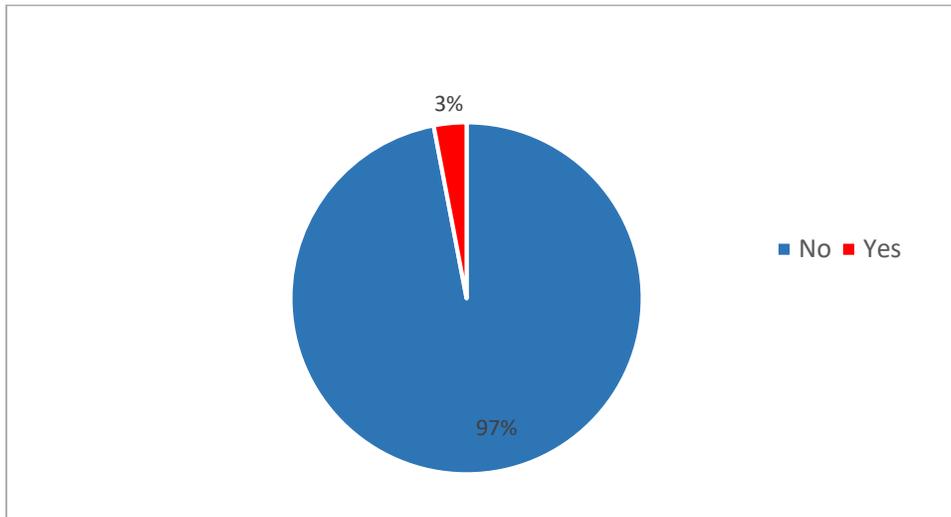
Figure 3.2.5. Sources that students used to find the company/institution for their internship.



Source: TU students’ survey

Students have the greatest chance of finding a company to carry out their professional practice through personal recognition, and this claim holds the highest weight in comparison to other claims, with 51% of respondents. The second option is the help provided by student lecturers, which is reported by 36% of students. Very few students receive information or opportunities in other sources such as career office, open applications, and public announcements.

Figure 3.2.6. The percentage of students that were paid during their internship

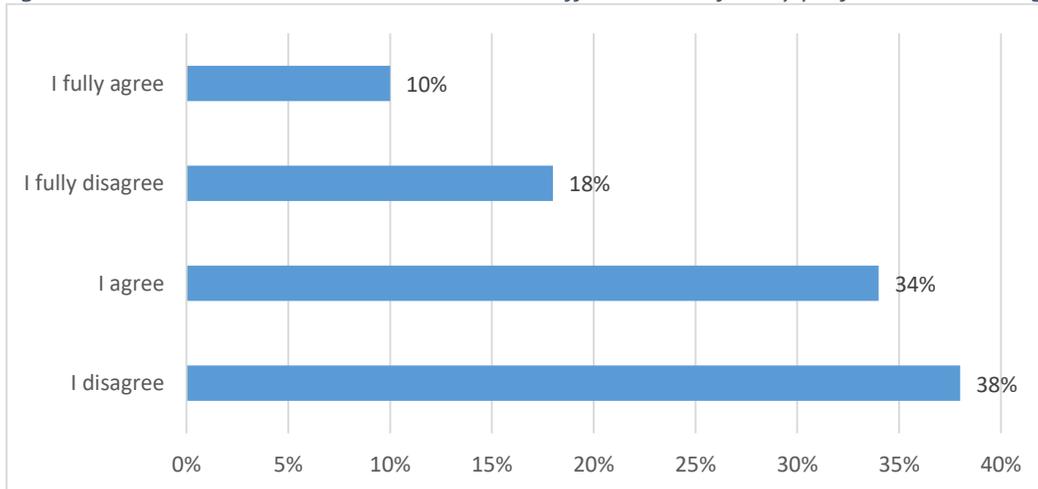


Source: TU students' survey

97% of students claim that they were never paid while performing professional practice by the relevant institutions.

*(note): For the Academy "Practice/inernship" is not a job - it is a professional opportunity where the student learns how to "think and act". Students need to understand what it means to be a professional, which includes demonstrating professional behavior as well as absorbing the role they play in a welcoming environment.*

Figure 3.2.7. Answer to the statement: "It was offered to me for my professional training"



Source: TU students' survey

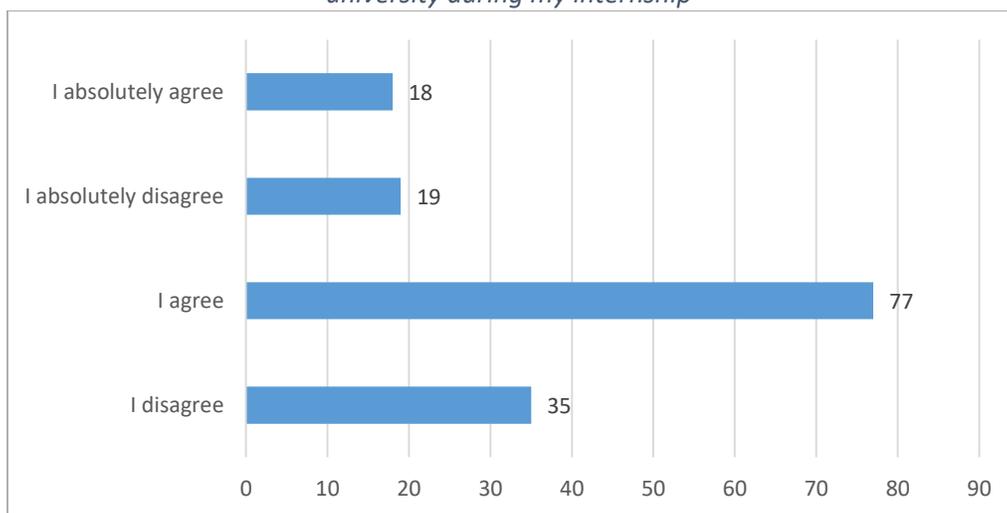
34% of students interviewed agree with the statement of providing numerous opportunities while doing professional practice and 38% disagree with this statement by not giving us the opportunity to state whether or not professional practice offers multiple opportunities for professional development. Taking into account even those students who have completely or completely disagreed with 48% disagree and

52% agree that even in these figures we cannot state whether the internship itself offers opportunities for students.

*(note): Some of the most important knowledge, habits, skills, and abilities acquired during the implementation of a future professional education program are reached outside the auditorium. Field education, also called internship, or field work, is a very important part of the training and education program. This is a chance for students to test their knowledge, make "mistakes" in a supportive environment, learn and be tested, as well as find orientation in a variety of career opportunities and face different challenges.*

77 out of 149 students interviewed stated that during the internship they had the opportunity to apply the professional skills acquired at the university, which increases the guarantee of validity of contemporary networking concepts.

Figure 3.2.8. Answer to the statement: "I had the opportunity to apply my professional skills that I gained at university during my internship"



Source: TU students' survey

*(Note): The purpose of field education is to combine the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of fieldwork. The field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on the criteria students show in achieving program competencies.*

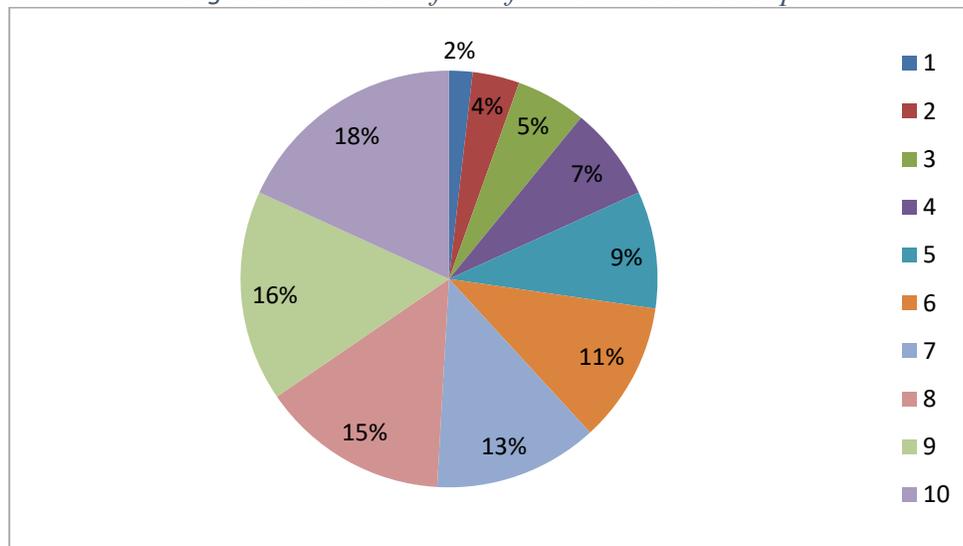
Students have identified concrete study programs that are directly related to their practical skills, both in accordance with the branch in which they studied and the institution in which they developed the internship. In reference to some of the elements mentioned above they rate the satisfaction of professional practice as follows:

Table 3.2.6. Level of satisfaction with internship

Answer to the question: “How satisfied are you with your professional practice/internship?”. (1 being completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied)	Frequency
1	19
2	6
3	9
4	12
5	17
6	8
7	13
8	24
9	20
10	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>

Source: TU students’ survey

Figure 3.2.9. Level of satisfaction with internship



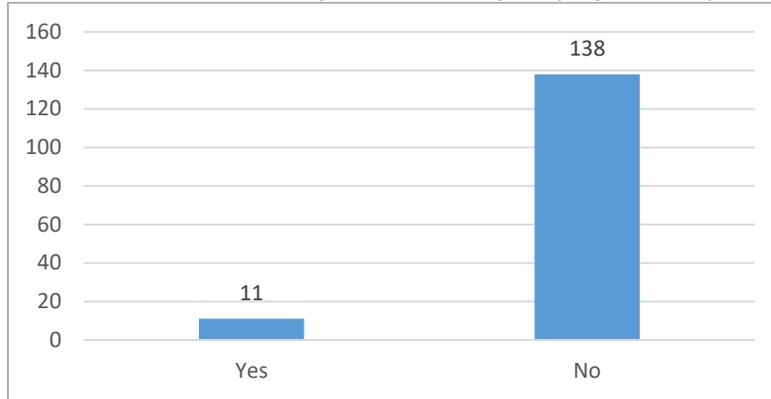
Source: TU students’ survey

During the internship the students were able to evaluate their performance in relation to the professionals in the institutions where they conducted the internships and were able to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the intern.

Nearly all students (138 out of 149) did not receive a job offer to work in a full-time / full-time position, from the organization or institution where they completed their professional internship. Such a fact

actually demotivates students for professional accountability and makes professional practice seen as a curriculum rather than a regular employment opportunity.

Figure 3.2.10. Answer to the question: “Have you received any job offer/full time job offers, from the organization/institution where you have done your professional practice?”



Source: TU students’ survey

Student satisfaction with the supervisor or leader of professional practice is assessed as follows, with 1 being completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied. If we analyze the data it turns out that 36 out of 149 students are completely dissatisfied and 35 out of 149 unanswered.

Table 3.2.7. Satisfaction level related to internship supervising/supervisor

Answer to the question: “How satisfied you are with your professional practice supervisor?” (1 being completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied).	Number of students
<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>
2	2
3	2
4	2
5	9
6	3
7	11
8	14
9	16
10	19
<b>No answer</b>	<b>35</b>

Source: TU students’ survey

It is worth noting that this situation is due to the lack of legitimate professional practice. Universities themselves have cooperative agreements with institutions or enterprises in which students do internships, but cannot oblige these enterprises to make available a leader or supervisor so that intern students are guided in the most professional manner.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

The professional practice or internship is a way to study the student's experiences, to improve how they should work. This will help them understand what they are doing and why they are doing it. Involvement in a continuous reflective practice would help to improve the quality of the work and fill the gap between theory and practice. In summary, the conclusions obtained from this study conclude in these recommendations and conclusions for the two target groups:

**Higher education institutions** and in particular the departments, which are responsible for the development and the improvement of bachelor and master curricula, should include in the plan-programs of the programs they offer "Professional practice" and should maximally commit to providing these practices through pre-signed institutional arrangements setting out the terms, obligations, and objectives of both parties, so that professional practice does not become just a formalization documentation, but on contrary it should serve as a starting point for further employment. This study shows that 51% of students enable professional practice through their personal acquaintances.

**The student** must show seriousness and dedication during the process of performing professional practice as it is performing professional practice as it is planned in order for him/her to understand the importance of the knowledge gained, to acquire the skills necessary for further professional education outside the auditorium. The education in the ground is as important as it is the one obtained in the university auditorium. This is a change for students to test their acquired knowledge, make "mistakes" in a supportive environment, learn and be tested, and find their orientation in a variety of career opportunities and facing with the labour market. An important problem highlighted by all students involved in the study is the organization of teaching and vocational practices. Their level of organization and performance is far from the purpose for which they are embedded in study programs. A deep and centralized operation must be undertaken to find the right paths, which would enable the organization and realization of valuable practices in view of the goals for which they are carried out.

### 3.3 PUT evaluation of internships from students



#### **Introduction**

The career counselling is a new concept in Albania, especially in the Higher Education Institutions. At Polytechnic University of Tirana, taking in consideration the polytechnic profile it has, has taken slow but firm steps towards three main pillars:

- Connecting students with the labour market.
- Dynamic development of the curricula complying with the labour market demand.
- Training and internships organized by PUT for the students in accordance with their practical needs.

During this process we have faced several challenges due to the some factors generated by internal and external developments for example: the gap of cooperation between enterprises and students, the lack of human capacities and infrastructure to be more present among students, etc.

The working group appreciates the data outcomes from this survey in order to improve the services we offer and to identify the most important best practices aiming at promoting and increasing the quality of university traineeships and improving students' employability and to understand which actions could be carried out by PUT to fulfill the gap between enterprises' needs in terms of human resources and newly graduates' skills and competences.

#### **The role of PUT on facilitating the first contact of students with the employment market**

The mission of PUT is to offer counselling and monitor the academic career development of the students. It offers services aiming the optimal integration of the graduates in the labour market and undertakes initiatives that create vacancies for qualified jobs.

It has been a few year that part of the Rectorate of PUT's structure is also the Career Office, a functional and active office which takes care to coordinate the counselling and orientation for the students of the 7 faculties of the institution.

The role of PUT on facilitating the first contact of students with the employment market consists in planning and monitoring several activities serving to the students and alumni.

Through the career office are organized trainings and workshops that help students to acquire the competences they need to make the first presentation with the enterprises; more specifically they are trained how to write a CV, a Motivation Letter, What is the communication during a job interview, How to become more employable in the labour market etc.

Another important role of the Career Office is to create and keep the relations with the enterprises through mutual activities such as the annual Job Fair and develop further this cooperation with activities of mutual benefit including internships and scientific research activities.

### Methodology

The questionnaire received by the coordinator of GRADUA Project, was administered to the students of seven faculties at PUT, who were asked to fulfill this questionnaire in order to express their satisfaction level for the internship program which is compulsory as part of the study program.

The target group was composed by roughly 555 students, on third year of Bachelor studies level, to the second year of Master level and also the last year of the Integrated Master.

The technique used to gather the data was face-to-face interviews with the students who were targeted. Using this method, 263 face-to-face interviews were conducted, and thus achieve a response rate of 47.3%. The same valid number of questionnaires was obtained even after the data cleaning (263).

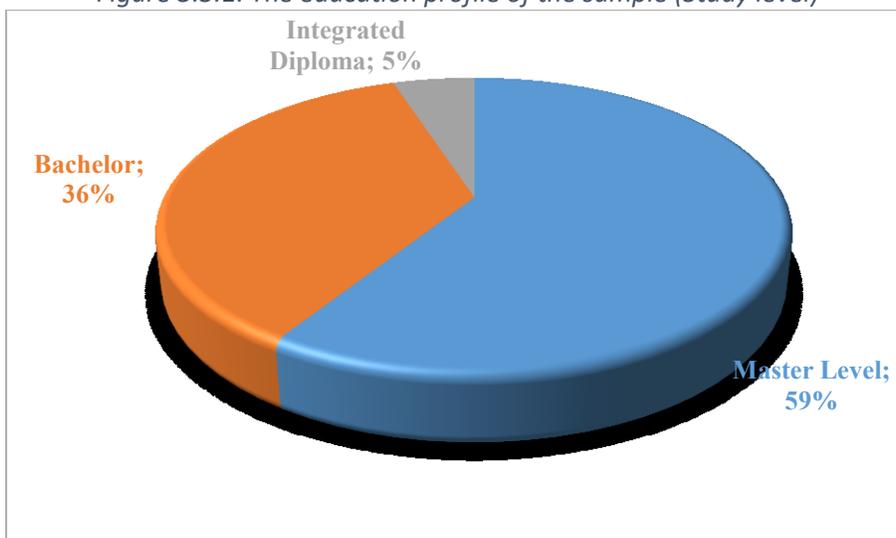
### Results and conclusions

#### Participants' profile

All third year of Bachelor studies level, to the second year of Master level and also the last year of the Integrated Master were targeted. This survey was representative for all the 7 faculties of PUT.

As shown in Figure 3.3.1 the major respondents are from Master Level (59%) followed by Bachelor Level (36%) and those who were completing an Integrated Diploma (5%). The low level of respondents from Integrated Diploma is due to the fact that PUT as institution offers only 2 integrated study programs.

Figure 3.3.1. The education profile of the sample (Study level)



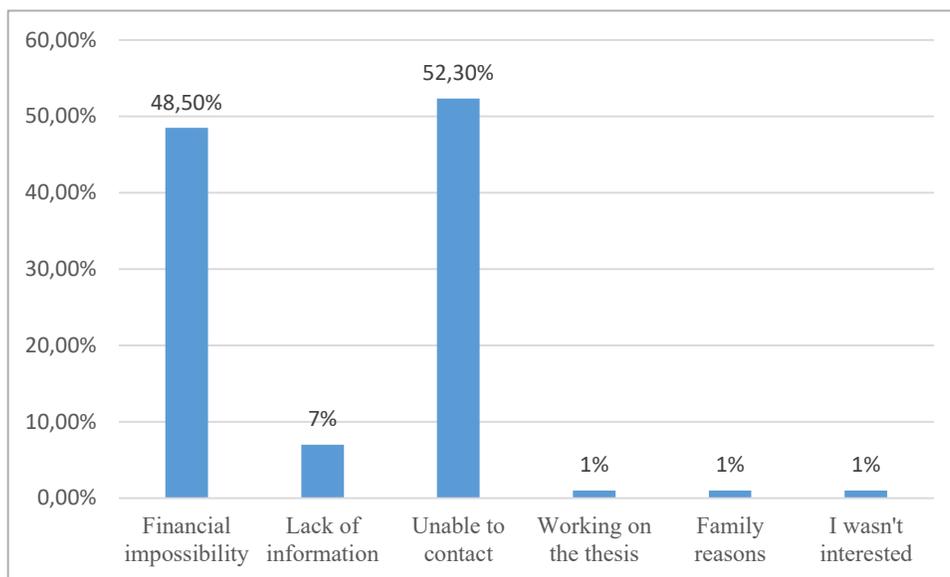
Source: PUT students' survey

### Obstacles in fulfilling an internship abroad

All students who completed the questionnaire were asked about the possible obstacles to fulfill an internship abroad. The valid cases were 263. As shown in the Figure 3.3.2, the main obstacle results to be the inability to have a contact with a company abroad (52.3%) followed by financial impossibility (48.5%), lack of information (7%). Working on the thesis, Family reasons and lack of interest are other insignificant obstacles.

It should be mentioned that PUT does not have any agreements with businesses abroad, for the students' internship. This is an issue to be considered in the near future.

Figure 3.3.2. Obstacles to fulfill an internship abroad (n=263)



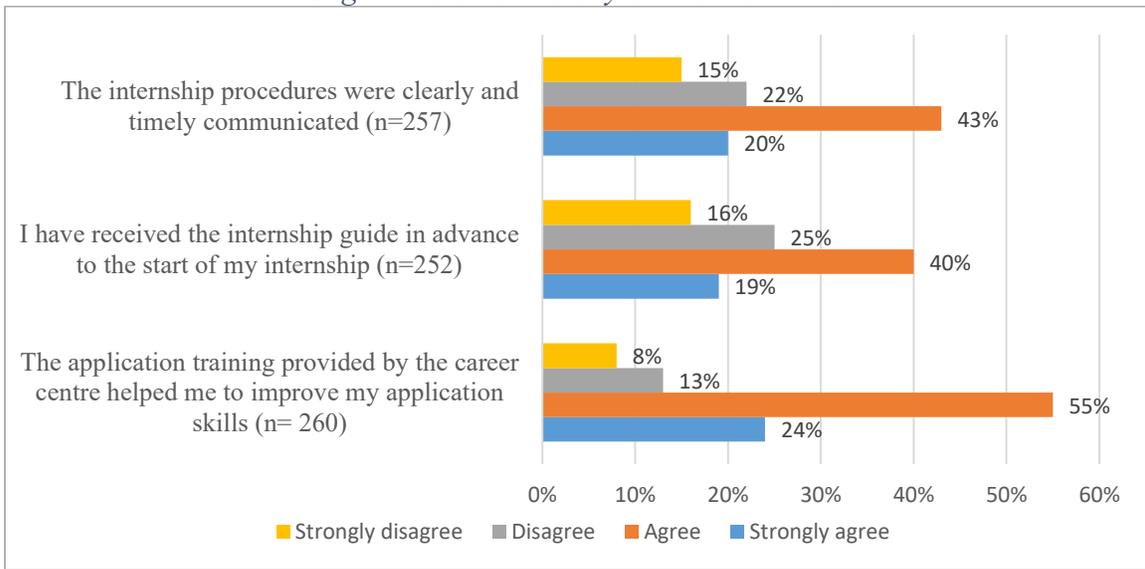
Source: PUT students' survey

### The role of PUT's career services for the internship

A crucial section of the questionnaire was about the role of the Career offices at PUT on supporting the students to find an internship opportunity. The career services are rated using a 4-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree to 4 being strongly agree (see Figure 3.3.3).

Roughly 80% of the participants agreed (i.e., agree and strongly agree) that career office has provided the application training to improve their application skills. In addition up to 59% of the students agreed that career offices has guided them in advance about the starting time of the internship period. The internship procedures were clearly and timely communicated has helped 63 % of the students.

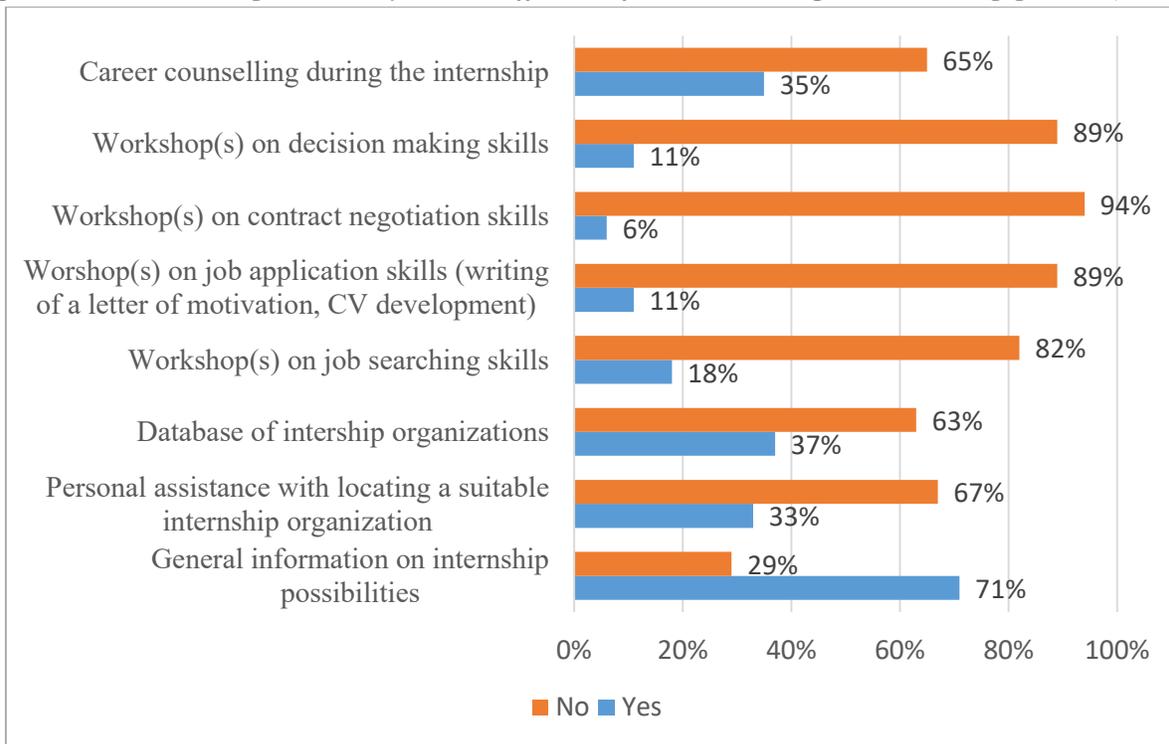
Figure 3.3.3. University's career services



Source: PUT students' survey

Although the general support of the Career offices, students that participated on the questionnaire were also asked about specific interventions of Career offices on helping them on finding an internship program. As indicated on the Figure 3.3.4, students are not enough supported by career offices about specific topics such as contracting, decision making, searching and applying for a job etc. In addition, along the internship period, career offices are not effective on career advice in group and/or individually.

Figure 3.3.4. Services provided by career offices before and during the internship period (n=260)

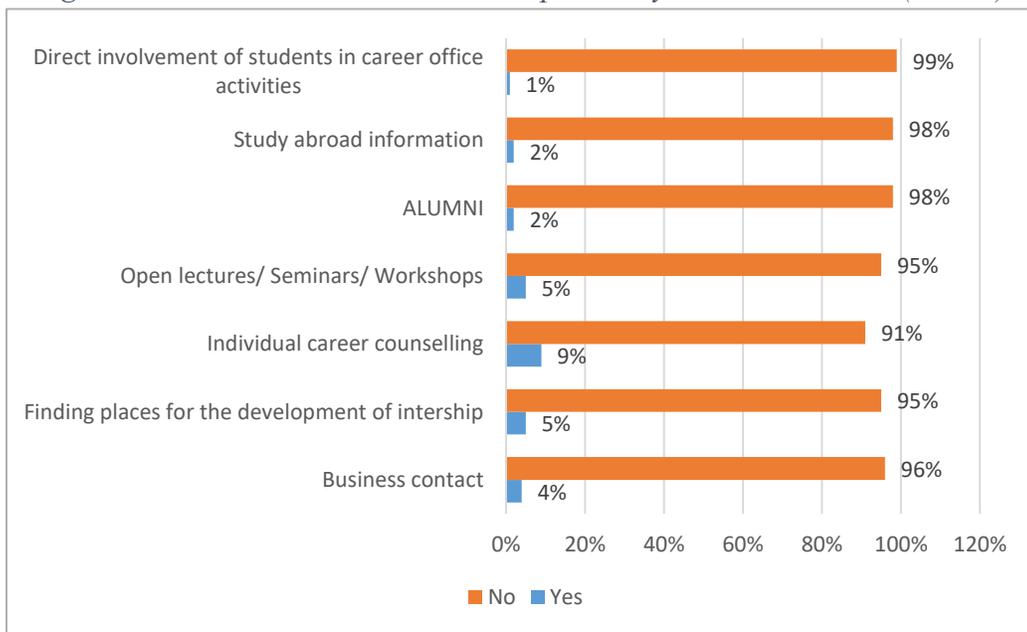


Source: PUT students' survey

The most worst perceived performance of career offices are about the lack of workshops on the topics of how to search and apply for a job, negotiations skills and decision making processes (see Figure 3.3.4). However, while in career offices are perceived as not supporting students about specific issues, on the other side, most respondents (71%), answered that these offices does provide the general information about internship possibilities.

Responding participants were also asked about the Careers’ offices actual services to be improved. Surprisingly the majority (over 90%) of student respondents stated that services offered by the career center do not need to be improved. These results might be due to the fact that this was an open question.

Figure 3.3.5. Services that should be improved by the career center (n=260)



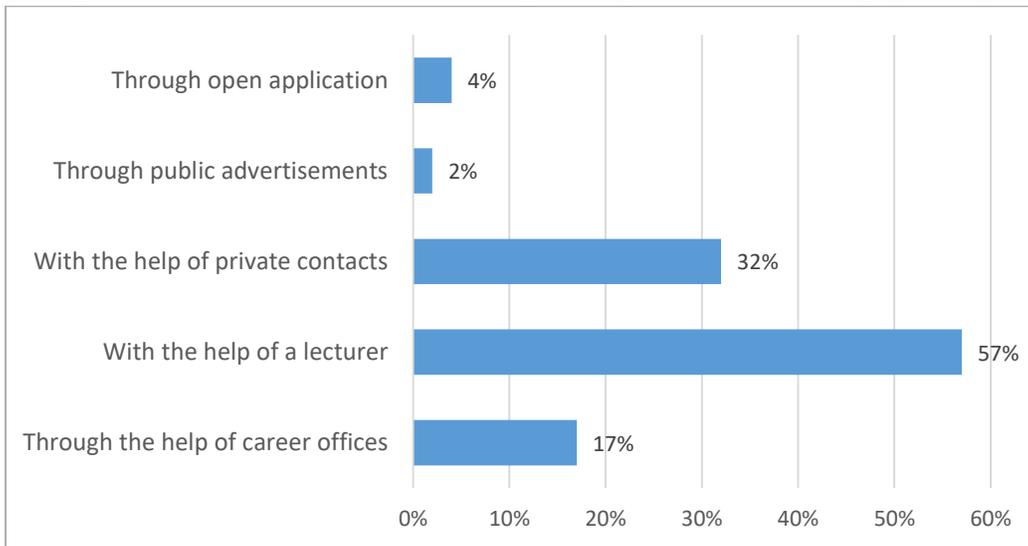
Source: PUT students’ survey

### Students’ internship

About 57% of respondents stated that, through the help of a lecturer, found the internship opportunity. 32% of them stated that the help of private contacts was a considerable source in finding the internship opportunity. Only 17% of the respondents admit to have found their internship through the help of career office. The rest of the respondents stated that other sources such as open application and public advertisement, served as their opportunity to find the internship (see Figure 3.3.6).

Again it resulted that students are not supported by University’s career offices to find an internship program. It is obvious that help of lecturers and the help of private contacts are the most used methods to find the internship.

Figure 3.3.6. Sources that students exploit to find their internship (n=260)

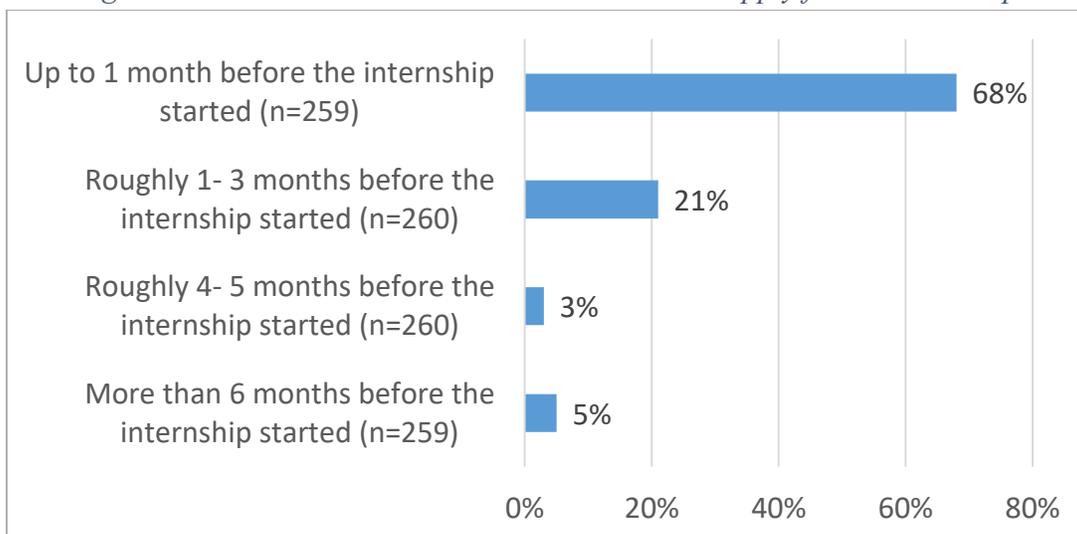


Source: PUT students' survey

Regarding the time when students started to search and apply for an internship, the majority of respondents (68%) stated that up to 1 month before the internship period starts, followed by 21% of respondents who apply roughly 1-3 months before the internship period starts. The rest of the students' participants declared that starts to search and/or apply for an internship more than 4 months (8%) before the internship virtually starts.

It resulted a concern the unpaid internship period. Thus, based on 254 respondents to this question, the majority of respondents (94%) stated that along the internship period they are not paid at all, while only 6% of them are paid.

Figure 3.3.7. The time students start to search and apply for an internship

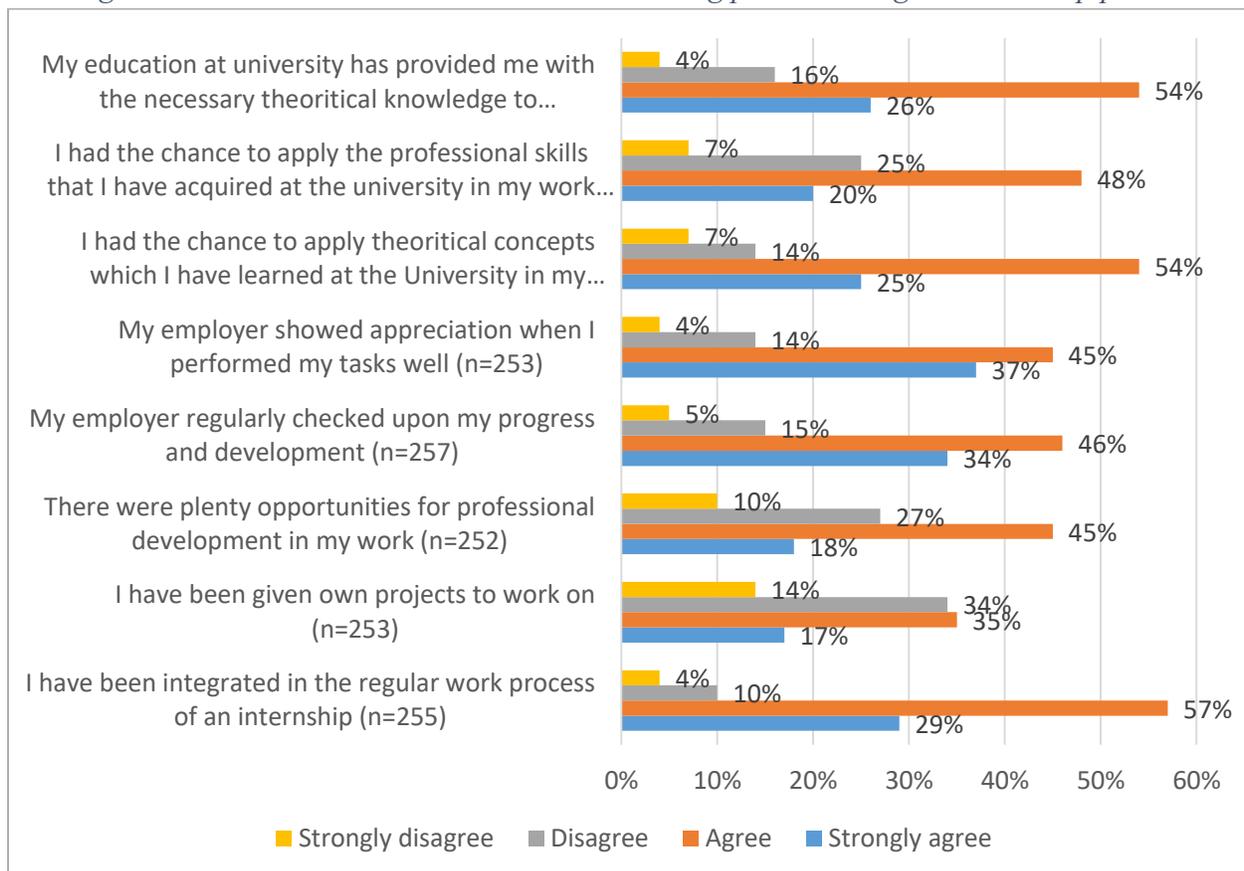


Source: PUT students' survey

Participants are also asked about another important dimension of their internship period. More specifically, they were asked about their engagement along the period of the internship. Their opinion was rated using a 4-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree to 4 being strongly agree.

As indicated at the Figure 8, it resulted a strong positive feedback about the effective involvement of students along the internship period. In other words, internship programs are an effective part of the university’s curricula. More specifically, up to 80% of the students, agree and strongly agree that university has given the necessary theoretical knowledge to succeed the internship. Major respondents agreed that along the internship period, they had the chance to apply their skills (68%) and knowledge (79%) gained at the university. To this, up to 52% of the respondents stated that they were directly given the opportunity to manage their own project. In addition, internship has strongly served as an opportunity for direct contact and interaction with the potential employer. Thus, participants stated that their employer has had regular check upon their progress and development (80%), appreciation when they had good performance (82%), and effectively integrated in the regular work process of their internship (86%).

Figure 3.3.8. Student’s involvement on the working process along the internship period



Source: PUT students’ survey

This study examined also the students’ opinion about the importance of the internship program. Their opinion was retrieved using a 10-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly unsatisfied to 10 being strongly satisfied. For this question, we had 258 valid responses.

It resulted that the average evaluation of respondents was:

From point 8 to 10 were 144 respondents or 56% indicating a good level of satisfaction from internship program. From point 5 to 7 were 77 respondents or 30% indicating on the average level of satisfaction from internship program. From point 1 to 4 were 37 respondents or 14% indicating a low level of satisfaction from internship programme.

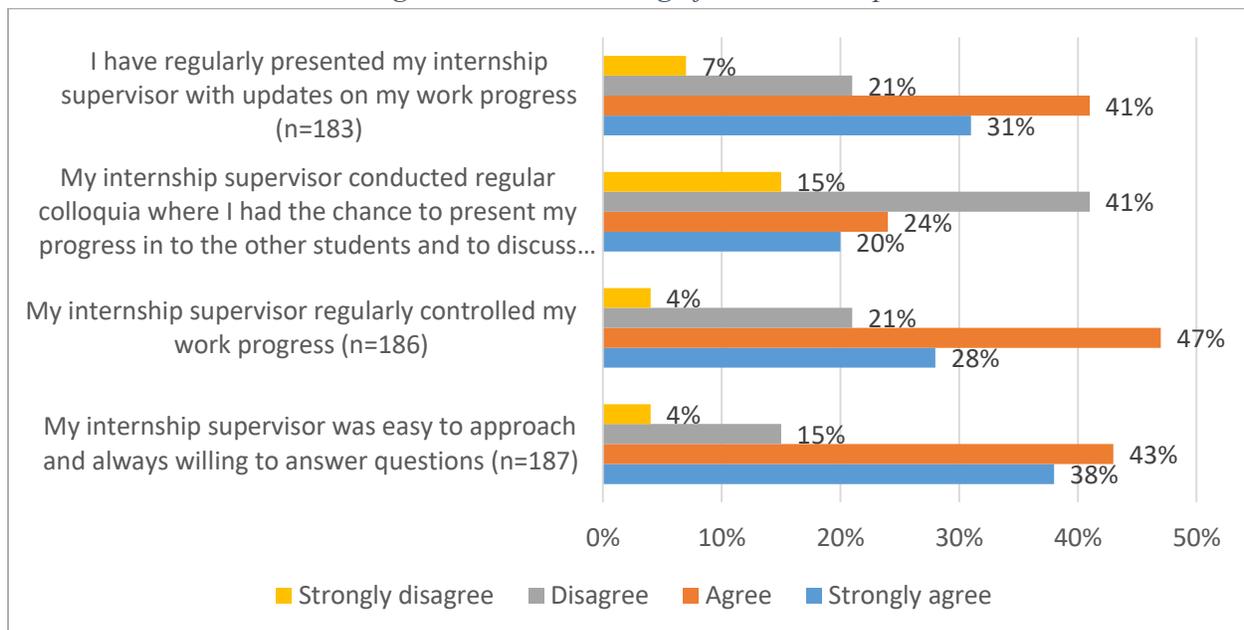
While discussing about the internship programs, it is indisputable to examine if these programs serve as gate to get a full-time job. In this vein, students that participated on this study, were asked if they received any job offer from the organization where they did the internship. Thus, roughly 78% of the respondents, did not receive any employment offer, while the rest (22%) received an employment offer.

In addition, participant were asked also, if they would like to be employed on the same profile of the job as the organization where they fulfilled internship. Results indicated that the majority did agree on this (78%), and the rest wanted a different employment profile (22%).

Along with the students' performance at the internship, it is importance to examine the supervisor of the students during the internship period. In this framework, participants on the study, were asked if they had a supervisor and which was. Firstly, about the question if they had a supervisor, 253 of the students, responded. Interestingly, the majority of responded did not have a supervisor (55%).

Secondly, the rest of respondents that had a supervisor for the internship (45%), agreed and strongly agreed for their positive role (see Figure 3.3.9). Thus, participants answered that their supervisors were ready to respond to their needs, to control their progress, promote them, and read the prepared reports about the internship.

Figure 3.3.9. Mentoring of the internship



Source: PUT students' survey

The internship report includes 263 students' questionnaires which meet the requirement after cleaning data. The findings already cover data of students who are studying at the last year of bachelor, master and integrated master programs at all faculties of PUT.

PUT's research team really appreciates valuable data brought about, especially the evaluation of internships and supervisors. The issues that will be considered to be improved will continue to be developed. Here are some important issues that we pointed out for improvement:

- The active role of the career office in order to rise the opportunities for the students to have internships abroad and financially supported.
- To widen the collaboration of the career office with the enterprises and to inform constantly the students about the opportunities that the labour market offers to accomplish the internships in their specific field of study.

### 3.4 UMT evaluation of internships from students



#### **Introduction**

Recently, universities are taking a new role, by facilitating the first contact of their students with the market. However, Albanian universities deal with a several challenges on this issue. This is due to the lack of human resources that advise students to contact with the market (career advisors/mentor), high level market informality, lack of cooperation between academia and employment market etc. This has led to the lack of data and information about students' internship and employment after they are graduated.

Discussing about this dimension of university's role, is important because mostly it is assumed that the highest is the students' employment rate, the more valuable is the diploma issued by university. In addition, this imposes that students are equipped with the right knowledge and skills to afford the requirements of the market.

Mostly, the first contact of the students with the market is along their internship period, which in turn might serve as a gate for the full-time job. To this, the universities might play a crucial role on this, by advising, guiding and providing the internship opportunities for their students.

In sum, although the importance of the university role on students' internships and later for their employment, there is a lack of researches and/or projects that examines and addresses these issues. To this, GRADUA project is specifically focused on this behalf. Therefore, the aim of this report is to indicate the situation of the students' internships at University of Medicine in Tirana (UMT).

#### **The role of UMT on facilitating the first contact of students with the employment market**

Part of the vision of higher education institutions is education, postgraduate education, research and professional training in order to provide to the market the right human capacities. Virtually, universities aim to furnish the market with human resources, equipped with skills and knowledge required by enterprise, organizations and public administration.

#### **Methodology**

In order to examine the issues foreseen on this report, a structured questionnaire prepared by AUT (Agricultural University of Tirana) was applied to UMT students. The questionnaire consisted in four sections: general information about the students, information about internship abroad, career offices, and the internship experience.

The questionnaire was administered to the students of three faculties at UMT, who were obligated to fulfill an internship program. Thus, the preliminary condition to select the target group was the internship program. Finally, a number of 74 students, on last year of Bachelor studies level, and also to the second year of Master level, were targeted.

The technique used to gather the data were face-to-face interviews with the students who were targeted. Using this method, 83 face-to-face interviews were conducted, and after data cleaning, a total of 74 valid questionnaires were obtained using this technique.

As clearly appears, the number of students who completed the questionnaire is very low. This is due to the fact that medical and pharmacy students carry out professional practices near their orders (respectively “Doctor's Order” and “Pharmacist's Order”).

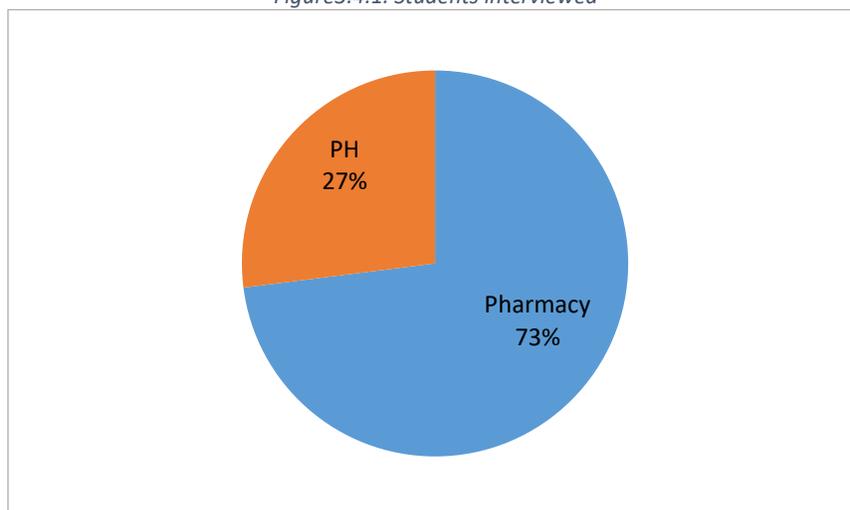
## Results and discussions

### Participants’ profile: the education background

All students of University of Medicine in Tirana (UMT) were targeted. The sample was represented by three Faculties of UMT.

The questionnaire was completed by 74 students, 73% of pharmacy, and 23% of public health (PH) (Figure 3.4.1).

Figure3.4.1. Students interviewed



Source: UMT students’ survey

Table 3.4.1. Demographic data

Demographic data		Frequency (%)
Semester	11	6 (8.1)
	10	48 (64.9)
	9	20 (27.0)
Residence	Durres	3 (4.1)
	Lushnje	5 (6.8)
	Tirana	63 (85.1)
	Vlore	3 (4.1)

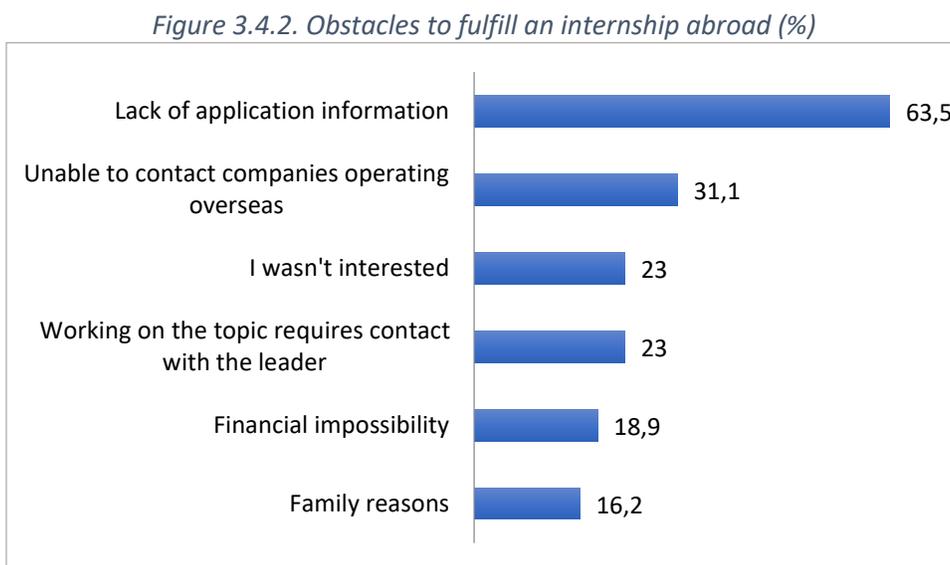
Source: UMT students’ survey

The majority of the students (85%) are from Tirana city.

### Obstacles for conducting an internship abroad

All participants were asked about the obstacles to fulfill the internship abroad.

Only 45% of students state that they have considered doing internships outside of Albania. Among the most potential factors for not completing professional internships abroad, students rated the lack of application information 64%, followed by the inability to get in touch with companies operating overseas 31% (Figure 3.4.2).



Source: UMT students' survey

None of the students interviewed have completed the PP abroad (consequently, questions B7.1-B7.8 are unanswered). It should be mentioned that UMT does not have any agreements with businesses abroad, for the students' internship. This is a dimension to work on.

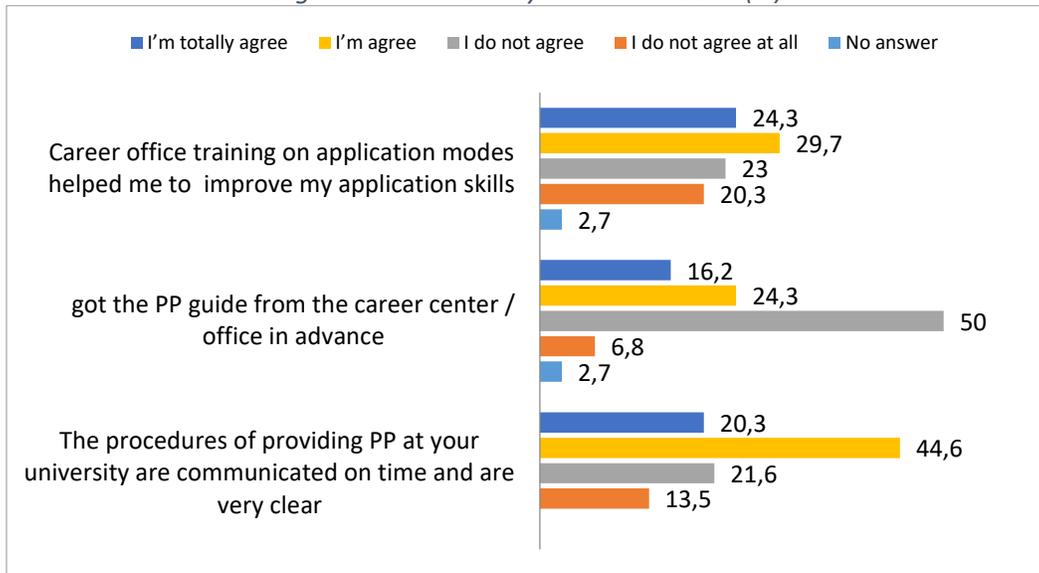
### The role of UMTs' career services for the internship

An important section of the questionnaire was about the role of the Career offices at UMT on supporting the students to find an internship opportunity. The career services are rated using a 4-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree to 4 being strongly agree (see Figure 3.4.3).

Sixty five percent of the interviewed students state that the procedures of offering PP (professional practice) at our university are timely communicated and they are very clear. Only 40.5% of students claim to have received the PP guidance from their career center / office in advance, and 54% of the respondents report that they are agree or completely agree that the training provided by the career office on how to apply, has helped them improve their application skills for PP.

In general it can be said that, career offices has well performed on supporting students about internship programs.

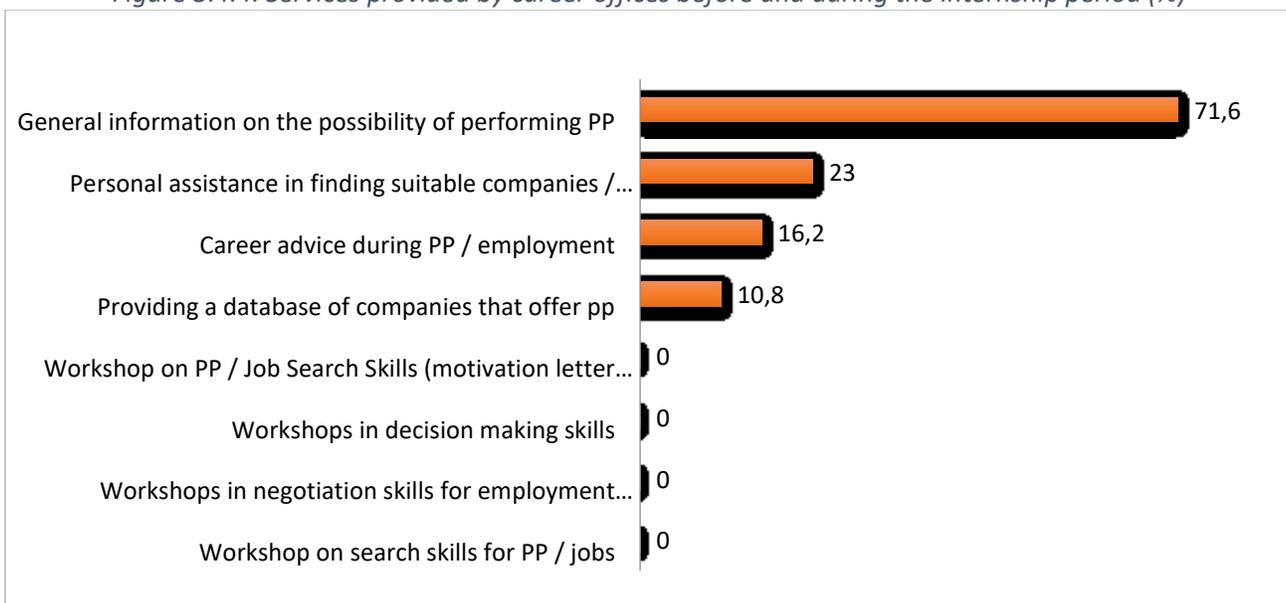
Figure 3.4.3 University's career services (%)



Source: UMT students' survey

Although the general support of the Career offices, students that participated on the questionnaire were also asked about specific interventions of Career offices on helping them on finding an internship program. As indicated on the Figure 3.4.4, students are not enough supported by career offices about specific topics such as contracting, decision making, searching and applying for a job, negotiation, etc. In addition, along the internship period, career offices are not effective on career advice in group and/or individually.

Figure 3.4.4. Services provided by career offices before and during the internship period (%)

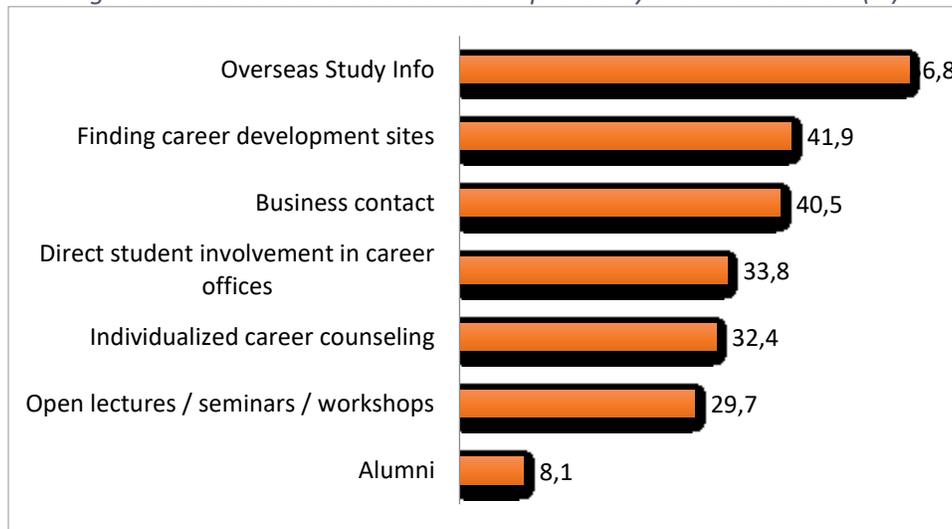


Source: UMT students' survey

The most worst perceived performance of career offices are about the lack of workshops on the topics of how to search and apply for a job, negotiations skills and decision making processes (see Figure 3.4.4). However, while in career offices are perceived as not supporting students about specific issues, on the other side, most respondents (72%), answered that these offices does provide the general information about internship possibilities.

Responding participants were also asked about the Careers’ offices actual services to be improved. The majority (92%) of student respondents stated that services about the Alumni are not necessary to be improved. This is quite obvious because this issue is not directly related to their actual interests. On the other side, When students are asked which services your career center / office in UMT should improve, in 57% of cases students suggest overseas study information, in 42% of cases they suggest finding career development sites, followed by business contact (41%).

Figure 3.4.5. Services that should be improved by the career centre (%)



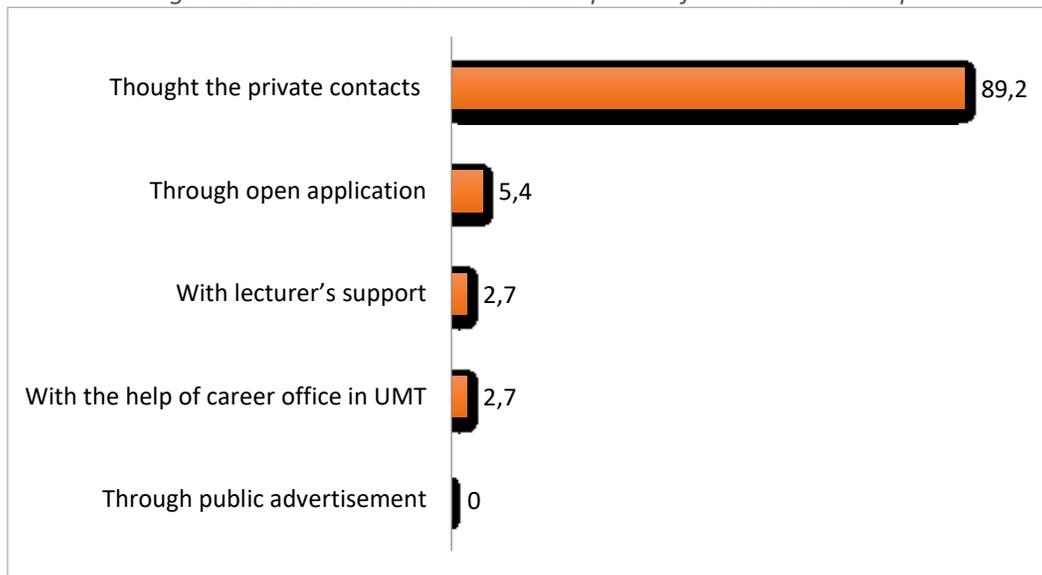
Source: UMT students’ survey

Up to the 68% of the students that responded to the questionnaire, suggest that career offices should add training activities on their services package, while 32% considered as not necessary. Although its efforts, it’s seems that career offices must strongly improve their role on students training on the internship and employing issues.

### Students’ internship

About 89% of respondents stated that through their private contacts found the internship opportunity. The rest of the respondents, stated that other sources such as career offices, lecturer support, and open application served as the opportunity to find the internship (see Figure 3.4.6).

Figure 3.4.6. Sources that students exploit to find their internship

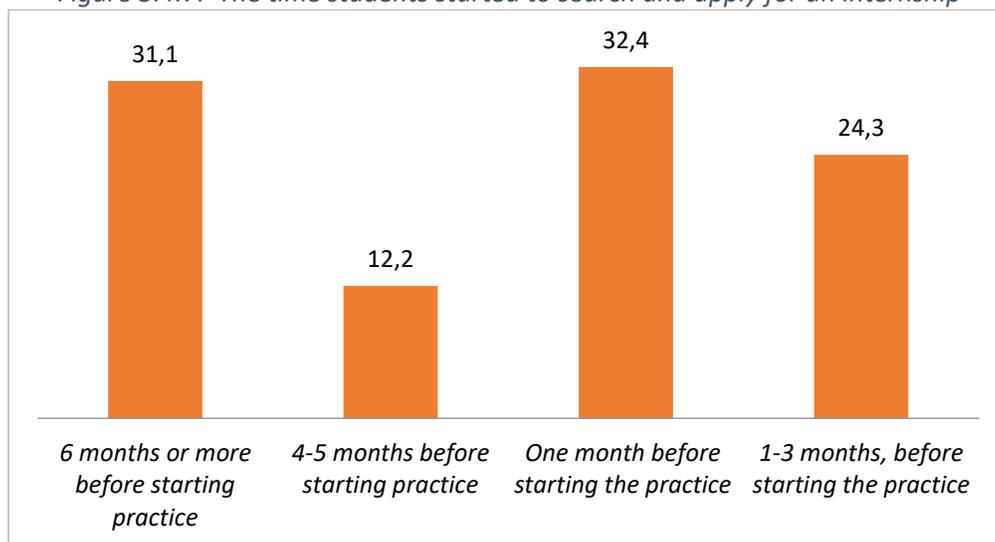


Source: UMT students' survey

None of the students mention the public advertisement as the opportunity to find the internship. It is obvious that private contacts of the students, through its relatives, friends etc., are the most used method to find the internship.

Regarding the time when students started to search and apply for an internship, the majority of respondents (32%) stated that they applied up to 1 month before the internship period starts, followed by 31% of respondents who apply 6 months or more before starting practice, and 24% of respondents who apply 1-3 months before the internship period starts. The rest of the students' participants (12%) declared that starts to search and/or apply for an internship more than 4 months before the internship virtually starts.

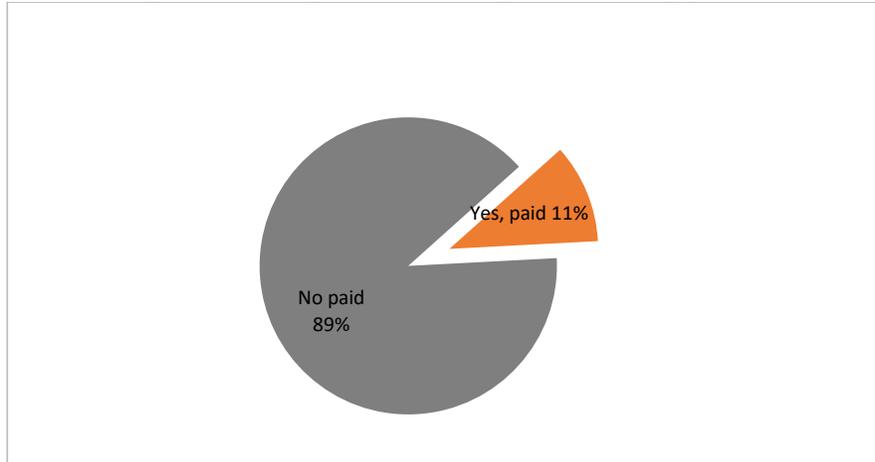
Figure 3.4.7. The time students started to search and apply for an internship



Source: UMT students' survey

The results are worrying about unpaid work during the internship period. So, based on our data corresponding to this question, the majority of respondents (89%) stated that along the internship period they have not been paid at all, while only 11% of them are paid (Figure 3.4.8).

Figure 3.4.8. Unpaid work during the internship period

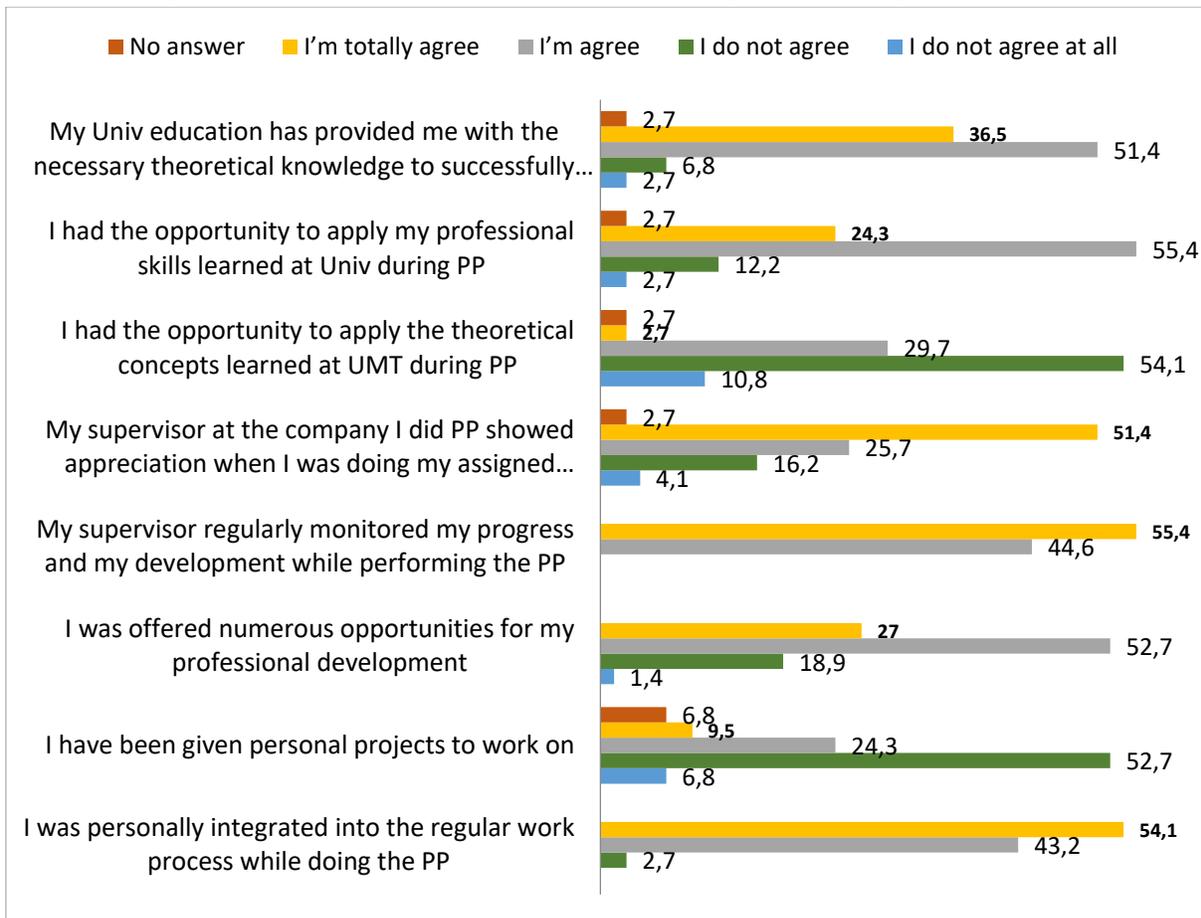


Source: UMT students' survey

Participants are also asked about another important dimension of their internship period. More specifically, they were asked about their engagement along the period of the internship. Their opinion was rated using a 4-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree to 4 being strongly agree. As indicated at the Figure, it is resulted a strong positive feedback about the effective involvement of students along the internship period. In other words, internship programs are an effective part of the university's curricula. More specifically:

- ✓ Almost 97% of students claim to have been integrated into the regular work process while doing the PP.
- ✓ About 60% of students report that they were not been involved, and were not given their own projects during the PP.
- ✓ Nearly 90% of the interviewees state that they were offered numerous opportunities for professional development.
- ✓ 100% of the interviewees state that the supervisor has regularly monitored their progress and development during the conduct of the PP.
- ✓ 77% of the respondents report that they agree or completely agree with the fact that the supervisor at the company that students completed the PP, showed appreciation for performing the assigned tasks.
- ✓ 84% of respondents report that they agree or completely agree with the fact that during PP, they have had the opportunity to apply the theoretical concepts taught at the University.
- ✓ About 90% report that they agree or completely agree with the fact that they apply their professional skills learned at the University during the PP.
- ✓ About 88% report that they agree or completely agree with the fact that their University education has provided them with the necessary theoretical knowledge to successfully complete the PP.

Figure 3.4.9. Students involvement on the working process along the internship period



Source: UMT students' survey

This study examined also the students' opinion about the importance of the internship program. Their opinion was retrieved using a 10-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly unsatisfied to 10 being strongly satisfied. For this question, we had 74 valid responses. It resulted that the average evaluation of respondents was about 8.8, indicating a good satisfaction from internship program.

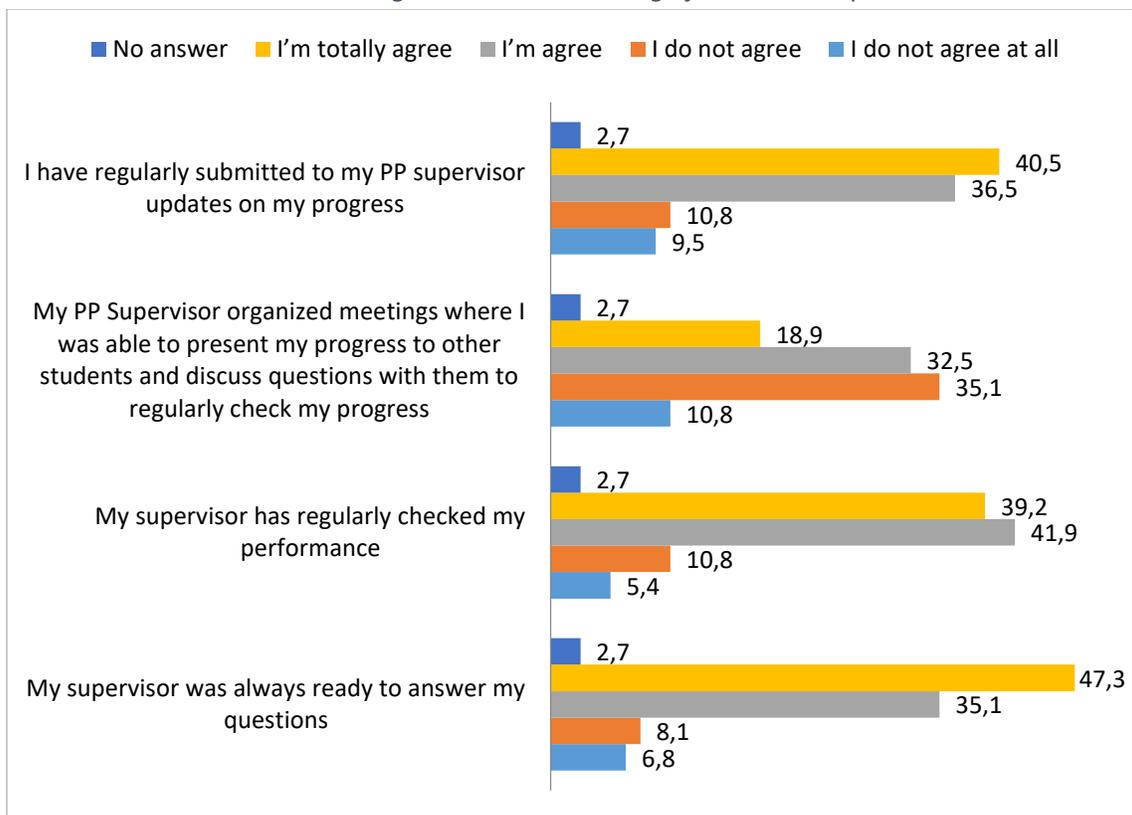
While discussing about the internship programs, it is indisputable to examine if these programs serve as an open gate to get a full-time job. So, students that participated on this study were asked if they received any job offer from the organization where they did the internship. Thus, 57% of the respondents did not receive any employment offer, while the rest (43%) have received an employment offer.

In addition, participants were asked also, if they would like to be employed on the same profile of the job as the organization where they fulfilled internship. Results indicated that the majority did agree on this (89%), and the rest wanted a different employment profile (11%).

Although the students' performance at the internship, it is of the utmost importance to examine the supervisor of the students along the internship period. In this framework, participants on this study, were asked if they had a supervisor and which was. Firstly, about the question if they had an supervisor, 74 of the students, responded. Interestingly, the majority of responded did have a supervisor (80%). The responder's were agreed and strongly agreed for their positive role (see Figure 3.4.10). Thus, participants

answered that their supervisors were ready to respond to their needs, to control their progress, promote them, and read the prepared reports about the internship.

Figure 3.4.10. Mentoring of the internship



Source: UMT students' survey

## Conclusions

Although the importance of the university role on students' internships and later for their employment, there is a lack of researches and/or projects on these issues.

UMT has a dedicated structure to the students' career development. CAC through its three career offices serve as the mediator of students' first contacts with the employment market.

However, it should be noted that career offices does not have full competences about the internship process. Students formally have to deliver information and documents at their respective department.

UMT has a high percentage of students employed after one year they are graduated, inside and outside Albania. This is an inspiring figure considering the average rate of students' employment (roughly 52%) for Western Balkan Countries, and the European countries (81% up to three years after their graduation).

It resulted that the most influent obstacles to fulfill an internship abroad are related to the lack of information access, lack of the contacts and financial capacities. It should be mentioned that UMT does

not have any agreements with businesses abroad, for the students' internship. This is a dimension to work on.

While in career offices are perceived as not supporting students about specific issues (e.g., organizing workshops, specific information about an internship opportunity etc.), on the other side, most respondents, answered that these offices plays a significant role on providing the general information about internship opportunities.

It resulted that career offices must strongly improve their role on students' training, internship and employing issues. More specifically, these offices must improve their services ensure opportunities about internships, direct contact with the employer, more information on how to apply for studies abroad, and direct involvement of students on careers' offices activities.

Yet, students do not feel the role of University's career offices, on finding an internship program. It is obvious that private contacts of the students, through its relatives, friends etc., are the most used method to find the internship.

The majority of students (32.4%) search for an internship, one month before the internship period starts. Indeed, it is assumed that the more in advance is searched for an internship opportunity, the more chances students will have to find it.

While the unpaid internship period is a concern, on the other side, students are effectively involved in the business' daily operations during their internship. In other words, internship programs are an effective part of the university's curricula.

For 43% of interns, internship served as an opportunity to have a job offer. Thus, internships are an important gate to get into the employment market.

The supervisor play a significant role on supporting the interns, along the period of the internship.

### 3.5 EUT evaluation of internships from students



#### **POPULATION**

The survey for measuring the students' satisfaction regarding the career office services and the internship programme was conducted on the population of 50 students who graduated from European University of Tirana in 2019. All graduates were full-time students taking both, bachelor degree and master degree in various programmes ranging from social science studies to humanity courses. In particular, there were 4 programmes: Communication studies, Political Science, International Relation and Finance.

#### **STUDY PROCEDURE**

To collect information for the Students' satisfaction regarding the internship programme 2019, European University of Tirana (EUT) administered the Student Satisfaction Survey during the last two weeks of June. The purpose of the survey was to collect data regarding students' satisfaction regarding the career office services. The aim of this report is to carry out findings on the weak points of career office services in order to improve their performance towards the students' needs.

The survey consists of 3 main sections (1) personal information; (2) career office services; (3) internship programme experience. Given the experience from the delivery of other similar survey over years, EUT team tried to improve the scale of the survey as well as response rate by various means but still focusing on communication about the project and its benefits to the students so that they would feel compelled to participate in.

#### **Data cleaning**

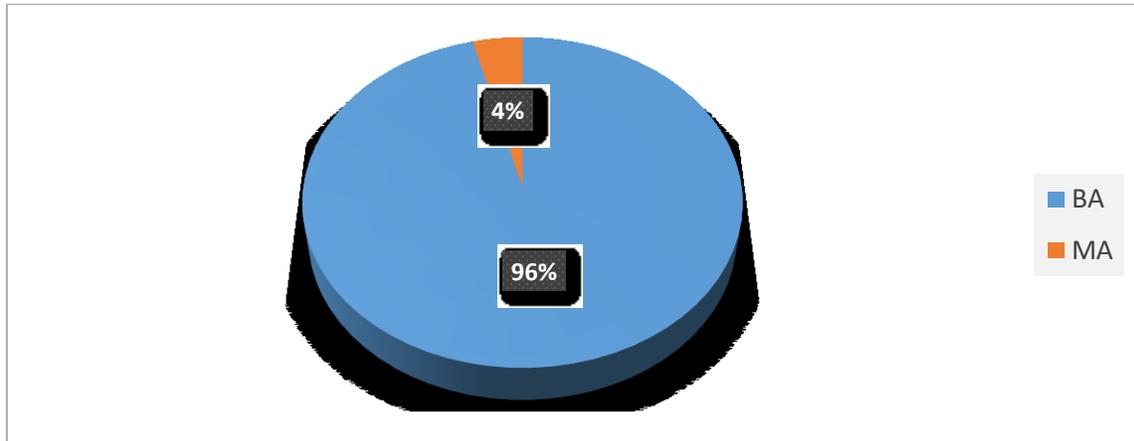
The matched data of 50 students was subject to a data cleaning process. As advised by AlmaLaurea, responses from students need to meet three conditions to ensure the integrity of the data. They are (1) completeness, (2) plausibility of replies; and (3) time required for survey completion. These criteria were successfully applied on matched data and the final dataset consisted of 43 respondents.

### **THE 2019 EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA GRADUATES' SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS ON THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**

#### **Sample description**

As described earlier, there were 43 students in the final sample.

Figure 3.5.1. The level of Degree

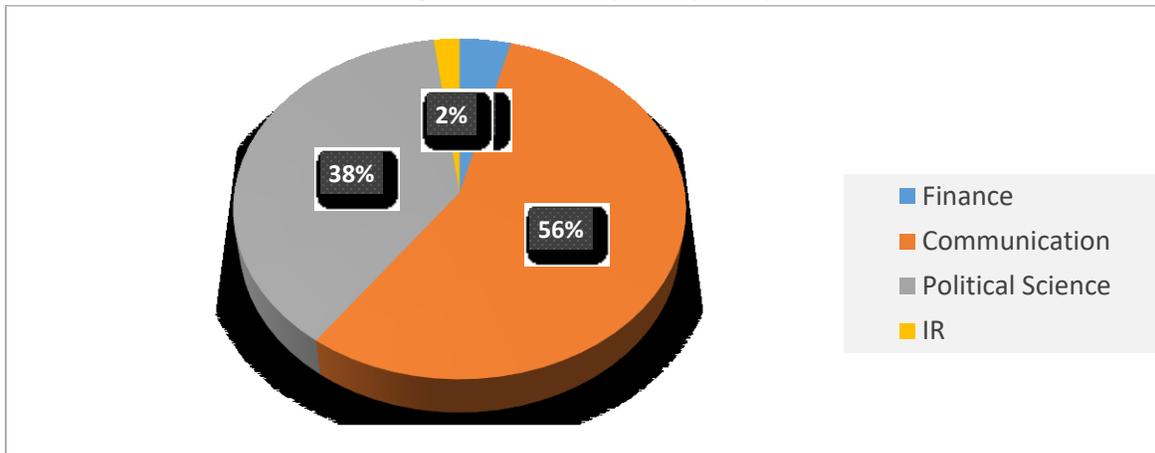


Source: EUT students' survey

As indicated by Figure 3.5.1. (96%) of the students who participated in the survey were conducting their BA studies, meanwhile only (4%) of them were finishing their MA studies.

As indicated by Figure (56 %) of the students were from the Department of Communication. Meanwhile, (38 %) of the students were from the Department of Political Science. Both of these departments represented the largest portions of the sample.

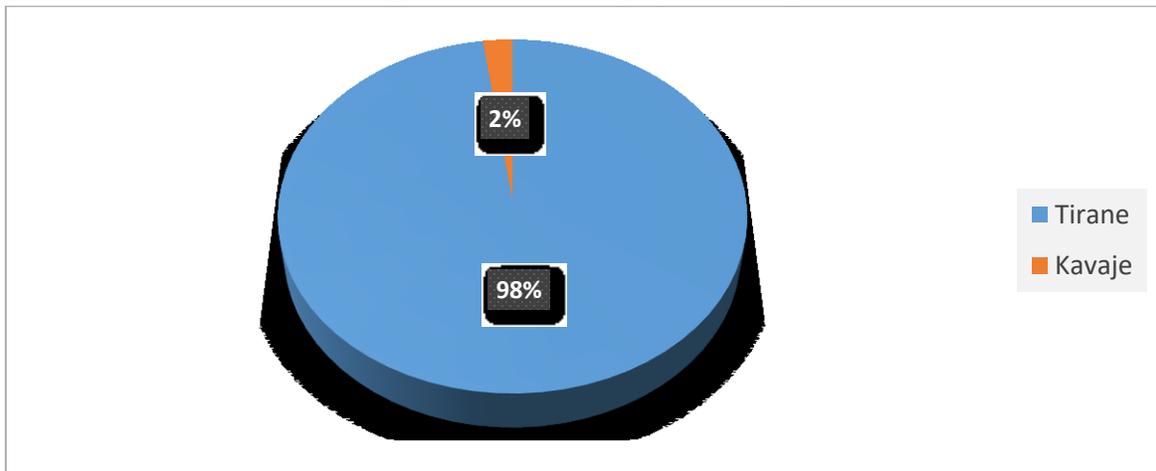
Figure 3.5.2. The field of study



Source: EUT students' survey

When the students were asked about the city where they did their internship programme, as it is reported in the Figure 3.5.3. (98%) of them responded, in the capital (Tirana).

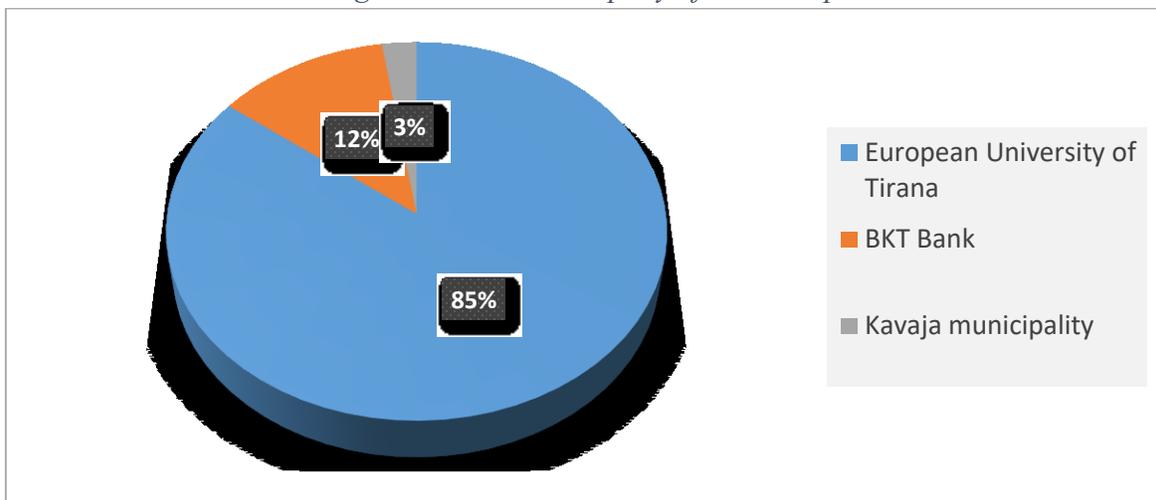
Figure 3.5.3. The city of internship



Source: EUT students' survey

European University of Tirana has in its practices to give the chance to all the students to develop their professional skills in the university. For this reason, since years, EUT students can make their internship programme in several offices of the University. For this reason, the Figure below reports that (85 %) of the students made their internship at EUT, meanwhile (12%) of them were part of the internship programs of BKT bank.

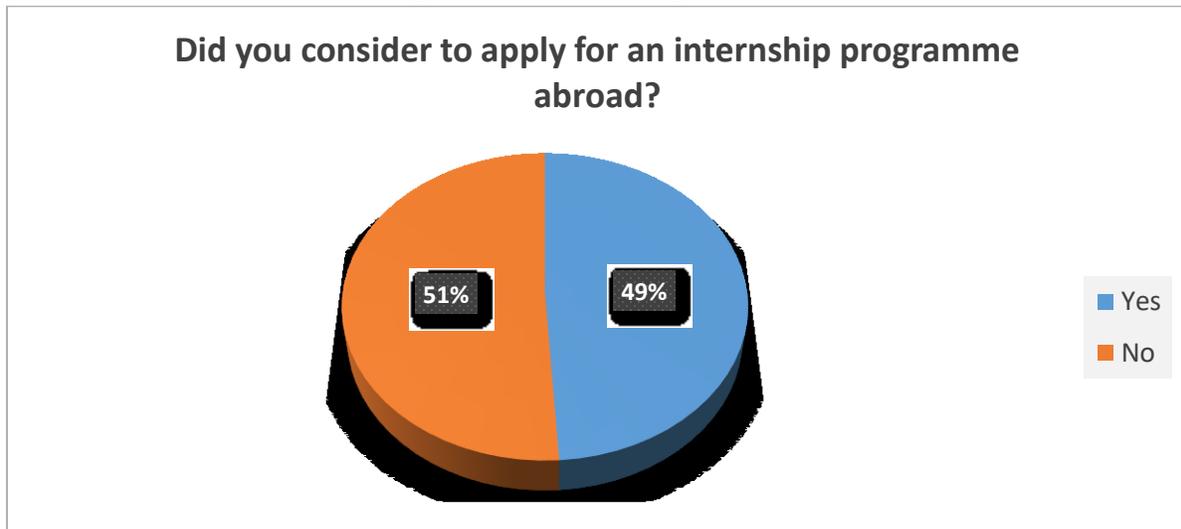
Figure 3.5.4. The company of internship



Source: EUT students' survey

One of the questions of the survey was to measure the intentions of the students regarding their future plans for the internship programme. When they have been asked whether they considered to make an internship programme abroad, (51%) of them reported that they were not considering the idea. However, the percentage of the answers is more or less the same. Please refer to the Figure. 3.5.5.

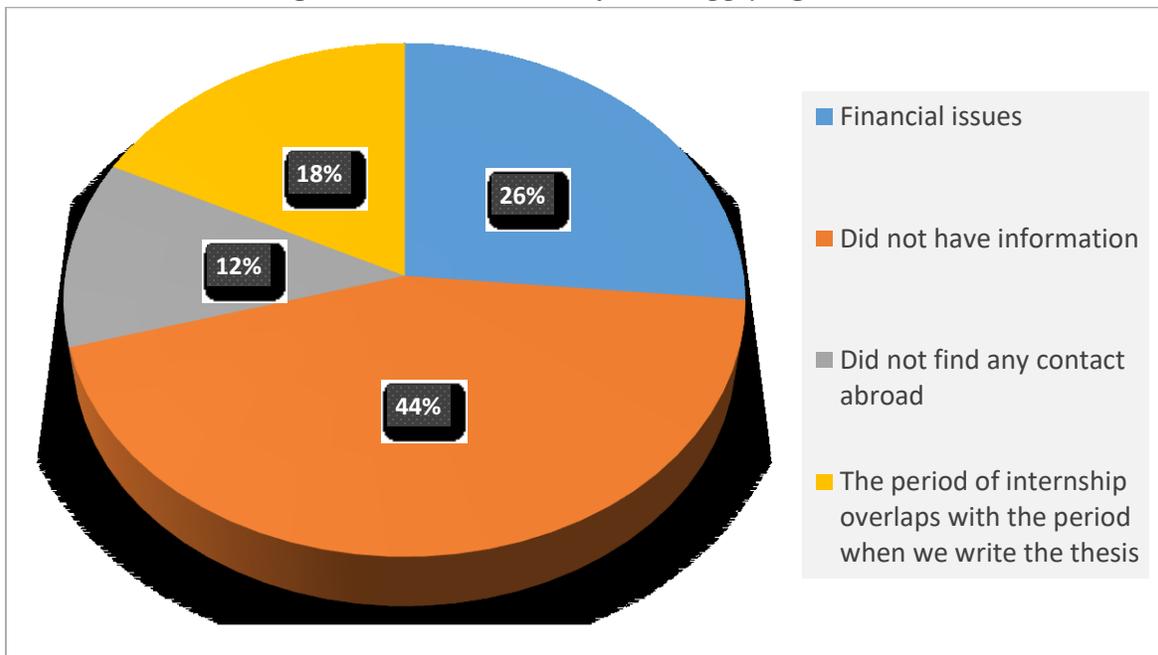
Figure 3.5.5. Internship abroad?



Source: EUT students' survey

In order to understand the reasons why the students of European University of Tirana did not apply for an internship programme abroad, they have been asked such a question. According to the results presented to the Figure 3.5.6, (44%) of them reported that they did not have enough information, meanwhile (26%) of the students admitted that they could not because of the financial issues.

Figure 3.5.6. The reasons for not applying abroad



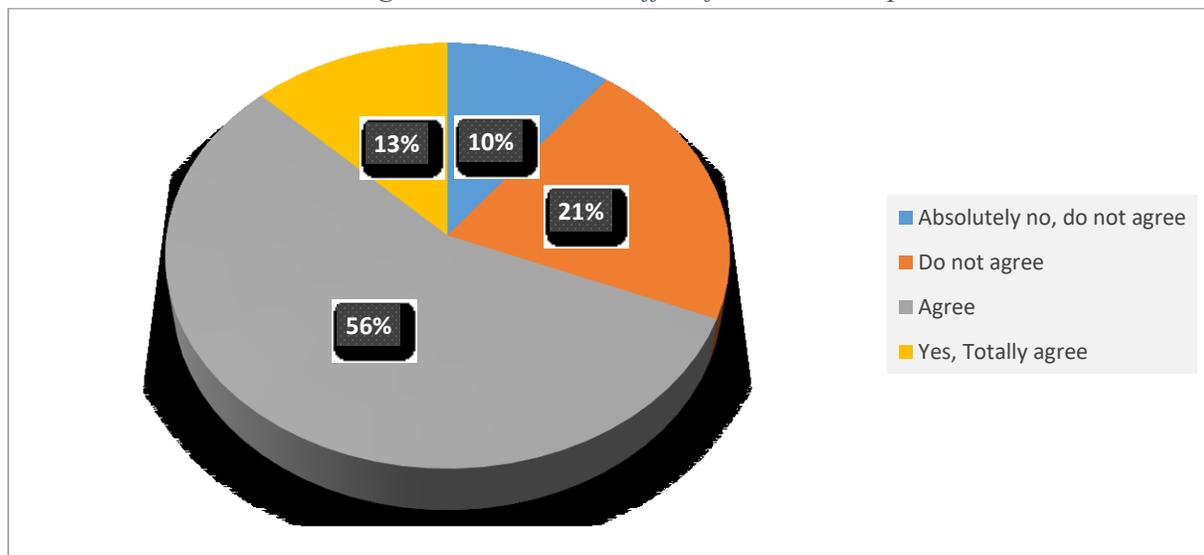
Source: EUT students' survey

## Career office services

The first part of Section 2 asked students about the company where they did the internship programme and if any of them did consider to make an internship programme abroad. Also, they have been asked about the reason why they did not consider the idea of an internship programme abroad. The results indicated that the students made mostly their internship in Tirana and the main reasons for not applying abroad were related with the financial issues and the lack of information.

After collecting and analyzing the data, with regards to career office efficiency in facilitating the process of finding and applying in an internship programme, most of the students (69%) reported that the career office helped and supported them to find an internship programme. Meanwhile (32%) of them reported that they did not find support by the career office. The answers are reflected in the Figure. 3.5.7.

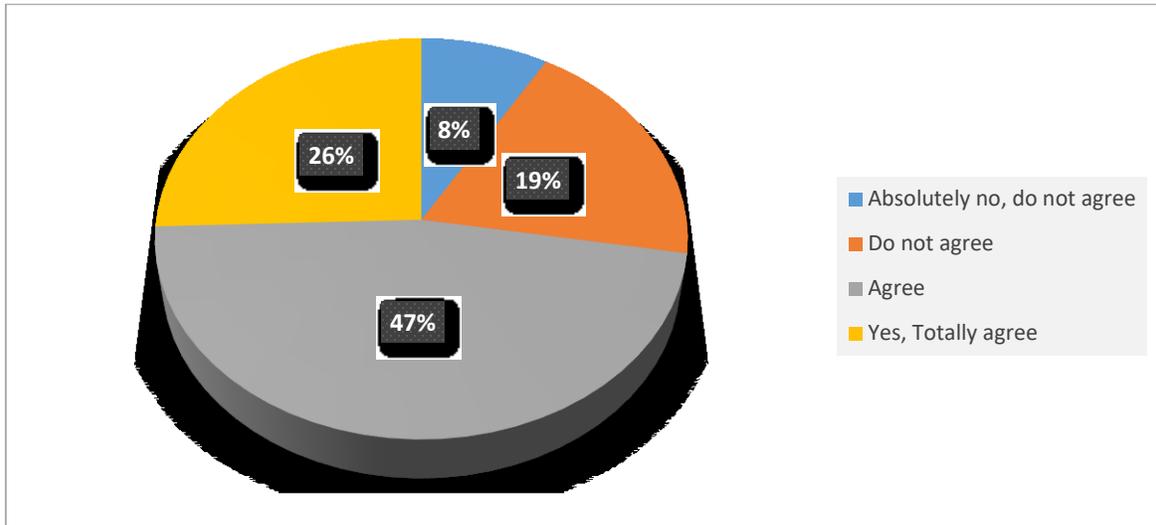
Figure 3.5.7. Career Office facilitates the process



Source: EUT students' survey

Another question that has been asked to the students regarding the career office efficiency was about the period that the career office announced the calls of application for the internship programmes. According to the results of the Figure 3.5.8. (73%) of the students reported that the career office announced in advance the internship programmes, meeting all the timing criteria.

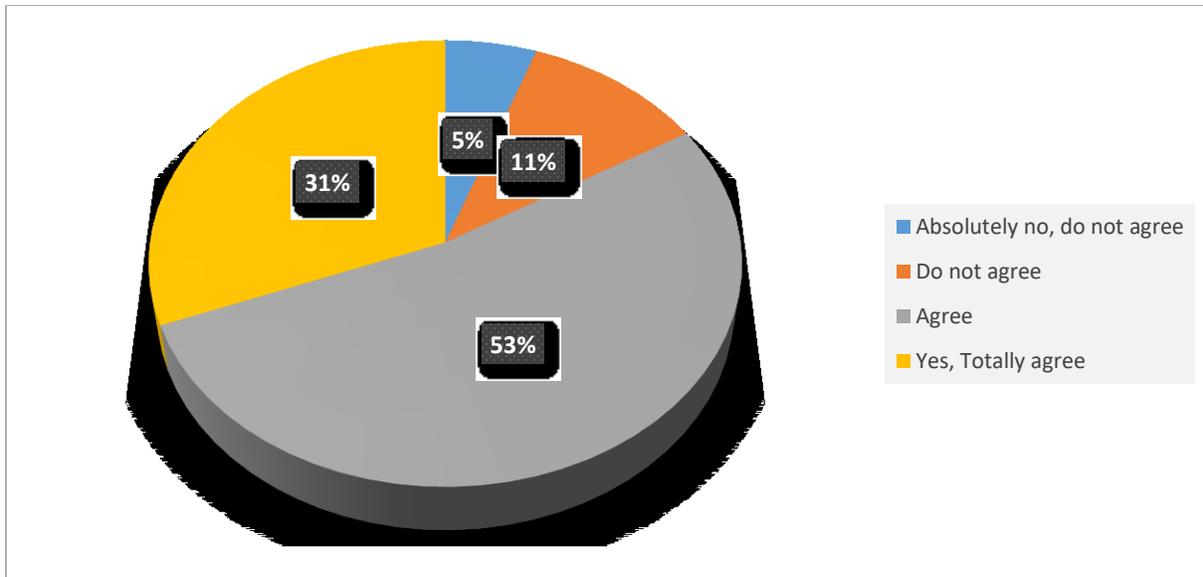
Figure 3.5.8. The students informed in advance by the career office



Source: EUT students' survey

The students have been asked whether the career office helped them during the application process for the internship programme. Most of the respondents (84%) reported that the career office assistance helped them to improve the application for the internship programme.

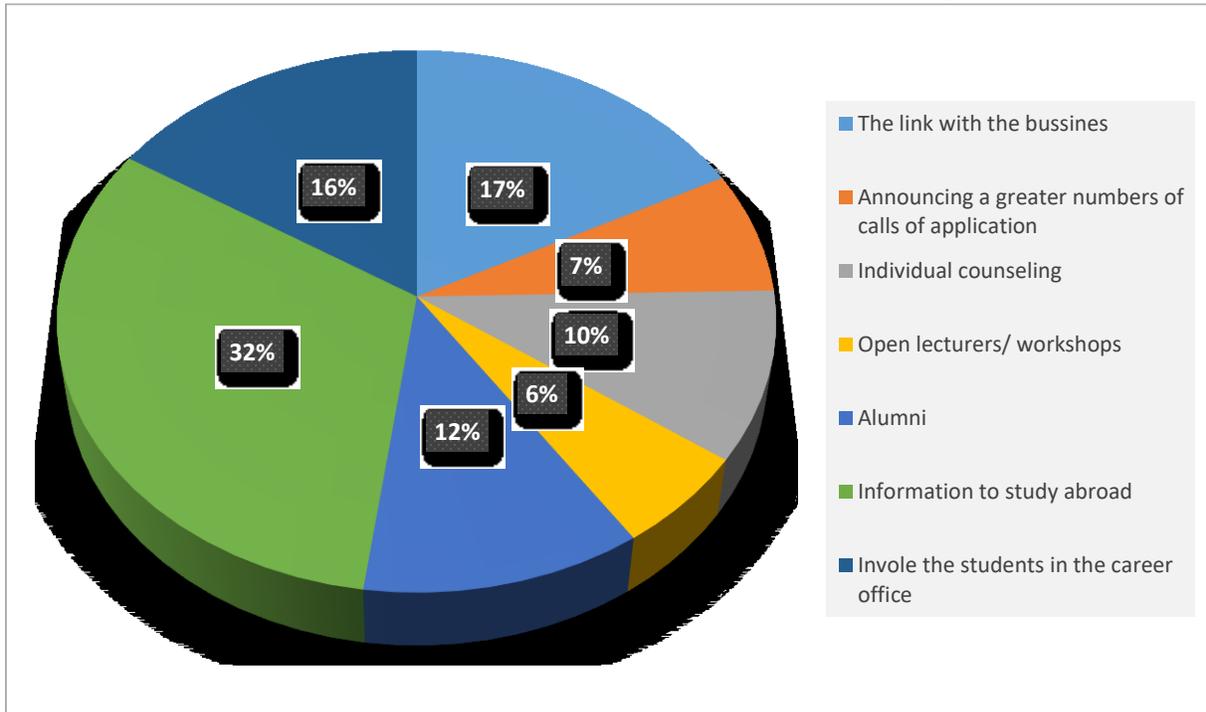
Figure 3.5.9. The assistance of the career office during the application



Source: EUT students' survey

After collecting and analysing the data regarding the career office performance and efficiency towards the students who made the internship programme, to the question 'What the career office has to improve?' the students reported as below: (32%) of them said that the career office should announce more call for application for positions that are abroad; (16%) of them expressed the idea, that the career office should involve more the students with the career office agenda; (17%) of them reported that the career office should expand the collaborations with the business partners.

Figure 3.5.10. The services that the career office has to improve

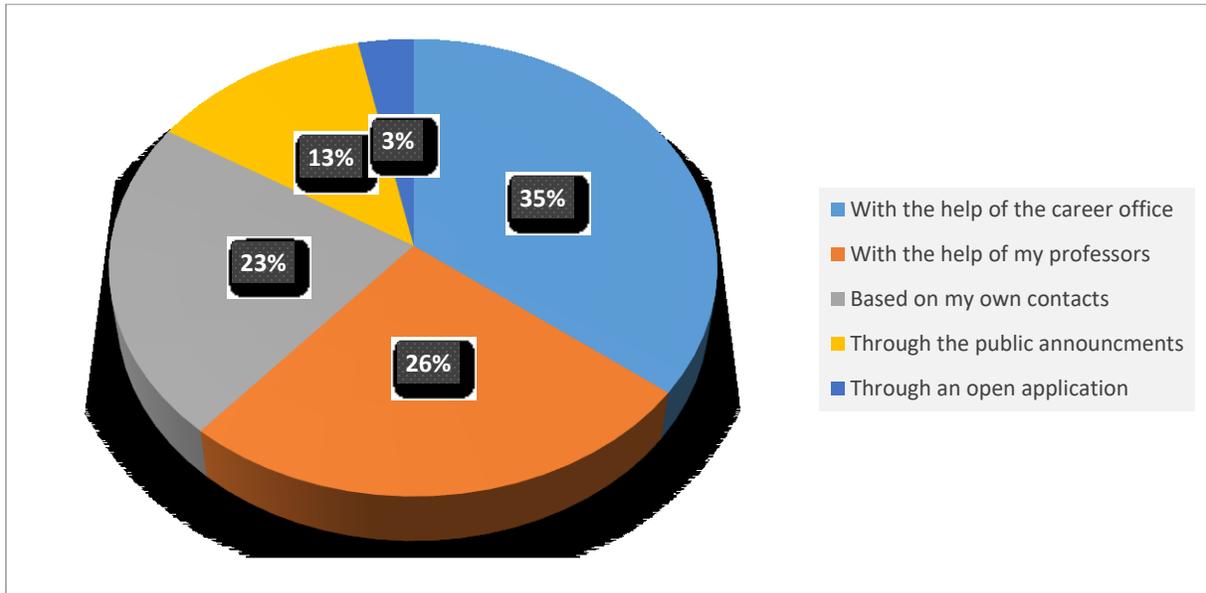


Source: EUT students' survey

### Internship programme experience

In order to measure the experience of the EUT students regarding their internship experience, firstly they were asked about the way that they found to contact the company where they did their internship programme. According to the results of the Figure 3.5.11. (35%) of them reported that they have been notified by the career office; (26%) of them reported that they have been supported by their professors and (23%) of them found the internship programme based on their person contacts.

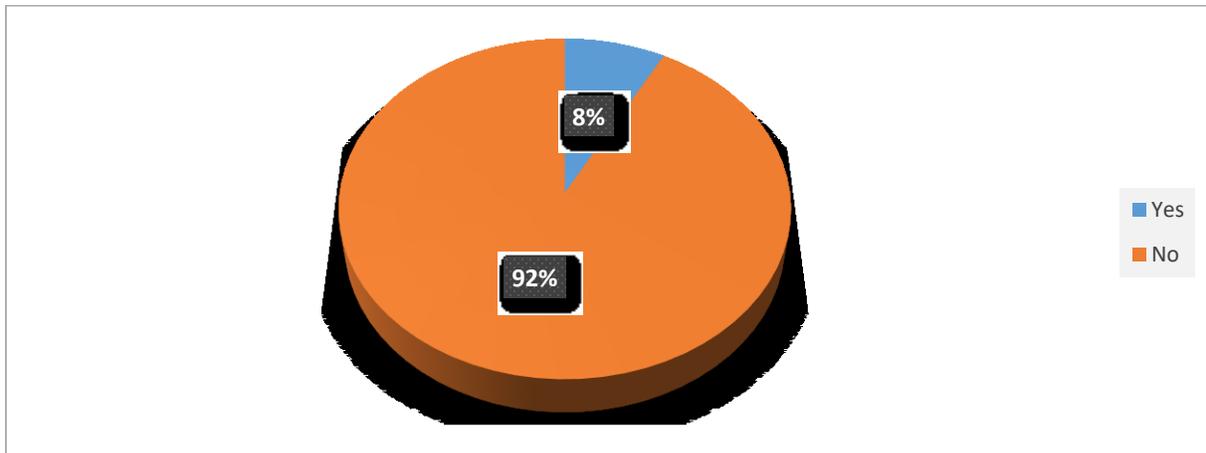
Figure 3.5.11. The contact with the company



Source: EUT students' survey

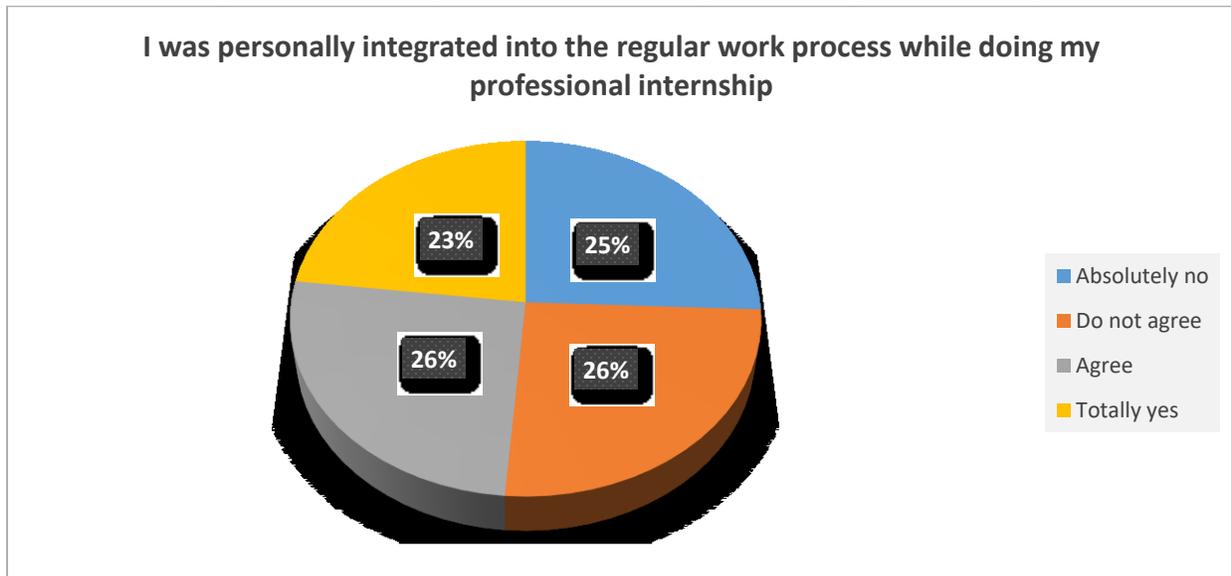
We also asked whether the students have been paid during their internship programme. Based on the results of the Figure 3.5.12. (92%) of EUT students followed an un-paid internship programme.

Figure 3.5.12. Paid for the internship programme



Source: EUT students' survey

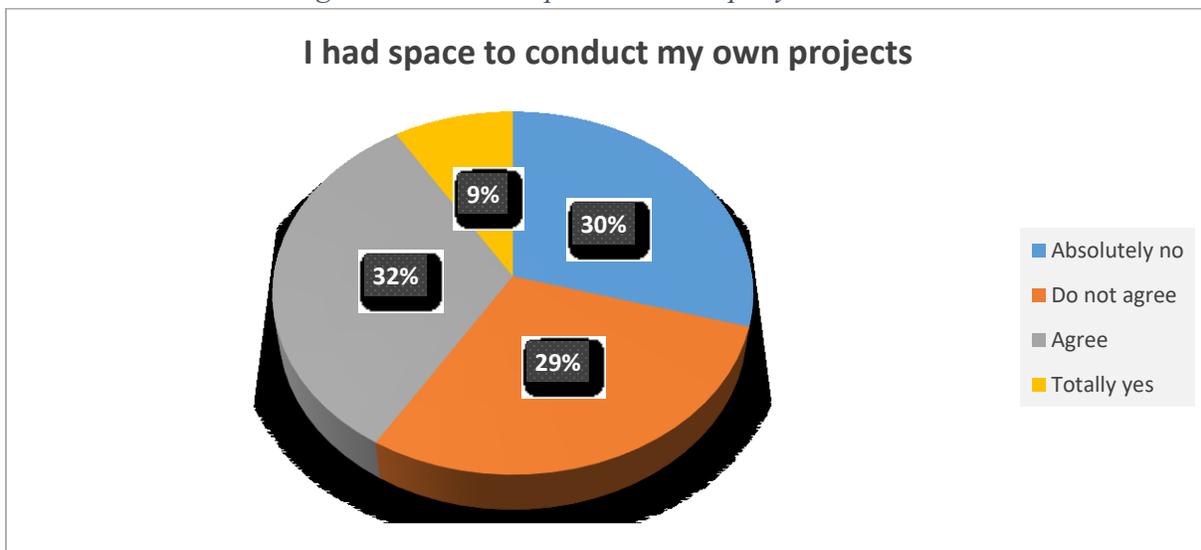
Figure 3.5.13. Integrated with the work-place during the internship



Source: EUT students' survey

Students were also asked whether they felt comfortable with the work place and whether the internship programme meet their expectations. When they have been asked if they felt integrated with the work process in the internship work place, (51%) of them reported that they did not feel comfortable at all and (49%) of the students answered that they felt integrated with the daily basis work of the company where they were following the internship programme. Please refer to the Figure 3.5.13.

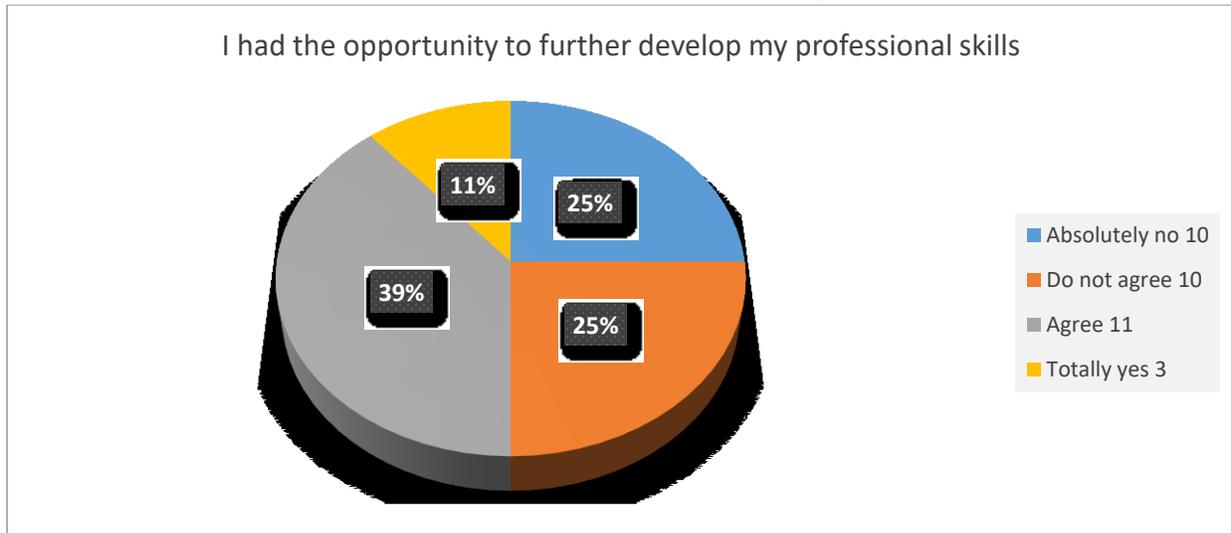
Figure 3.5.14. The space to develop my own ideas



Source: EUT students' survey

We also asked the students if they felt space enough to develop their own ideas and projects during their internship programme. Unfortunately, only (41%) of them reported that they were able to express and make their own projects.

Figure 3.5.15. Internship as a tool to develop the professional skills

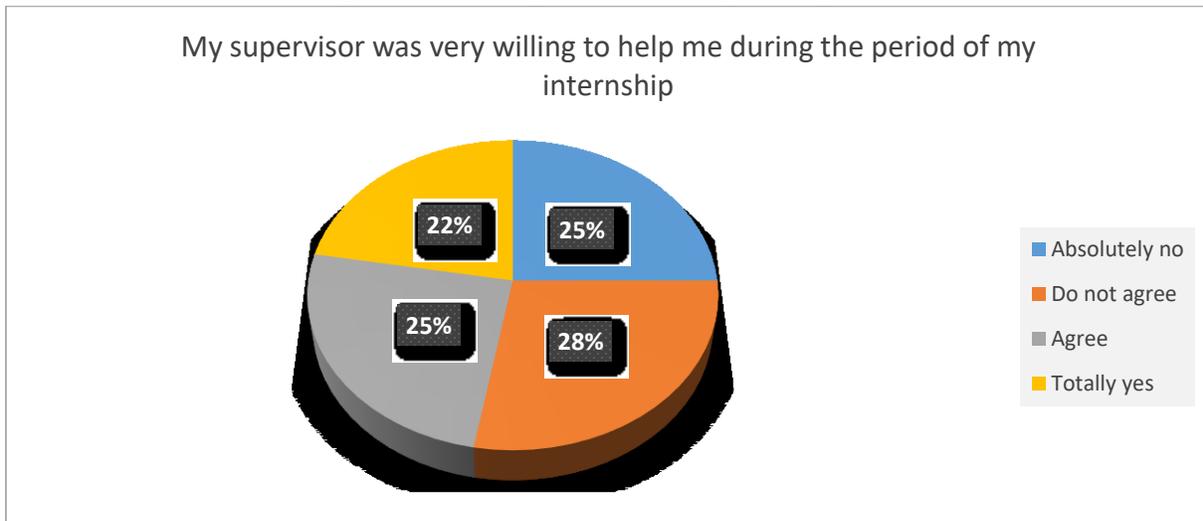


Source: EUT students' survey

Regarding the question if the internship programme helped the students to improve and further develop their professional skills (50%) of the reported that, yes it did help, meanwhile the other half reported that the internship programme that they followed did not help them to improve their professional skills. The results are showed in the Figure. 3.5.15.

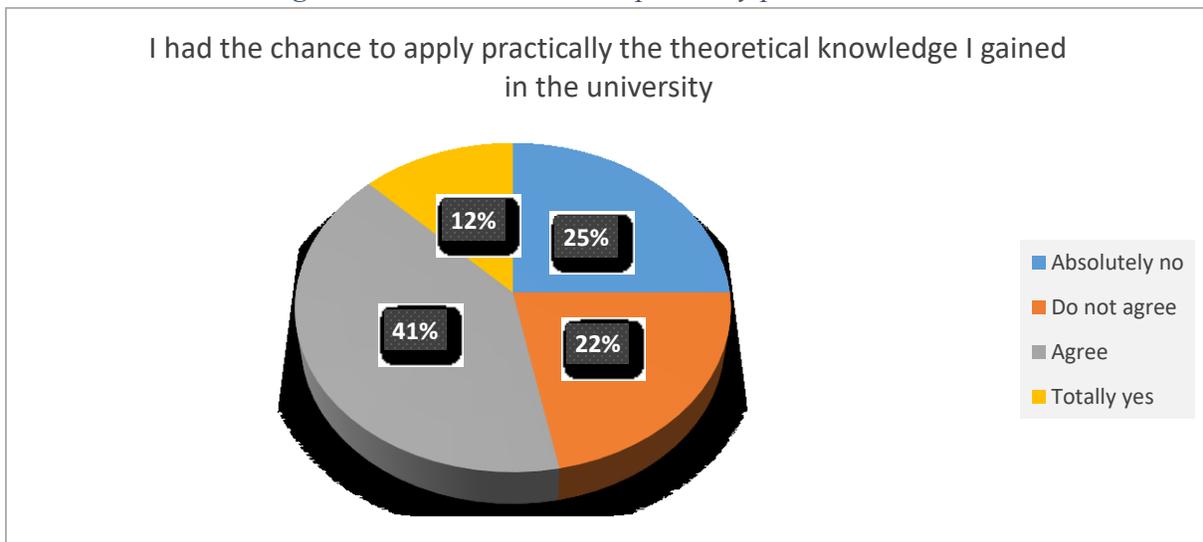
We also asked our students if they found support when they were following the internship programme by the person who was supposed to be their supervisor. According to the results of the Figure 16. (47%) of them answered that they felt supported, but more than the half reported that they have not been under the supervision of the person who was selected as the supervisor. Please refer to the Figure 3.5.16.

Figure 3.5.16. Supervisor willing to cooperate



Source: EUT students' survey

Figure 3.5.17. Chances to improve my practical skills



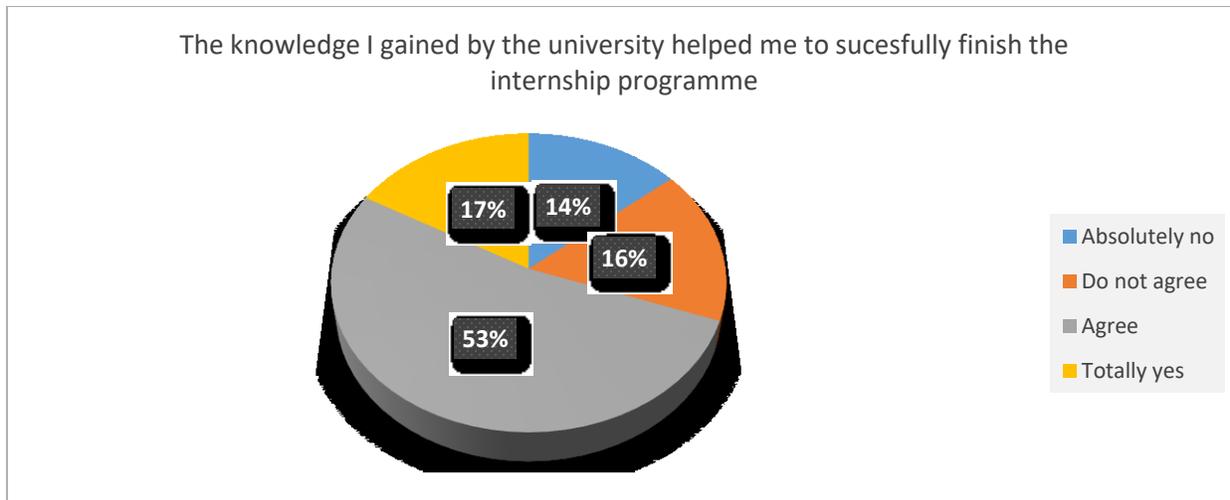
Source: UT students' survey

The internship programmes often are considered as the perfect place where the students start to apply their theoretical knowledge gained in the university. Thus, we asked to our students such a question aiming to understand if they applied their theoretical knowledge in practice. (50%) of them replied that they were able to work on the company's sector where they could apply the theoretical background, meanwhile the other half reported that they did not have the chance to apply their theoretical skills in the company that they were following the internship programme. Such results are reflected in the Figure 3.5.17.

It was also in our interest to understand if the university curricula help the students to be prepared for the market requirement. Thus, we asked to our students if the knowledge they gained during their studies at European University of Tirana were sufficient for a successful internship experience. (70%) of them reported that they felt professionally prepared regarding the field/expertize that they were covering

during the internship programme and (30%) of them answered that their studies did not help them for a successful internship experience.

Figure 3.5.18. Lecturers vs market

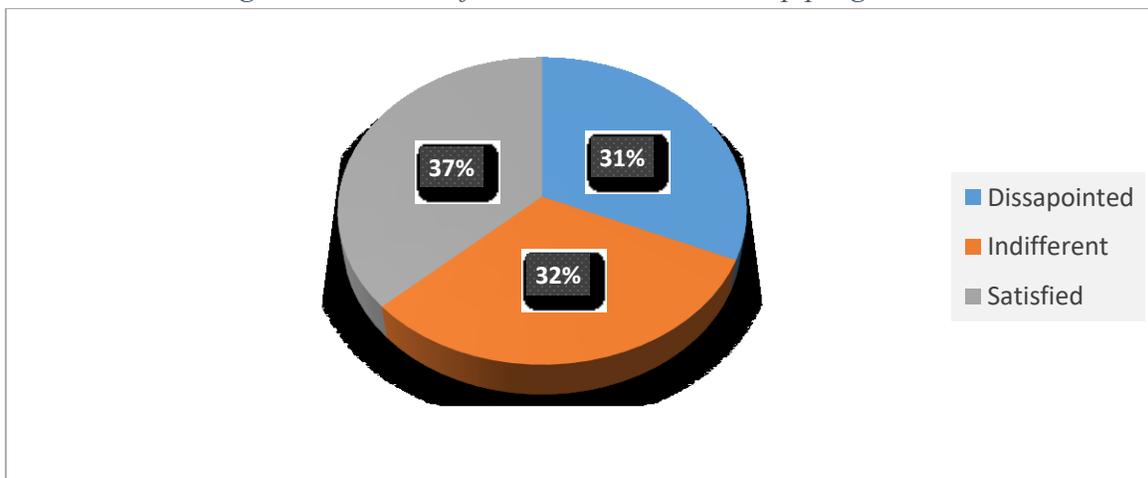


Source: EUT students' survey

### Satisfaction with the internship programme

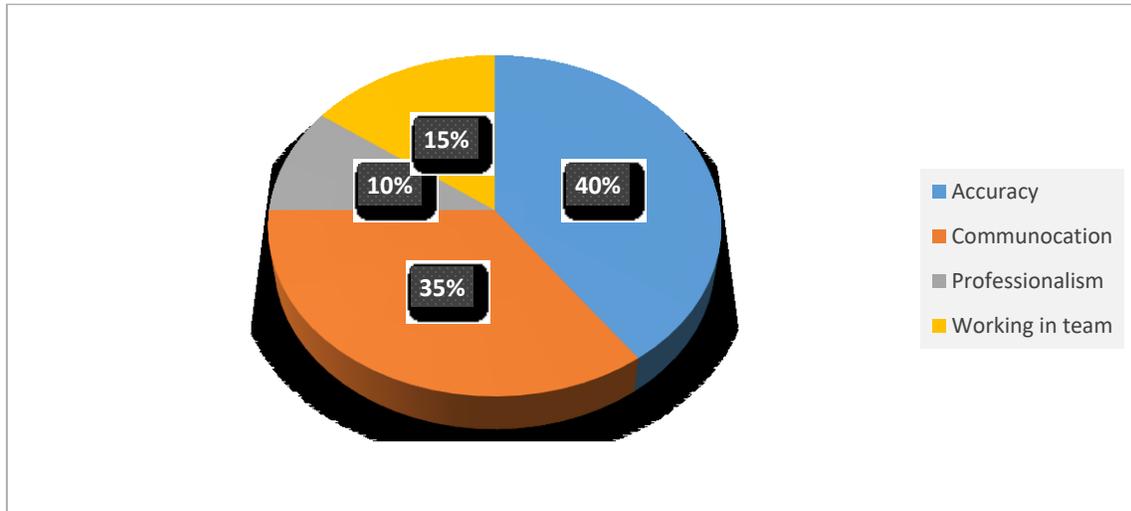
Students were asked if they felt satisfied with the overall internship experience after finishing it. This question as measured with a 10 point scale (1= very disappointed and 10= very satisfied). At this point, I collapsed the data as follow: 1-4= disappointed; 5-6 = indifferent and 7-10 =satisfied. I collapsed the data in order to simplify the analysis. Furthermore, collapsing the data as such does not implicate the bias results. The results are not very optimistic. According to them, as showed in the Figure 3.5.19 only (37%) of the student expressed satisfaction with the overall internship experience, (32%) of them were indifferent and (31%) of them were disappointed.

Figure 3.5.19. Satisfaction with the internship programme



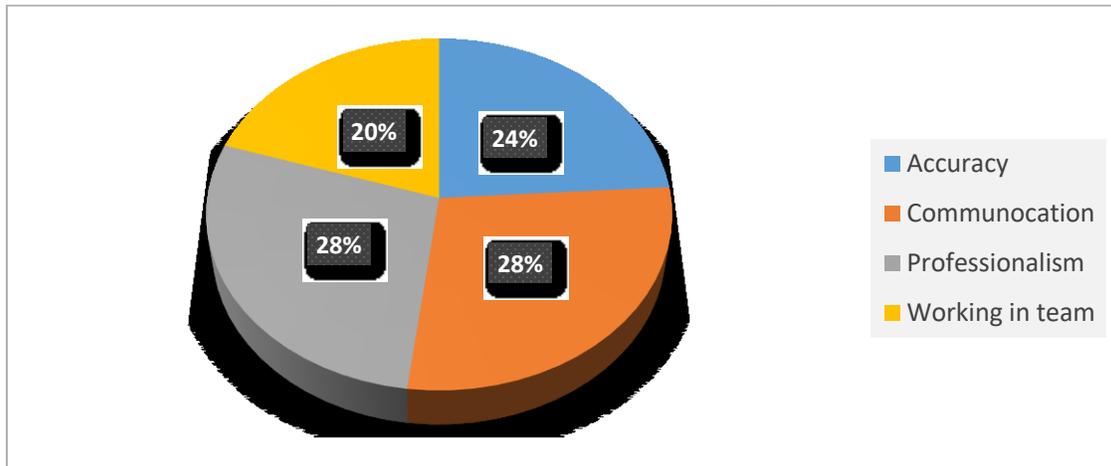
Source: EUT students' survey

Figure 3.5.20. Strength at the work place



Source: EUT students' survey

Figure 3.5.21. Weakness at the work place



Source: EUT students' survey

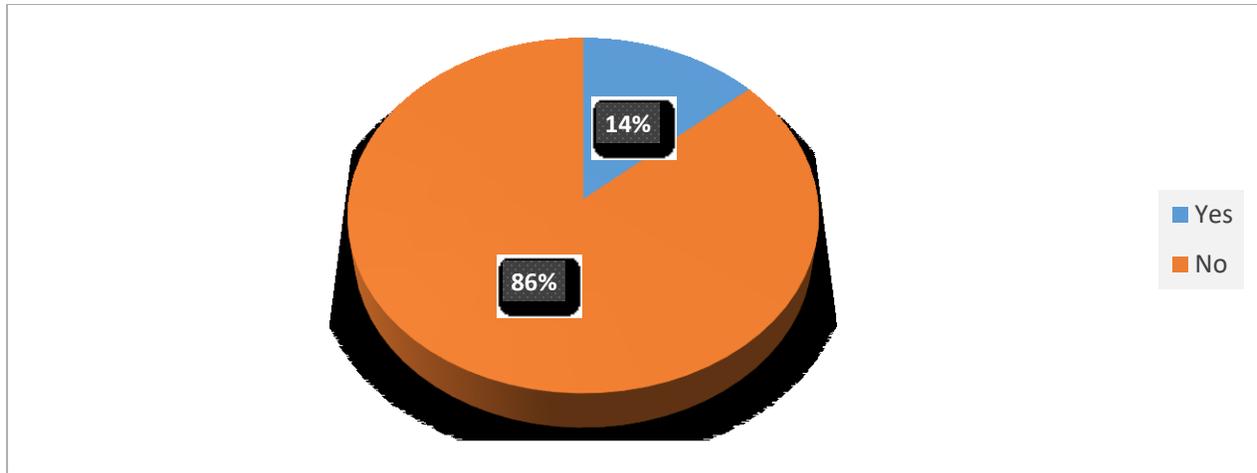
Students were also asked about their self-evaluation. Figures 3.5.20 and 3.5.21 shows their answers regarding their strength and weakness that they felt during the internship programme. As it is reported by the Figure 20 (40%) of the students think that their strength was the 'accuracy' and (35%) of them admit that their strength is related with the good communication skills.

Regarding their weakness, as it is showed in the Figure 3.5.21 (28%) of them reported that they lack professionalism and (28%) of them reported that their weak point is related with the communication skills.

We asked the students if they got a job offer by the company where they followed their internship programme. As it is reported by the Figure 3.5.22. (86%) of students said that they did not get a job offer

by the company where they followed their internship and only (14%) of the students got a job offer and started to work in a full time job in the same company where he/she followed the internship.

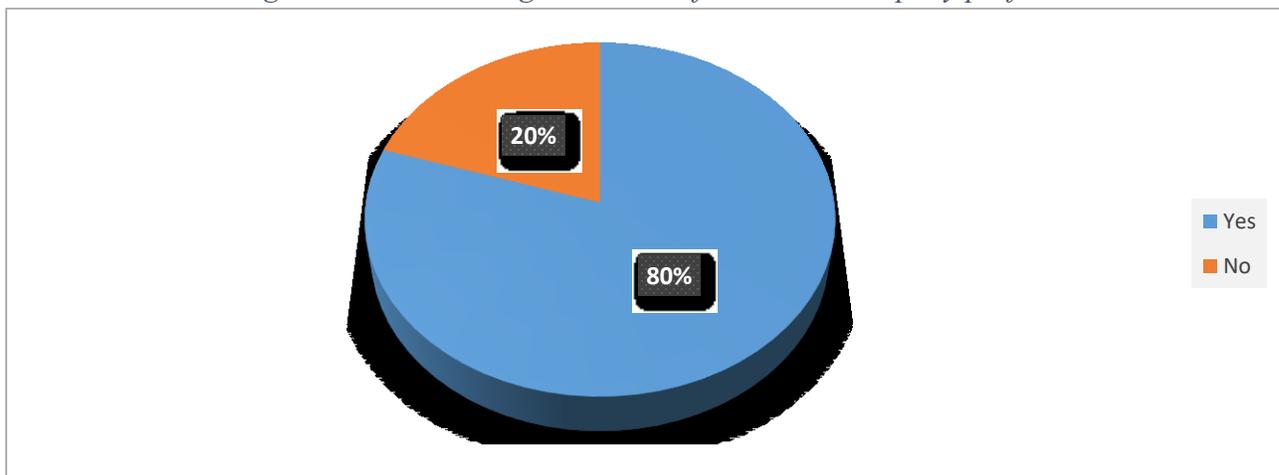
*Figure 3.5.22. Job offer by the company*



Source: EUT students' survey

Students have been asked if they prefer to work in the field where the company they made the internship programme operates. (80%) of the students responded, yes, meaning by that they liked the field and where they found involved themselves.

*Figure 3.5.23. Working in the same field as the company profile*



Source: EUT students' survey

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMANDATIONS

In order to understand (i) the efficiency of the career office towards students and (ii) the efficiency of the internship programmes that students attended during their studies, the current study is conducted on a

population of 50 students. After meeting the three conditions to ensure the integrity of the data, such as: (1) completeness, (2) plausibility of replies; and (3) time required for survey completion, the final dataset consisted of 43 respondents.

According to the results 49% of the participants declared that they were willing to conduct an internship programme abroad but they did not have enough information about it. It means that the career office should put more efforts in this regard. However, 56% of the students said that the career office facilitated the process during the time period they were looking for an internship programme and 53% of them declared that the career office supported the students during their application for the internship programme.

The results are not very optimistic, as the career office should disseminate sufficient information about the internship programmes and should support all the students in need during their application. As far as, several students declare that they did not have the support of the career office (16% of them declared as such), it means that the career office should increase the number of its members or should prioritize its agenda.

The students were also asked regarding the career office and what should be improved in its services. According to 32% of the participants in the study, the career office has to disseminate more information regarding the internship programmes offered aboard. Meanwhile, 16% of the students declared that the career office should involve in its daily basis work a higher number of students. It means that the EUT students would like to collaborate with the career office of their university during their studies.

In order to understand the efficiency of the career office with the aim to improve its services, the survey included questions regarding the contact point between the student and the company where he/she conducted the internship programme. The results show that 35% of the students found the company where they conducted the internship programme through the career office, 26% of them declared that the contact point were their professors and 23% found the company by themselves. According to the results more than 50% of the students found the company for the internship programme through the University channels.

Students were also asked regarding the space that they had during the internship programme in the company to conduct their own projects. 59% of them declared that they did not have such a space. It means that the career office should work in this regard too. One way can be through a specific agreement that the career office can sign with several companies, giving the necessary space to the students to develop their skills through their own projects. The companies that recently are operating in the Albanian market started to develop specific programmes dedicated to the students with the aim of employing them in the near future. Thus, the career office can start to collaborate with such companies in order to increase its efficiency and consequently creating the needed space in the company for the students.

It was also in the focus of the current study to understand if the university curricula help the students get prepared for the market requirement. Thus, the students were asked if the knowledge they gained during their studies at the University were sufficient for a successful internship experience. (70%) of them reported that they felt professionally prepared regarding the field/expertize that they were covering during the internship programme. It means that the curricula are well prepared based in the market needs.

Unfortunately, a great number of students declared that they were disappointed with the internship experience (31%) and 32% of them were completely indifferent in this regard. These are not optimistic results, meaning that the career office should be more careful in selecting the companies where the students can conduct their internship. On the other hand, 80% of students declared that they did their internship according to their field of study.

### 3.6 PU evaluation of internships from students



#### Introduction of POLIS University

POLIS University is a “university space for thinking” in the fields of science planning and development of the territory, applied design, construction and technology, civic leadership and private entrepreneurship.

The mission of POLIS University is to provide knowledge, technology and leadership for people, encouraging development and innovation. Through applied and scientific research POLIS University develops and promotes scientific excellence and innovation. Through academic and practical teaching it enhances creative and comprehensive competences.

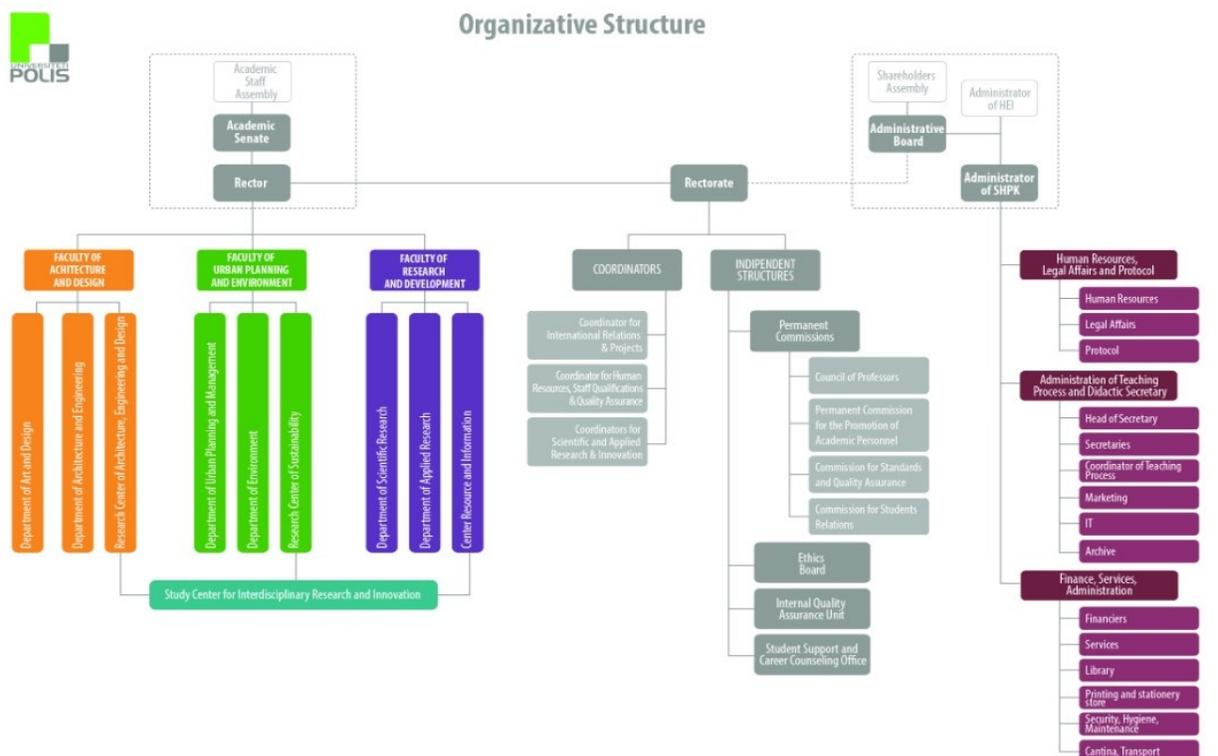
POLIS University is a privately funded institution with strong social responsibility. The founders in the same time are representative of ‘Assembly of Partners’ are a group of prominent Albanian professionals, activists of civil society, and academics who aim at creation of a “critical mass” of experts and leaders of private entrepreneurship who will push Albania and the region towards the EU and global trends.

#### POLIS University Faculties

POLIS University has 3 units (Faculties):

- FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
- FACULTY OF URBAN PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT
- FACULTY OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Figure 3.6.1: Organizational Structure POLIS University



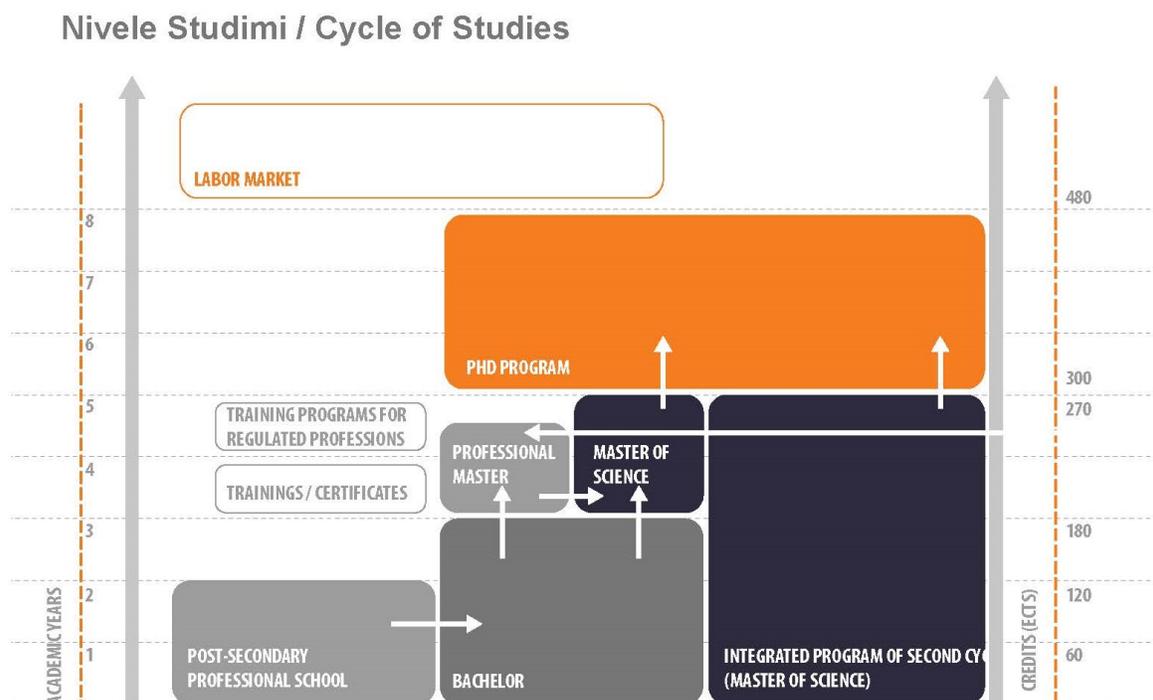
Source: Polis University

Each main unit consists of three base units: usually two departments and a research unit, while the “INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND INOVATION” is the unit which coordinates the activities of three base unites (centers) at each main unit.

### Cycles of Study and Academic Programs

At POLIS University, the study programs are organized in the following cycles: Post-Secondary (Professional School), Bachelor, Master (Integrated Program of Second Cycle, Professional Master, Master of Science) and PhD Program.

Figure 3.6.2: Cycle of Studies



Source:Polis University

#### Post-Secondary (Professional School)

- Professional Diploma in Energy Efficiency
- Professional Diploma in Maintenance of Computer Networks

#### Bachelor Studies of POLIS:

- Bachelor in Art and Design
- Bachelor in Civil Engineering
- Bachelor in Environmental Studies
- Bachelor in Computer Science

### **Professional Master in Parametric Design with profiles;**

- Architectonic and Parametric Design
- Aesthetic Structural Design
- Landscape and Urban Design

### **Professional Master in Territorial Development Policies with profiles;**

- Spatial Planning and GIS Application
- Housing and Land Development
- Urban Social Development & Human Resources

### **Professional Master in Business Administration with profile;**

- Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Real Estate
- Marketing and Strategy

### **Master of Science:**

- Master of Science in Applied Design
- Master of Science in Civil Engineering
- Master of Science in Urban Environmental Management

### **Integrated Program of Second Cycle:**

- Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design
- Master of Science in Urban Planning and Management

### **Alumni Association**

Association of Former Students ALUMNI at POLIS University, ensures active organization and interaction between staff and students by addressing issues which concern the quality of the teaching process, infrastructure, staff, curricula, and the social, cultural, and athletic life.

The students are also active with “Social Media”; they organize exhibitions, design events and promote the University publications and the "I LOVE POLIS" brand.

The Association of Former Students, ALUMNI which includes the Constitutional Assembly and the Executive Board, exercises its activity in close coordination to the governing organs of U\_POLIS and focuses on the professional welfare of the individuals who have completed their studies at the University.

All the members of the association have the right to:

- Benefit from the assistance programs administered by the Association.

- Win scholarships.
- Exhibit their work in the MAD center and other assets of U\_POLIS.
- Participate in the social life and activities of U\_POLIS, Metro\_POLIS, Co\_PLAN, etc.
- Engage in the different projects of U\_POLIS, Metro\_POLIS based on demand, by undergoing a selection process managed by U\_POLIS and Metro\_POLIS.
- Be informed in terms of the Association's activities and also participate in all social functions of the Association.
- Buy publications/periodicals of U\_POLIS at a reduced price.

### **Office of Student Support and Career Counseling**

The Unit which assist the students is represented by the Office of Student Support and Career Counseling. The aim of OSSCC as a structure is the ongoing contact with the students and the offering of multidirectional information. The information includes data on studies, different programs, career or professional orientation, and also individual or group counseling. **The Office of Student Support and Career Counseling** is a unit which assists students and follows their educational process, during and after its completion, creating a database with available data on their careers, successes, difficulties during their adaptation to the market, their achievements, lobbying for the protection of their professional rights through AUA (the Union of Architects and Urban Planners), ensuring the continuation of ties with U\_POLIS through the Alumni association, encouraging the cooperation spirit as a community through support and philanthropy.

The aim of OSSCC as a structure is the ongoing contact with the students and the offer of multidirectional information. The information includes data on studies, different programs, career or professional orientation, and also individual or group counseling. This office collaborates with the leaders of the Students' Association and the Alumni Association.

The main activities and duties of the Office of Student Support and Career Counseling are:

- The process of informing students and providing full transparency on academic, teaching, and research issues as well as their rights and duties;
- The students' orientation during the educational process, the selection of the specific educational fields, and the academic and training opportunities offered by the university;
- Awareness and knowledge offered to students on the labor market in general and on current employment opportunities;
- The maintenance of personal contact with students after their graduation and employment in order to continue receiving their feedback;
- The undertaking of up-to-date studies on the labor market and the identification of its requirements in order to make this information available to students.
- The task of getting the students involved in decision-making processes in key activities related to teaching and other activities such as research, development, and the services offered.

## Polis University Graduates' Profile Survey 2019

At Polis University, during the academic year 2018-2019, they were 1042 active students in the system, distributed in 13 programs of three faculties, in 5 cycles of studies.

Meanwhile students that were able to graduate in the period of July and September - October are 300.

*Table 3.6.4: No. of graduated students and registered in platform*

The study cycle	Nr. of Graduated Students	Registered in Platform
Bachelor	69	65
Integrated Programs	25	24
Master of Science	55	55
PHD	15	3
Professional Master	84	83
Professional School	52	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>230</b>

*Source: Polis University*

## The Population

The graduates, have managed to conclude their studies, in the following record (Fig. 3.6.3), where 54.6% of them graduated in the summer season and 45.3% graduated in autumn season. Students from 14 study programs (listed as below), were presented with the questionnaire where 98 students, from 136 graduates have taken time to respond to the questions, which consists of 72% of the graduates.

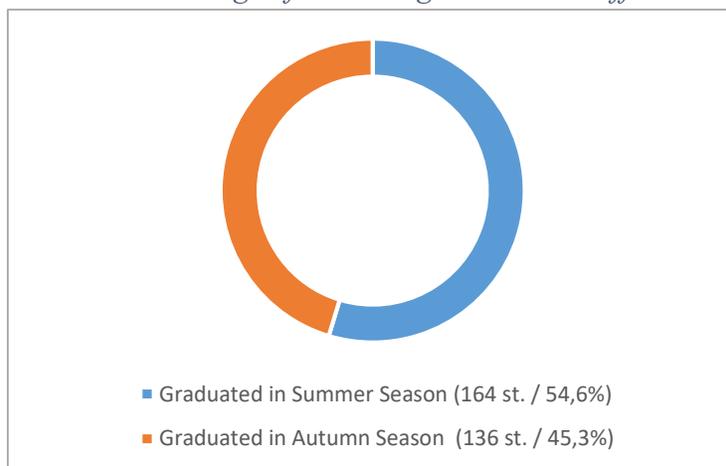
### List of the study programs where the questionnaire is distributives.

1. Architecture and Urban Design
2. Art and Design
3. Applied Design
4. Business Administration
5. Civil Engineering
6. Energy Efficiency
7. Environmental Studies
8. Environmental Urban Management
9. Territorial Development Policies with the Specialization in Urban Social Issues and Human Resources
10. Territorial Development Policies with the Specialization in Housing and Land Development
11. Territorial Development Policies with the Specialization in Spatial Planning and GIS Application
12. Parametric Design with the Specialization in Aesthetic Structural Design
13. Parametric Design with the Specialization in Landscape and Urban Design
14. Urban Planning and Management

## Study Procedure

The questionnaires regarding the experience of the professional practices, were distributed to the students which graduated in the autumn season.

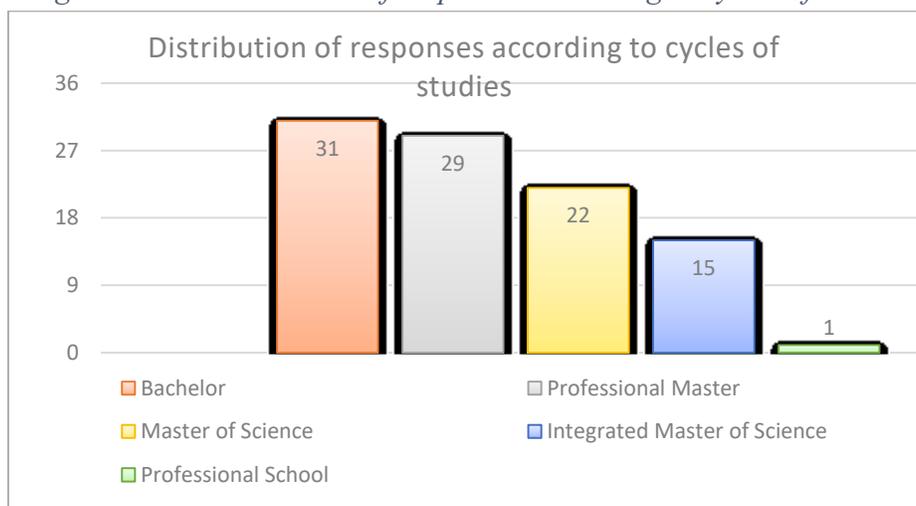
*Figure 3.6.7: Percentage of students graduated in different seasons*



*Source:Polis University*

The questionnaires filled during this phase had a major of distribution in the Bachelor study program, which is also in proportion with the programs with the higher amount of students. Followed by the Professional Master Programs and Integrated Master of Science. The Professional (Vocational) Programs are represented just by one student, while the PhD students, are not included in this questionnaire, since they have no requirements or needs regarding professional practice, considering the fact that they are having research activities, mostly parallel with their actual jobs.

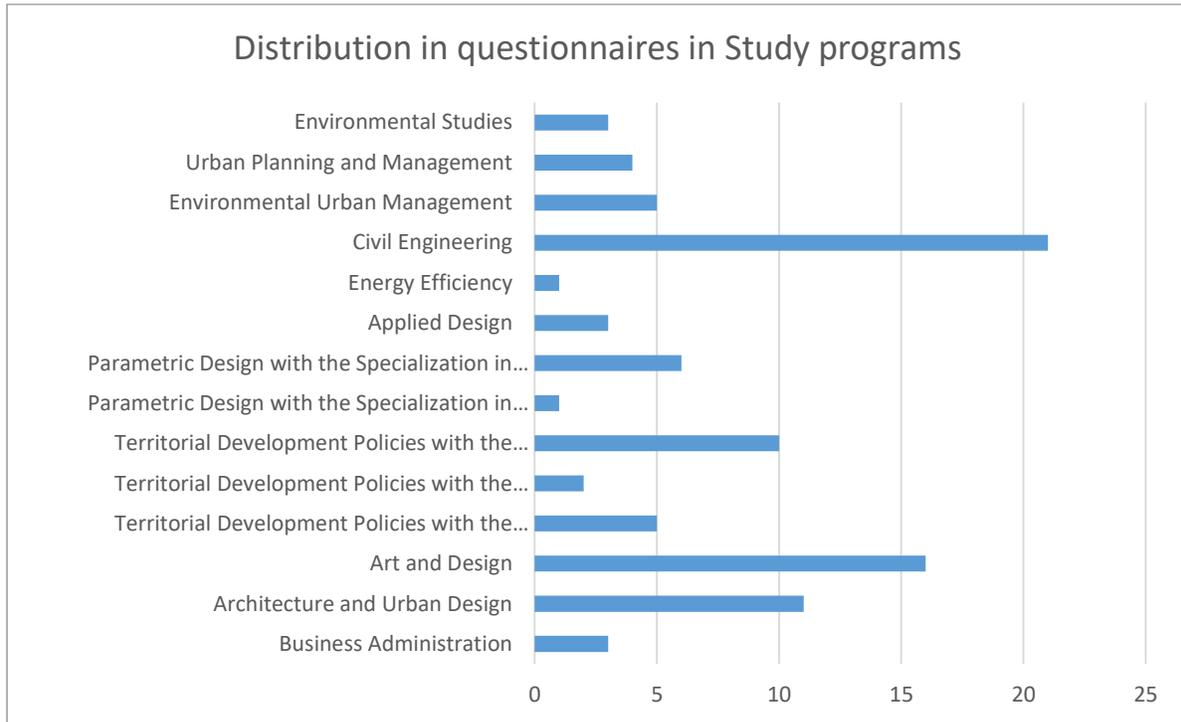
*Figure 3.6.8: Distribution of responses according to cycles of studies*



Source: PU students' survey

The distribution for the completion of the questionnaire regarding the study programs is reflected in the Figure 3.6.5, where the Bachelor of Civil Engineering (21 students), followed by the Bachelor of Art and Design (16 students) and Integrated Master of Science in Architecture (11 students), whilst all the other programs have managed to complete less than 10 students, each.

Figure 3.6.9: Distribution of the student's questionnaires in study programs



Source: PU students' survey

## Data Cleaning

In order to obtain more accurate information, the data underwent the cleaning process. To evaluate the student profile, only the cases that had completed the questionnaire at least 60% were retained at the start. It was also used the criteria of answering at least two of the following questions.

- Is the professional practice thought to be undertaken outside Albania?
- What other services should the career office provide?
- How satisfied are the students with the professional practice
- Does the institution where the internship is realized offered job opportunities after the internship

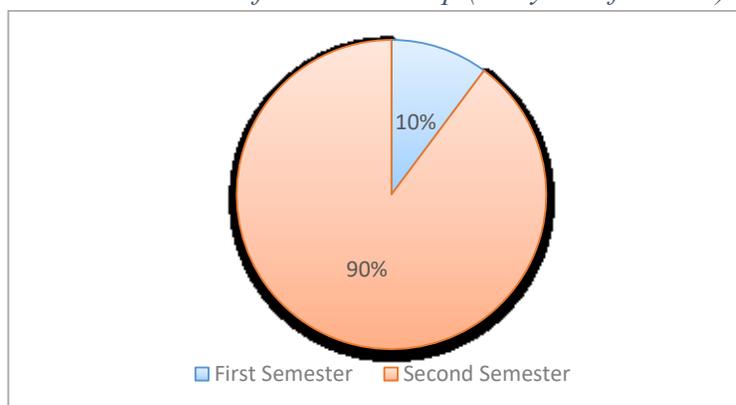
After the cleaning process, 85 out of 98 were considered valid for the survey.

## Results generated from the questionnaire of the professional practice

### Place and Time of the internship occurrence

In the questionnaire regarding the professional internship, the students are at first questioned for the period when they conducted the internship. The students were instructed to profit from the last 2 semesters of their studies to actualize their internship. From the results of the questionnaire it is identifiable that 90% has fulfilled this task during the last semester of their studies, while only 10% of the students have managed to attend their professional practice during the first semester of the last year of studies (Fig. 3.6.6). This response rate is related with the structure and organization of the last year of studies, since the second semester is mostly dedicated to the thesis or final exam preparation and internship.

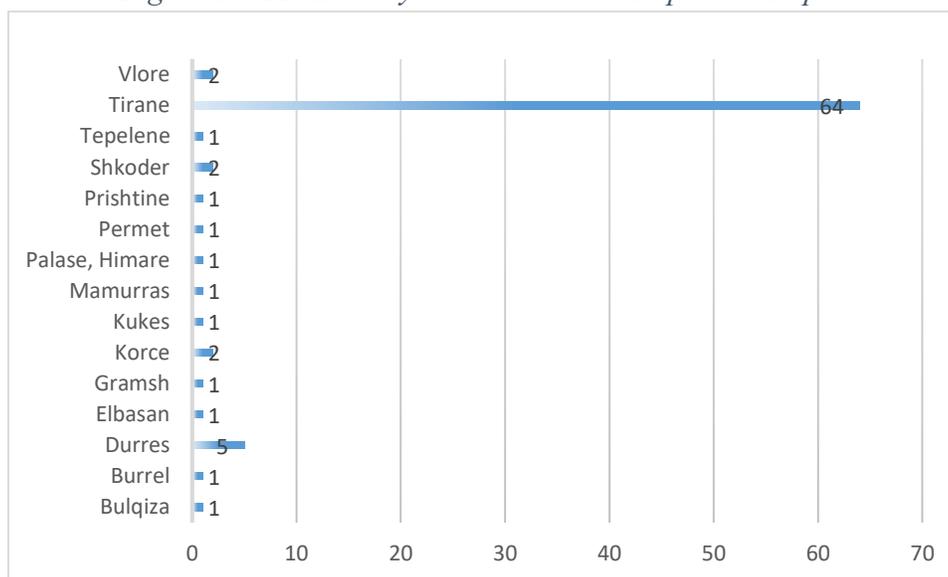
Figure 3.6.10: Semester of The Internship (last year of studies)



Source: PU students' survey

During the questionnaire, there was also the interest in the city where the students have conducted the internship.

Figure 3.6.11: The city where the internship is developed

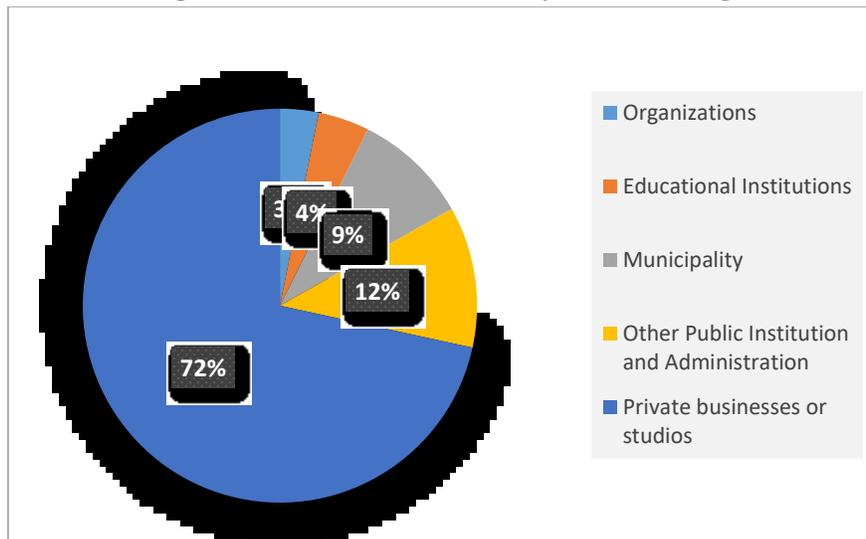


Source: PU students' survey

In the Figure 3.6.7, the answers regarding this question are presented, with a frequency of 64 students which have managed to execute the internship in Tirana, which is related with the city where they are accommodated and the range of the possibilities in the capital. Other major cities like Durres, Korca, Shkodra or Vlora follows with the ratio of two responses, except Durres which is mentioned in 5 responses. Whiles the other cities in the figure, are mentioned by only one student each.

The Institution where the students have concluded their internship hours, are also at specific interest, which also indicates their preferences as well as the institutions which offer more space for their internship.

Figure 3.6.12: The institution of the internship



Source: PU students' survey

In the figure 3.6.8, it is illustrated that the 72% of the students, consisting in 54 students out of 85, have chosen or have had greater opportunities in private studios, in consideration with 3% who have found a space in an organization, 4% in an educational institution, and 9% in municipalities. The group of other public institutions and administration was also a considerable preference represented in the responses with 12%.

In the following table, the responses from the questionnaire regarding the institutions/organizations or businesses where the students have achieved their internship is revealed.

Table 3.6.5: List of the institutions where students have completed their internship

LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS WHERE STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED THEIR INTERNSHIP		
A99 Architects	Dentsi Aegis Network	Larti Sh.p.k
Adis Design Studio	DERBI-E sh.p.k	Light project shpk

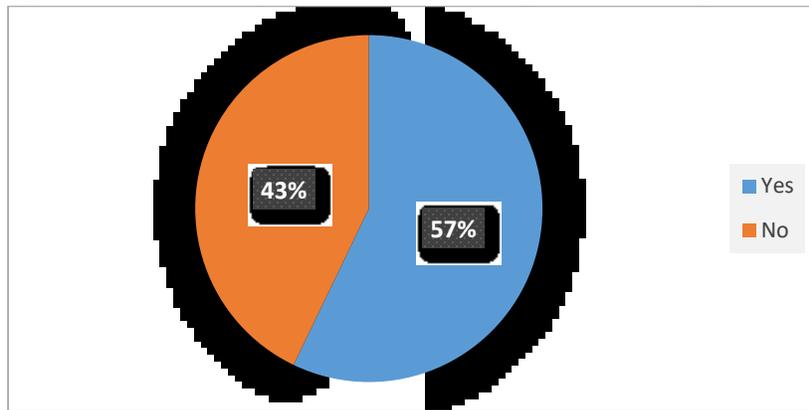
Agjencia Shteterore e Kadastres	Devoll Hydropwer sh.a	Lim-Eni Company
Al Point Shpk	Dragovoja Architecture	Macaferni Garden Line
AL- STEEL Sh.p.k	Drejtoria Rajonale OSHEE Shkoder	Marsi Sh.p.k
Alba Konstruksion	Egeu Stone Sh.p.k	Martini Design Studio
Albsig	Eurostar sh.p.k	MetroPolis sh.p.k
Alfa Design Studio sh.p.k	Express Print & Communication	Milieu Kontakt Albania
Aluizni	Focus Architecture Studio	Novatech Studio sh.p.k
Aluizni Durres	Fondi Shqiptar i Zhvillimit	Njesia Bashkiake Nr 94
AMB	Frederika Arti Martesor	P.T. Ndertim
Anna Solutions	Gener 2 Sh.p.k	P.T. Ndertim
Arkitekti Im Studio	Geostat Group	Pallati I Sportit Asllan Rusi
ASIG	Gold Construction Studio	POLIS
Bashkia Burrel	Grand Idea Office	Porche Albania sh.p.k
Bashkia Korce	Grand pool SPA	Quad Studio
Bashkia Permet	Hastoci	Rean sh.p.k
Bashkia Shkoder	Hera Company	SNS Consulting Engineering
Bashkia Tepelene	Hotel Stela	Speed Engineers
Bashkia Tirane	I.X.H.E.M sh.p.k	SRP - Albanian Engineering
Bashkia Tirane	ICE (Ingenuity Consulting Engineers)	Studio Arch 4
Bashkia Vau I Dejes	Igjeum	Sherbimi Hidrografik Shqiptar
Buci Sh.p.k	IMK-Instituti Monumenteve dhe kultures	Sherbimi Kombetar I Punesimit
Build Green Group	Info Albania	Taulant shpk
CBS	Infraplan	Taulant shpk
CBS Creative Studio	J & F Architectural Designer Sh.p.k	UFT
Co-Plan	Kastrati Construction	Valet Sh.p.k
DDS Design dhe print	Kika Construction	Vogolat sh.p.k
Dekliada - Sh.p.k	Landmark Communication	ZQRPP

Source: PU students' survey

### **Internship abroad or within the state**

Faced with the question of whether they have thought of having the internship abroad, 57% of the students (out of 85) have declared that they have thought of having the internship abroad, through mobility programs or scholarship (Fig. 3.6.9).

Figure 3.6.13: Have you thought of having the internship abroad?



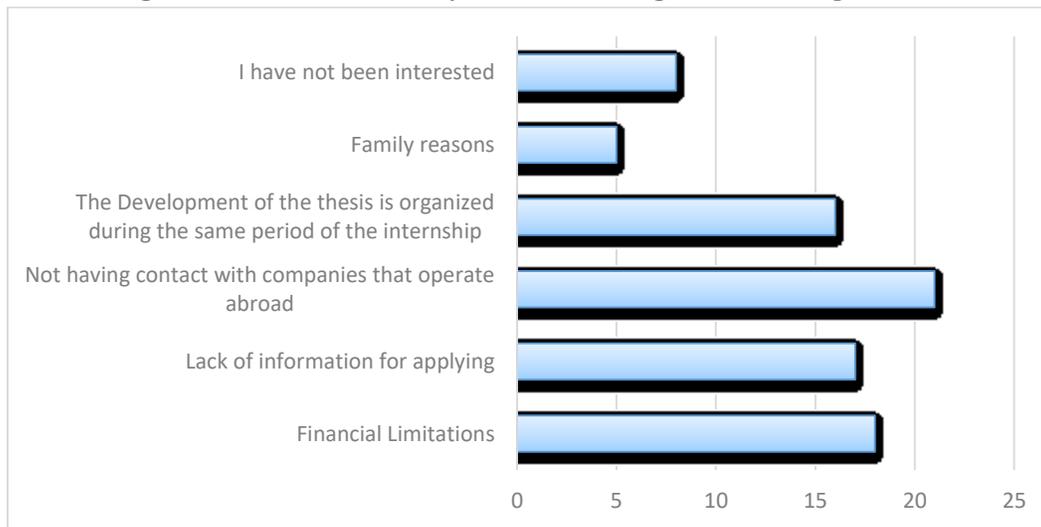
Source: PU students' survey

In order to better understand the reasons why the students have chosen to engage in the internship in Albania, and not considering the abroad option, they were asked to define the reasons for not attending the internship abroad (Fig. 3.6.10).

The three main reasons listed by the students, consist on:

1. Not having contact with companies that operate abroad (17.85%)
2. Financial limitations (15.3%)
3. Lack of information for applying (14.45%)
4. The development of the thesis is organized during the same period of the internship (13.6%)

Figure 3.6.14: The reason for not attending the internship abroad

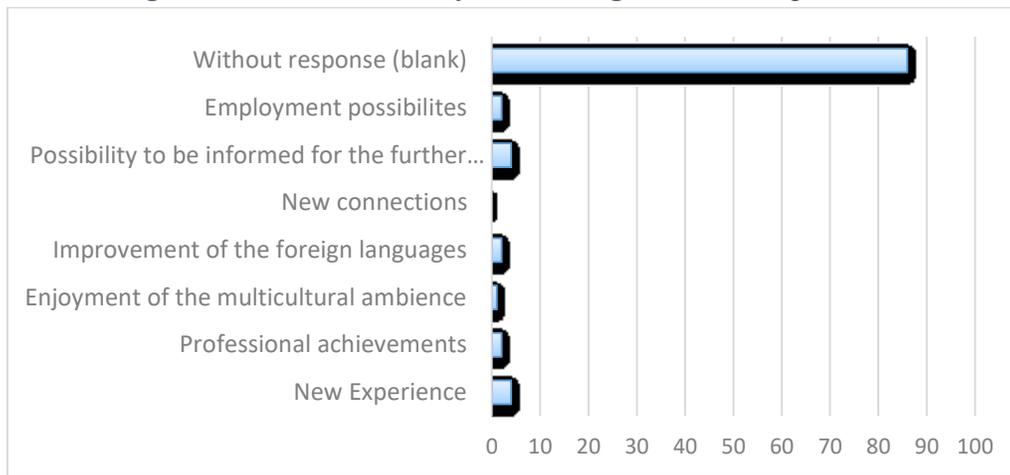


Source: PU students' survey

The three first reasons, are related with the level of information that the students have regarding the opportunities available for internship abroad, which considering the comments, is limited in the information provided by the university and the OSSCE on the Erasmus Exchange options, which underlines the fact that still there is a little information in terms of application processes and few possibilities regarding scholarship.

In the question why the students, have chosen to attend an internship abroad, there is no trend or domination of answers which can help in interpreting better the situation (Fig. 3.6.11).

Figure 3.6.15: The reason for attending the internship abroad



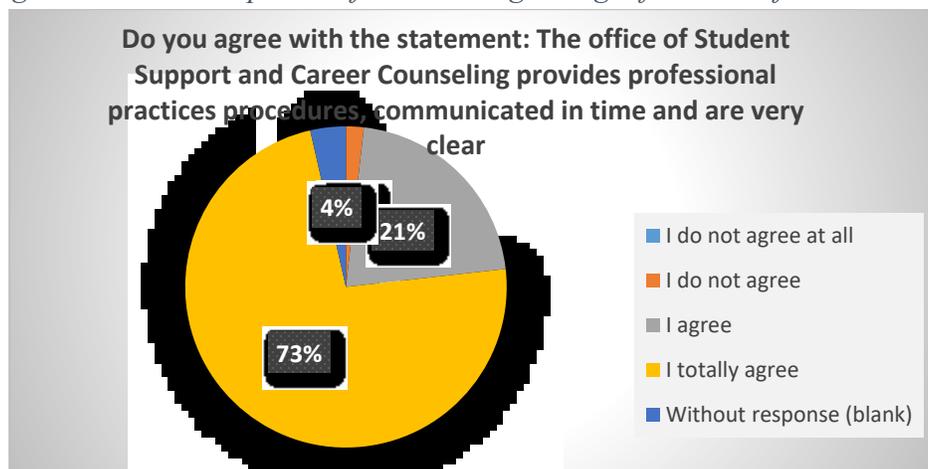
Source: PU students' survey

### Evaluation for the OSSCC (Office of Student Support and Career Counseling)

In the questionnaire for the professional practice the students were asked to evaluate the Office of Students Support and Career Counseling.

In the first section, the students were asked regarding the information that OSSCC provided for professional practices procedures and the way of their communication, which constituted in a response of 73% of the students, satisfied with the information, the clarity and timing of the information from the OSSCC (Fig. 3.6.12). 21% of the students, were quite satisfied with this service from the OSSCC while only 6% showed a lack of satisfaction or poor satisfaction.

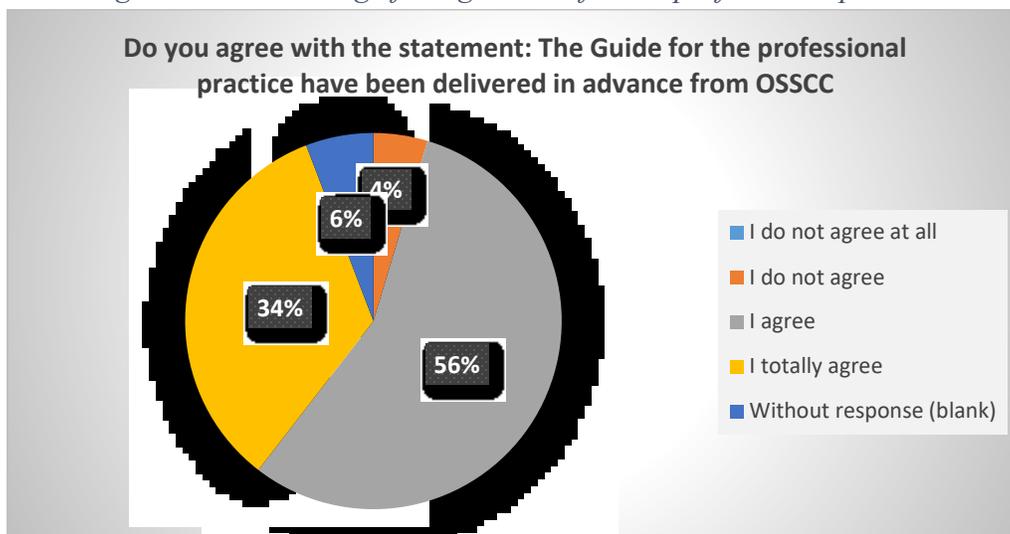
Figure 3.6.16: The opinion of students regarding information for internships



Source: PU students' survey

Further on, the report was interested in achieving more clear understanding in the timing of the guidance for the professional practice (fig. 3.6.13).

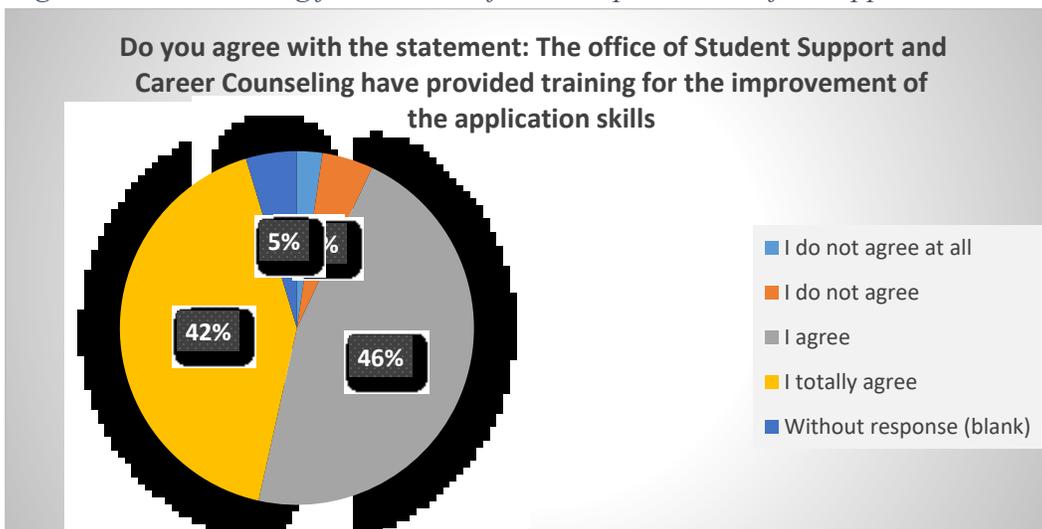
Figure 3.6.17: Timing of the guidance for the professional practice



Source: PU students' survey

From the statistics accumulated by the responses, the report of the students resulted in 56% students who agreed that the timing of information and guidance for professional practice by the OSSCC was in alignment with the time of the internship occurrence. 34% have consented their recognition of the information coming in the proper time from this office, while 10% were doubtful or not satisfied.

Figure 3.6.18: Training from OSSCE for the improvement of the application skills

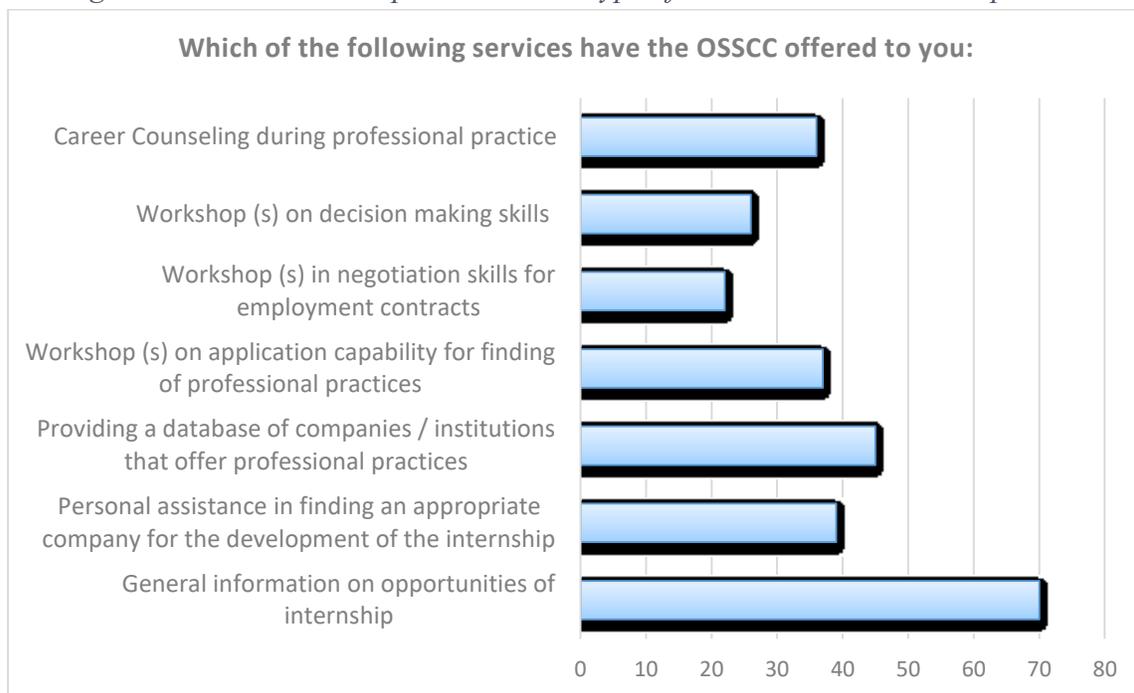


Source: PU students' survey

Regarding the question, whether the OSSCC have provided training for the improvement of the application skills (Fig. 14), 46% of the students have declared their full recognition in this matter, along

with 42% which agree to have taken this kind of service. Only 12% have disagreed or haven't been satisfied from this service of OSSCC.

*Figure 3.6.19: Student's opinion on what type of services should OSSCE provide*

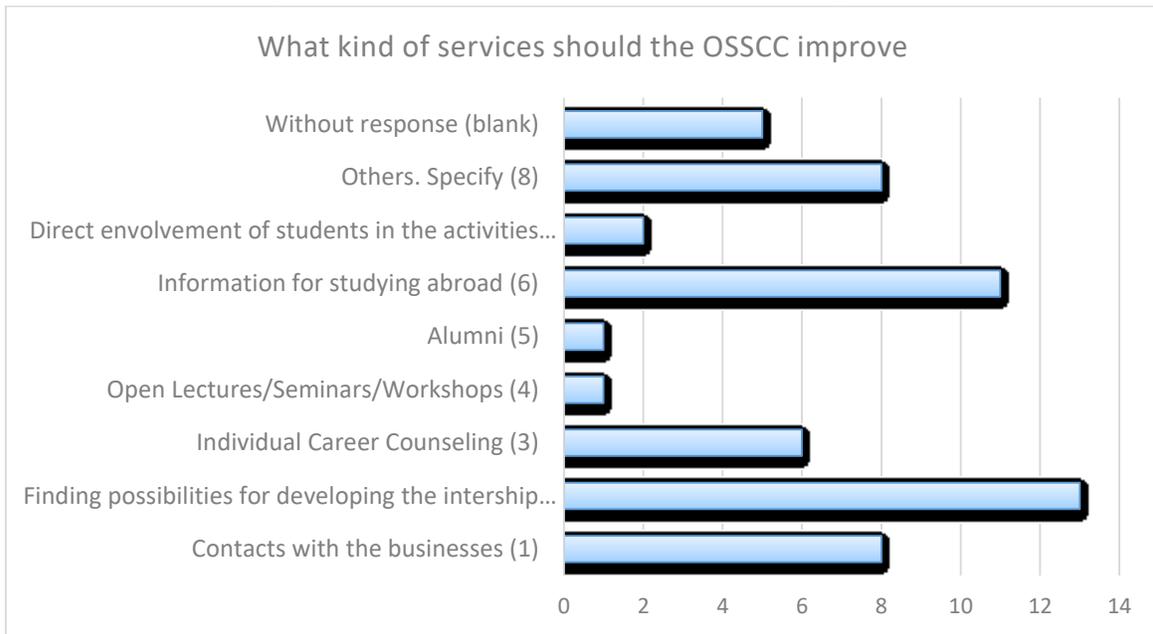


Source: PU students' survey

Students were also asked for the services that they require from the Office of Student Support and Career Counseling in general (Fig.3.6.15). Since this type of question was opened with more than one alternative eligible, 70% of them, have stated that general information regarding the internship opportunities, is the first service that they evaluate OSSCE should provide. Followed by a database of companies/institutions (45%), personal assistance in finding an appropriate company for the development of the internship (39%), and career counseling (37%). The workshops in negotiation skills, application capabilities decision making were considered less valuable.

For the actual OSSCC (Fig. 3.6.16), the students have identified 2 main components that this office can improve by underlying the search for companies, capable for offering internships and the possibilities offered abroad. Contacts with Alumni and open lectures, seminars were the ones considered less valuable.

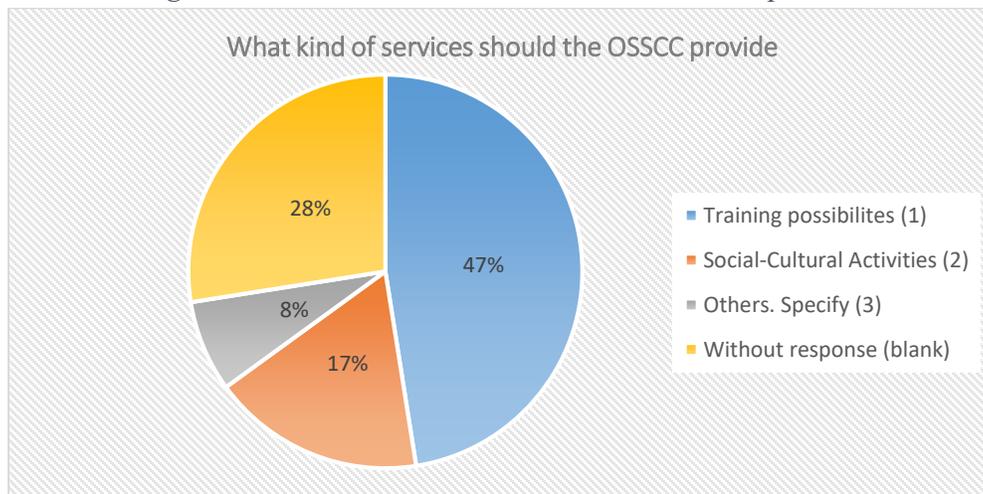
Figure 3.6.20: Services that OSSCC should improve?



Source: PU students' survey

Regarding the activities that OSSCC should provide, 47% of the responses, are oriented to toward the training possibilities and 17% in social-cultural activities.

Figure 3.6.21: The Activities that OSSCC should provide

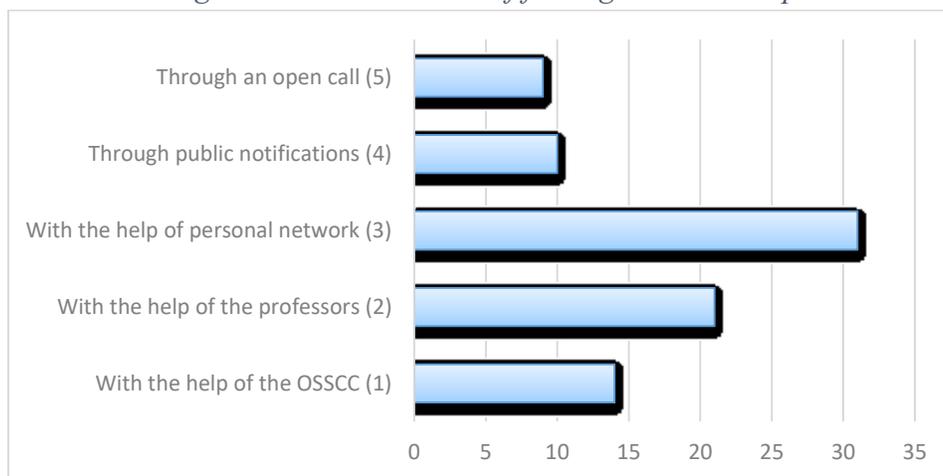


Source: PU students' survey

### The professional practice (internship) characteristics

The last section of the questionnaire is focused on the student's evaluation of the professional practice experience.

Figure 3.6.22: The mean of finding the internship

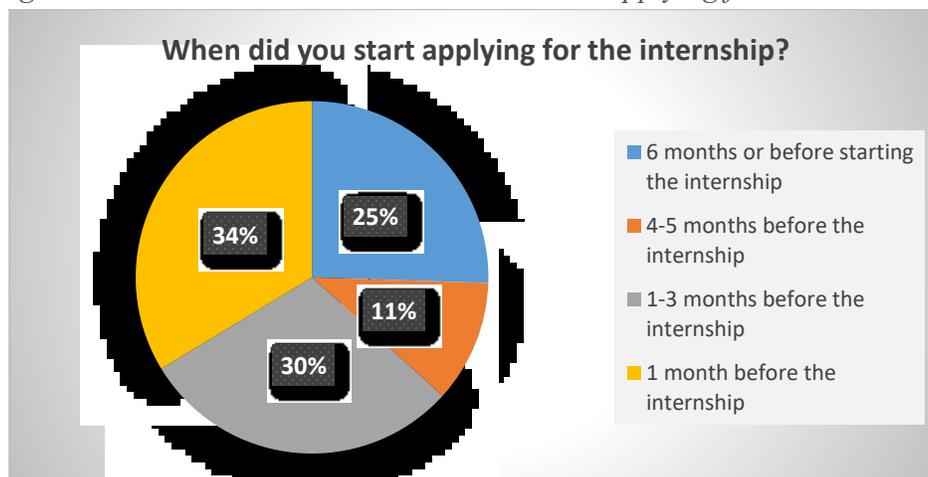


Source: PU students' survey

The responses are concluded in figure 3.6.18, where it is specified that 32 students have reached the possibility for the internship with the help of the personal network, 22% of them, with the help of the professors and 13.5% through OSSCC.

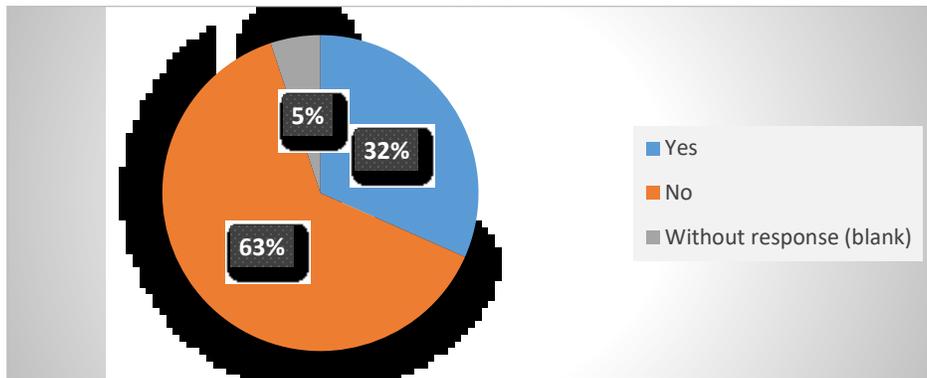
In the questionnaire the students were asked regarding the time when they started to apply for the internship (fig.3.6.19), from where 25% of them declared that they started applying for the professional practice more than 6 months before the initiation of the internship, 34% of them have started applying 1 month before the internship, 11% in the period of 4-5 months before the internship and 30% in the period of 1-3 months before.

Figure 3.6.23: Time when students have started applying for the internship.



Source: PU students' survey

Figure 3.6.24: Reivement of payment during the internship

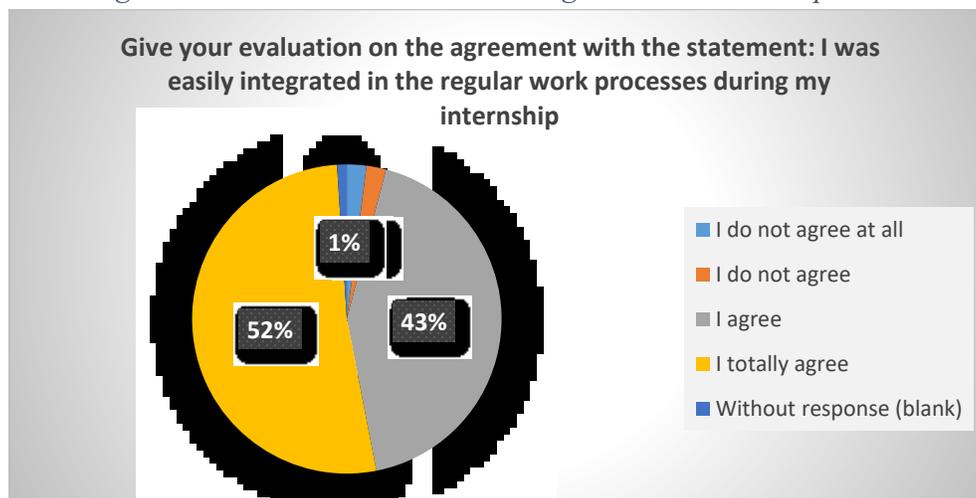


Source: PU students' survey

Regarding opportunity of receiving payment during internship (fig.20) , 63% of the students have declared that their professional practice was not payed, while 32% of them have had the opportunity to achieve a payed internship.

The experience of the professional practice is requested to be evaluated by the students, in terms of integration in regular work processes (fig.3.6.21) where 52% of the students have stated they have been easily integrated in the work processes and 43%, that have managed to integrate.

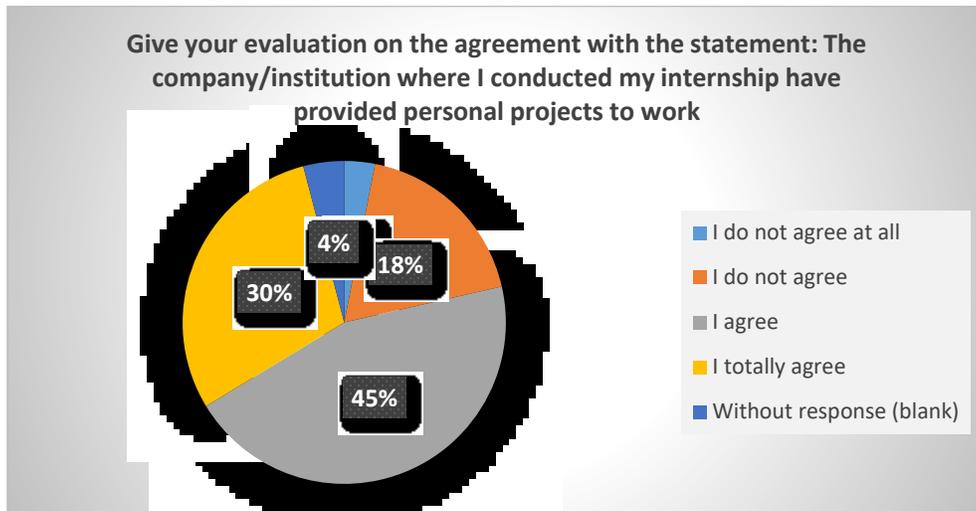
Figure 3.6.25: Evaluation on the integration in the work process



Source: PU students' survey

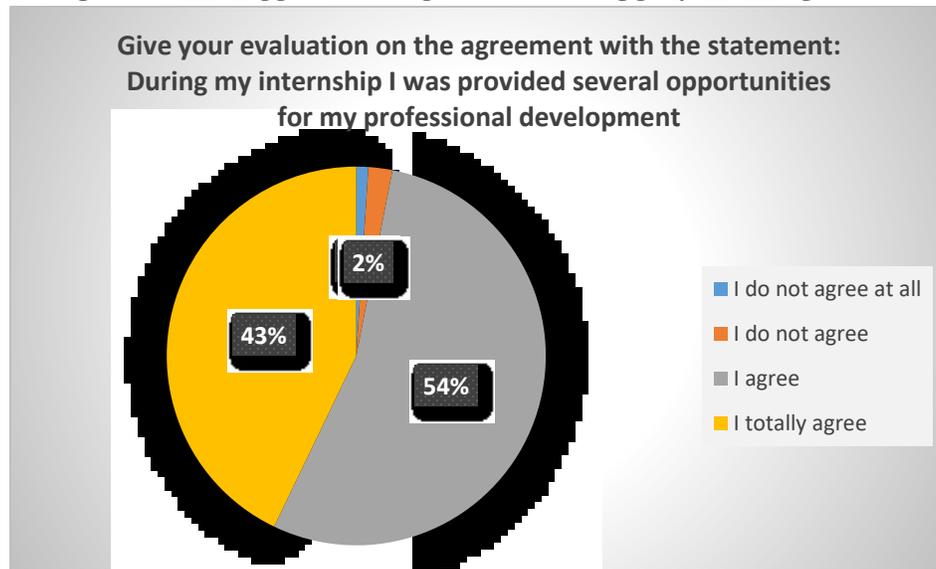
Whiles the trust of the companies in giving the interns personal projects during the professional practice (fig.22) have been perceived by the students in 30% responses in favor of receiving this type of trust immediatly, and 45% receiving it during the internship, figures which underline great opportunities in their freedom to work on projects.

Figure 3.6.26: Providing projects to intern work



Source: PU students' survey

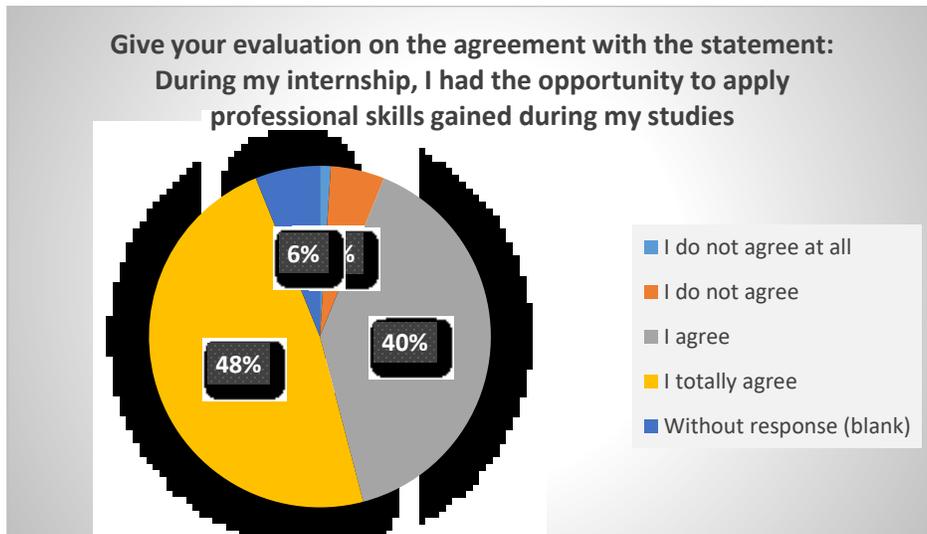
Figure 3.6.27: Opportunities provided during professional practice



Source: PU students' survey

The majority of the students, around 97% (fig.3.6.23) declared that they have been presented opportunities for professional development during their internship, while the application of the professional skills gained in school have been able to be implemented by almost 88% of the students, during their internship, in comparison with 12% who did not relate the combination of academic skills with job requirements (fig.3.6.24).

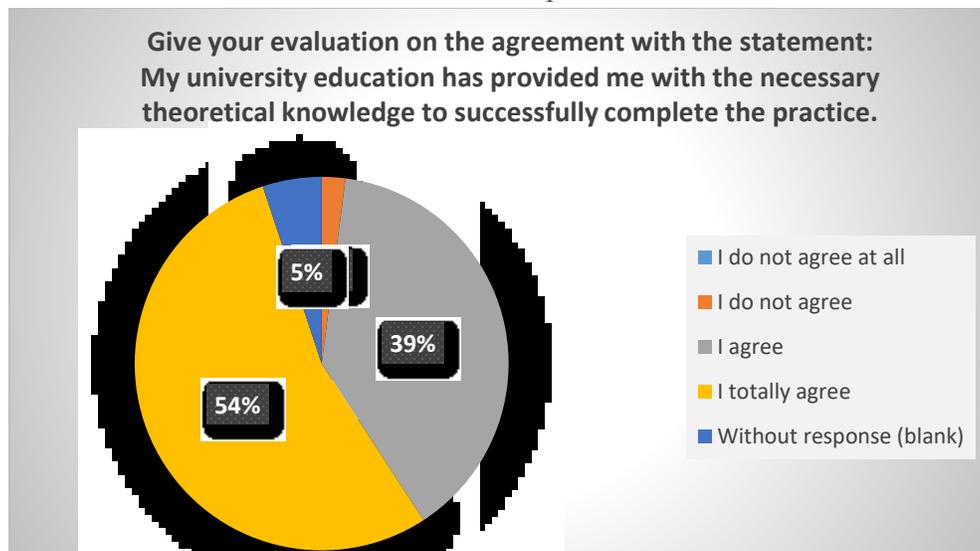
Figure 3.6.28: Application of the job internships in the internships work processes



Source: PU students' survey

In the question of their agreement upon the theoretical knowledge that the education have provided in order to successfully complete the professional practice (Fig.3.6.25), the amount of the students agreeing on this level is 93%, which represents a high confidence on their education.

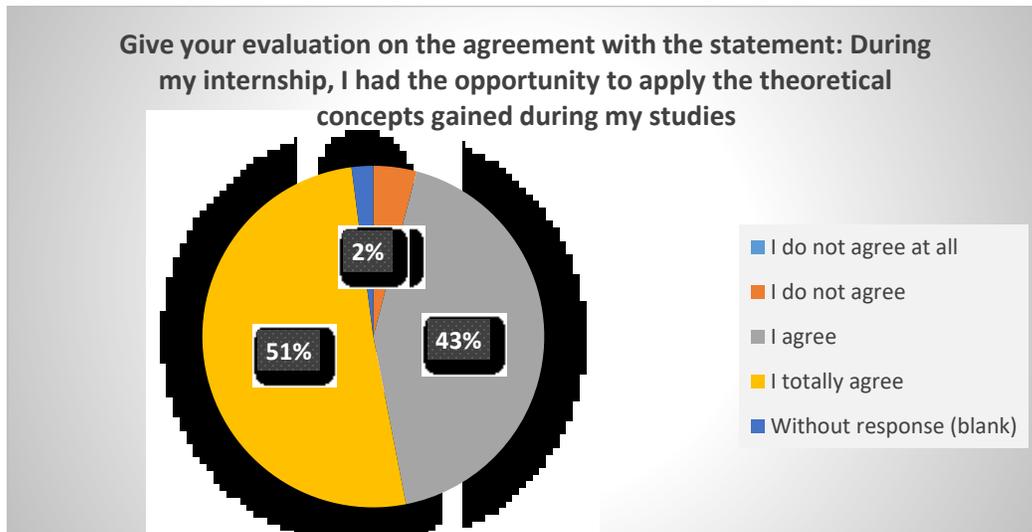
Figure 3.6.29: Evaluation of the theoretical knowledge gained in university in compliance with the internship



Source: PU students' survey

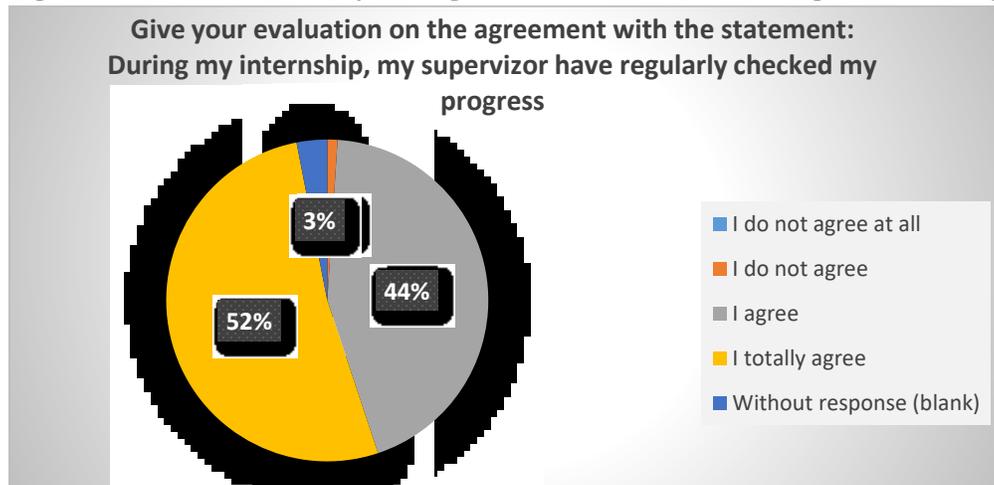
Application of the skills and theoretical gained during academic years, has been possible on the rate of 94% as stated in the questionnaires (fig.3.6.26). These two charts can support the compatibility of the curricula with the market requirements.

Figure 3.6.30: Opportunity to apply the theoretical concepts gained during the studies



Source: PU students' survey

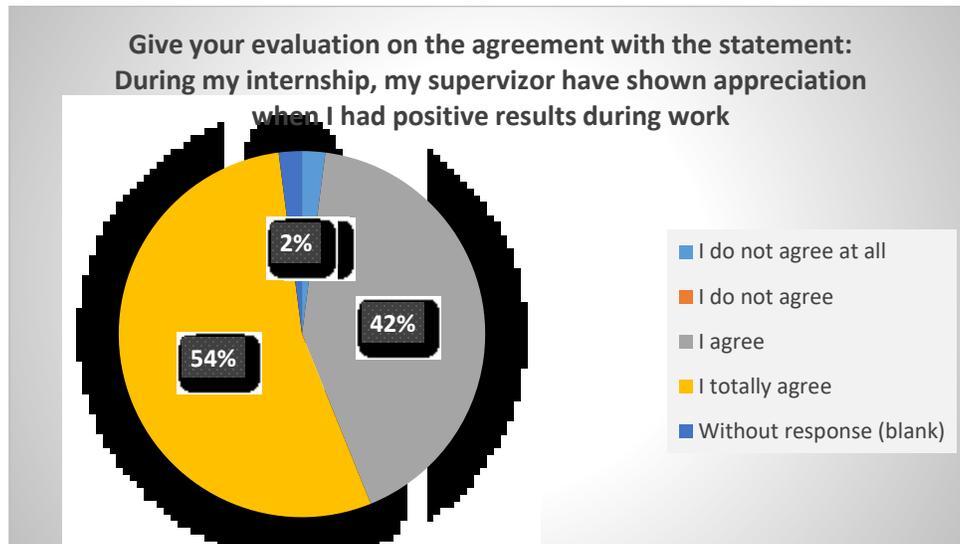
Figure 3.6.31: Evaluation of the supervisor monitoration during the internship



Source: PU students' survey

Their relation with the supervisor in the internship institution is evaluated also in figure 26 and 27. The regular checking of their progress by the supervisor is rated at the level of 96% out of 85 students (fig.3.6.27), while in the same rating is also the supervisor's appreciation towards the student while achieving positive results in the work (fig.3.6.28), which indicates positive relationship during the professional practice.

Figure 3.6.32: Review and appreciation from the supervisor



Source: PU students' survey

In the opened section of the identification of courses that have been straighten out as important by the students, it is easily identifiable that computer programs, such as GIS, AutoCAD, design programs, along with the construction courses were the ones mostly mentioned by the students, since they are easily applied in every workspace.

The extended list is listed below:

Table 3.6.6: Programs and Courses identified as important by the students

LIST OF PROGRAMS/ COURSES THAT STUDENTS HAVE IDENTIFIED AS IMPORTANT	
3dsMax	1
Adobe Program	1
Spatial Planning and GIS Application	14
AutoCAD	7
SAP 2000	1
Etabs	1
All the Computer Programs	2
Waste management and public services	1
Human Resources	2

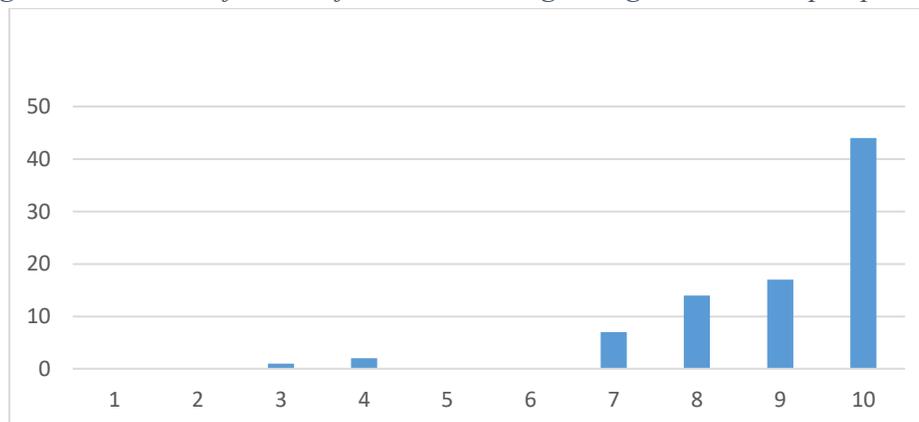
Interior Design	1
Reinforced concrete structures	5
Metallic Structure	2
Construction materials	2
Construction economics	2
Multimedia Design	2
Landscape & Urban Design	2
Revit	1
Local Finance and governance	1
Architecture and Urban Design	1
All the subjects	13
Without response (blank)	30

Source: PU students' survey

### Evaluation of the experience of Internship

The students in the questionnaires, have rated their overall satisfaction regarding the internship experience, where 44 of them have stated that they were completely satisfied with the process (fig.3.6.29). The other rating consist on: 17 students rated the mark "9", 14 students the mark "8" and 7 students the mark "7". The last 3 students rated with "3" and "4".

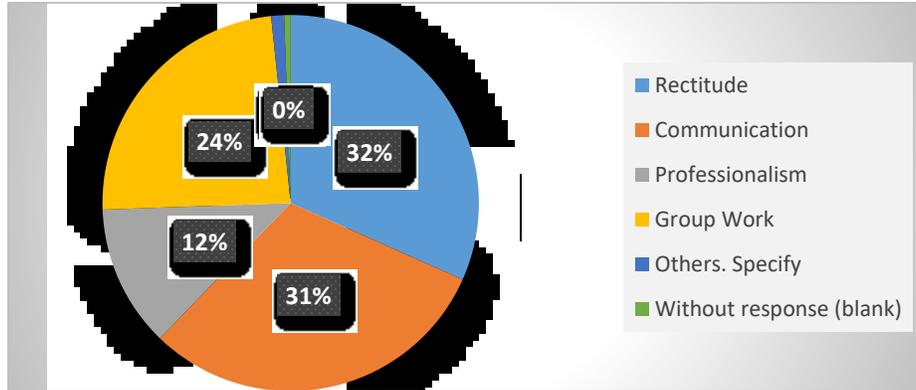
Figure 3.6.33: Satisfaction of the students regarding the internship experience



Source: PU students' survey

The interns assessed also their capacities during the professional practice. Some of the strongest points that prevails in their answers (fig.3.6.30), are Rectitude (evaluated by 32% of the students). Almost in the same rating is positioned the Communication (31%), Group Work (24) and Professionalism (12).

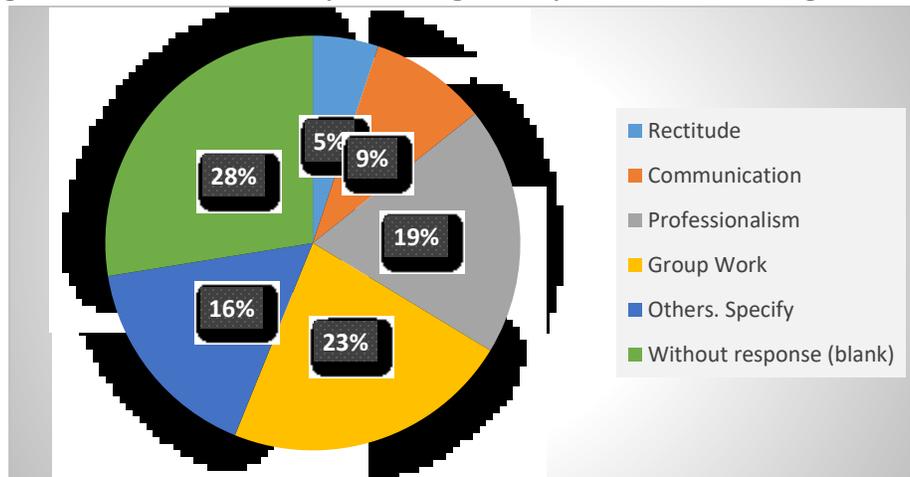
Figure 3.6.34: Evaluation of strong points of the students during internship



Source: PU students' survey

In the section of the weakest points (fig.3.6.31), 28% of the students didn't respond or didn't know how to respond, which argues their limitations in the self-evaluation. Group work is also considered as a weak point (rated with 23%), followed by professionalism (19%), communication (9%) and other characteristics (16%). Rectitude in this section is identified only by 5% of the students involved in the questionnaires.

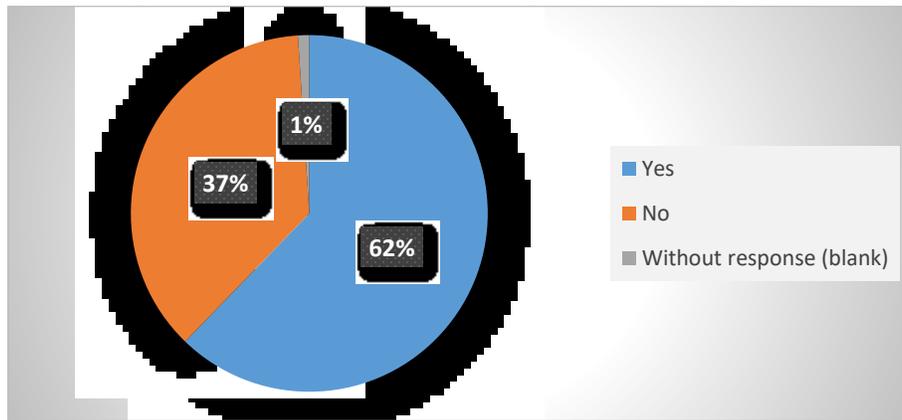
Figure 3.6.35: Evaluation of weakest points of the students during internship



Source: PU students' survey

Another interest in the questionnaire was realizing if there are job offers from the institutions or companies, presented to the students, after the completion of the internship (fig.3.6.32). 62% of the students declared that they were offered a job after the professional practice, which is a very positive report, and 37% of them, did not have this kind of opportunity.

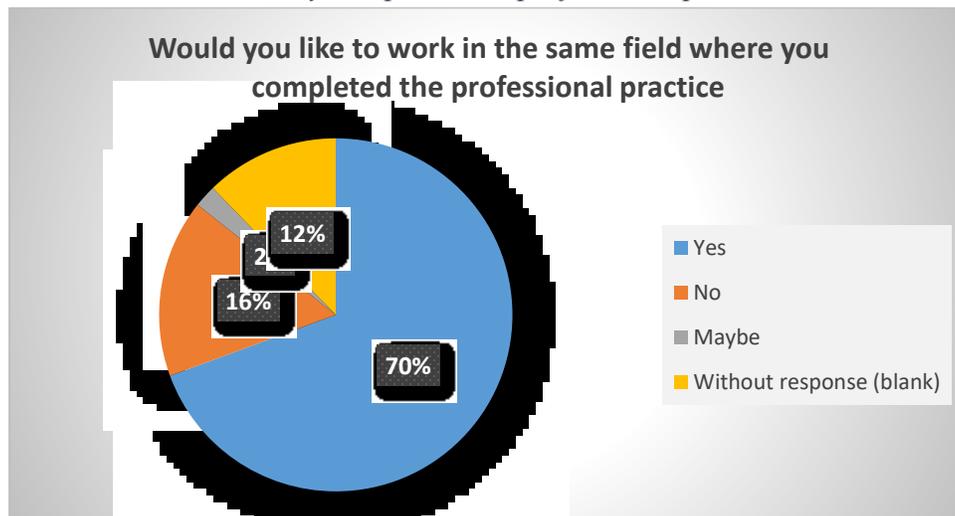
Figure 3.6.36: Work offers during the internship period



Source: PU students' survey

After the professional practice occurred, the students have declared that they had found a positive environment, with specific orientations, where the students have felt comfortable and confident and they have expressed willingness to work in the same field. The students who did not find themselves comfortable enough to work in the same field after the internship are rated as 16%.

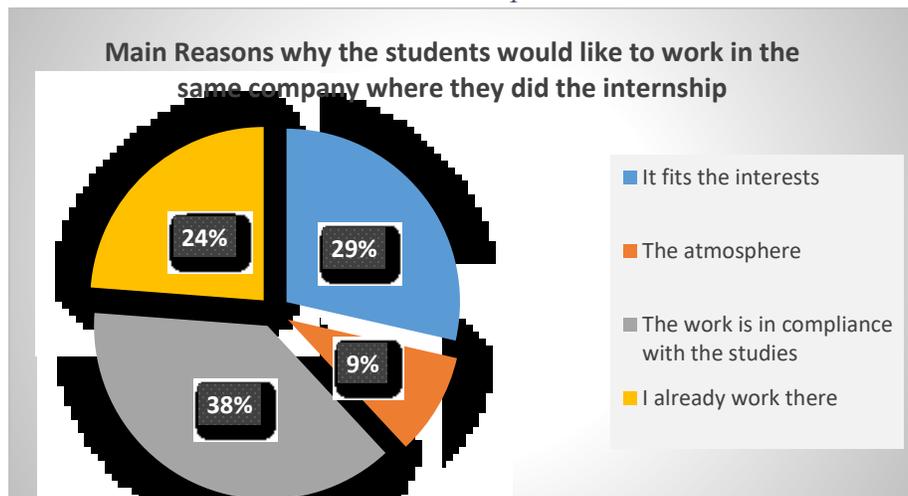
Figure 3.6.37: Statement of the students regarding the interest in working in the same field as the one where they completed the professional practice



Source: PU students' survey

The main reason why the students would like to work in the same company where the internship was held (fig.3.6.34), is related with the compliance of the work with the studies (38%), the interests fit (29%), the atmosphere (9%). 24% of the students, in the meantime are already working in the company, prior than the internship, or after the internship.

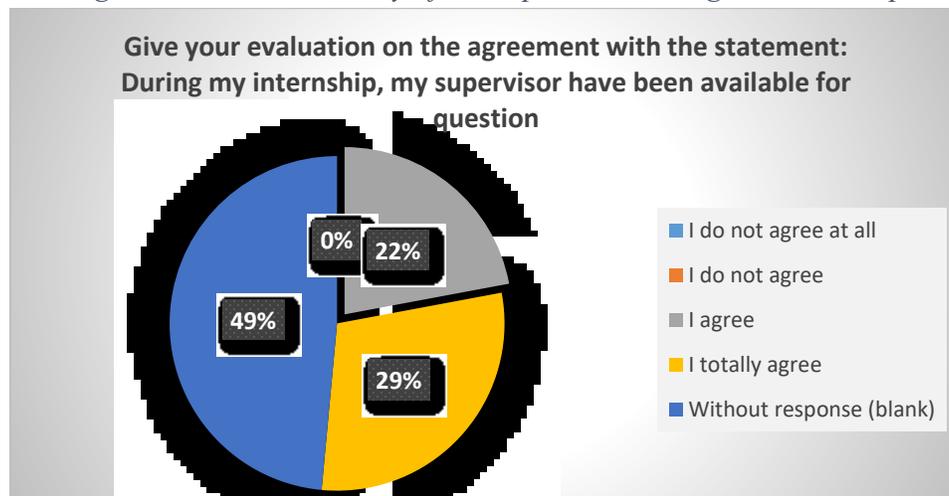
Figure 3.6.38: Reasons why the students would like to work in the same company that they did the internship



Source: PU students' survey

The last session of questions for assessing the internship is related with the supervisor evaluation. The ability and availability of the supervisor to be open for questions (fig. 3.6.35) is only rated by almost 50% of the students. The other half of the students, were quite satisfied with this characteristic of the supervisor.

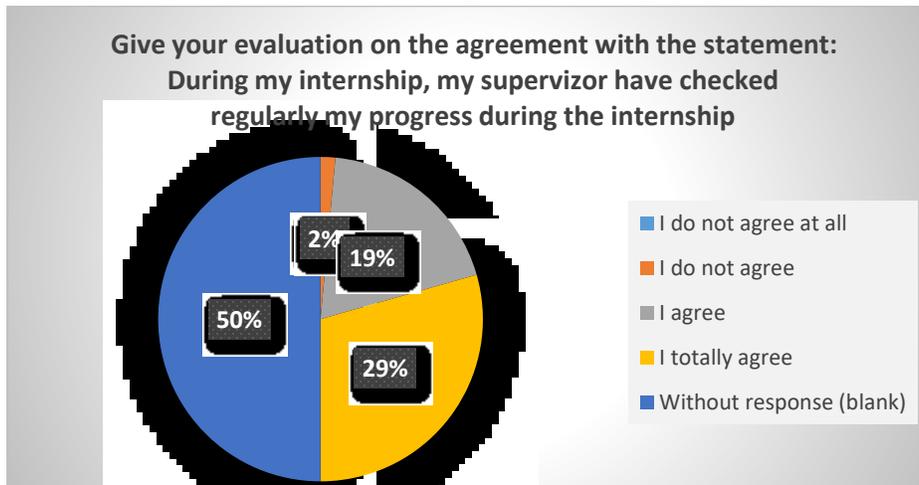
Figure 3.6.39: Availability of the supervisor during the internship



Source: PU students' survey

The same evaluation is presented also in the question for assessing the regularly checking of the supervisor during the internship (fig.3.6.36), where only 50% of the students have chosen to answer, 48% have declared a very positive evaluation and only 2% a negative one.

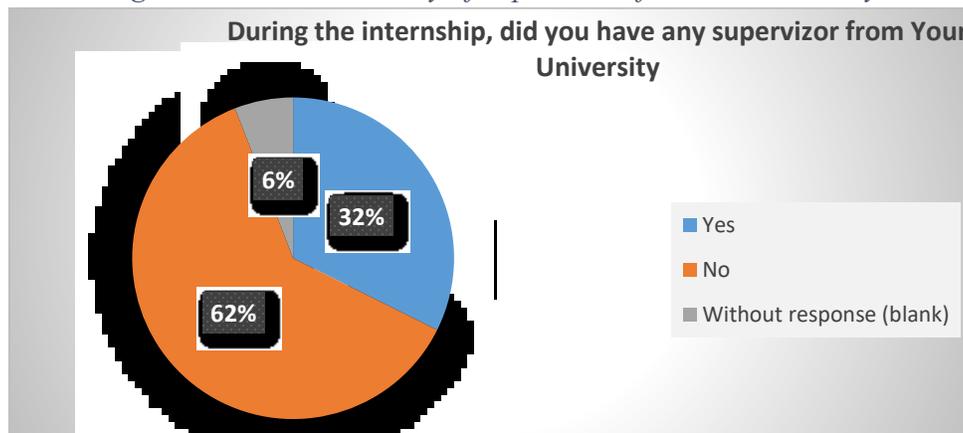
Figure 3.6.40: Evaluation on regular checking by the supervisor



Source: PU students' survey

The supervisor from the University has been possible to be assigned for only 32% of the students, while 62% have had only the service of the supervisor in the institution/business where the internship has occurred.

Figure 3.6.41: Availability of supervision from the university

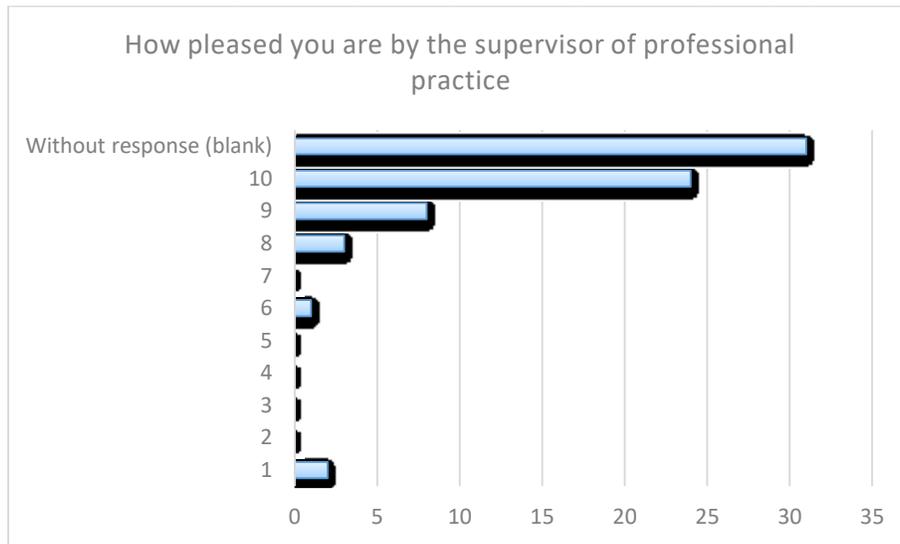


Source: PU students' survey

The overall assessment for the supervisor is determined for 67% of the students, since 33% have chosen not to respond.

From this 67%, 28% have rated this service with the mark "10", 8% with the grade "9", 6% with the mark "8", 3% with the mark "6" and 4% with the mark "1".

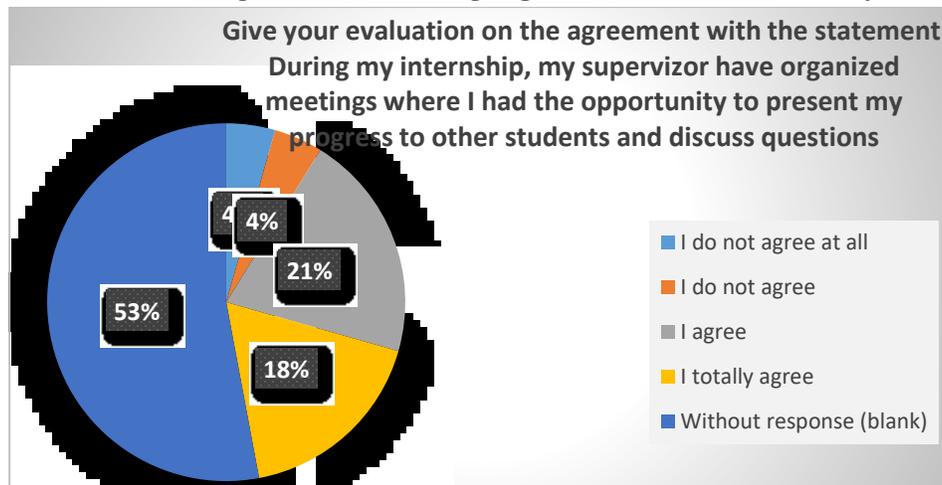
Figure 3.6.42: Evaluation of the satisfaction for the supervisor of the professional practice



Source: PU students' survey

Finally, the students have been asked to assess the communication and relation with the supervisor in terms of opportunities, to present progress and discuss questions in organized meetings by supervisor (fig.3.6.39), from 47% of the students who have answered, 39% of the students have had the opportunity to present their work and have open discussions in the organized meetings.

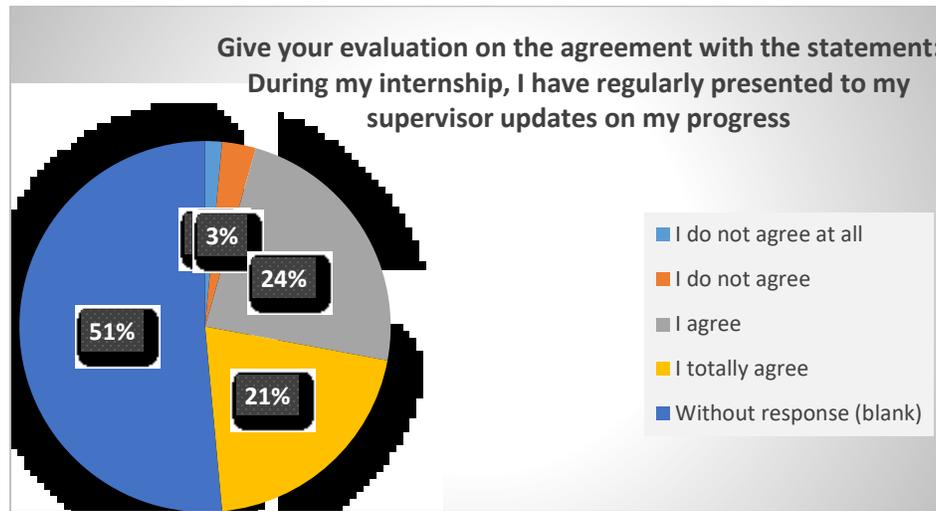
Figure 3.6.43: Possibilities to present the intern progress to other students and further discussions



Source: PU students' survey

Whiles the direct communication with the supervisor, in presenting regular updates on the internship progress (fig.3.6.40), from 49% of the students who have answered, 45% of them have had this type of comodity in the relationship with the supervisor.

Figure 3.6.44: Opportunity to give updates to the supervisor



Source: PU students' survey

## Conclusions

1. The questionnaire for the evaluation of the professional practice, was distributed to 136 graduates in the autumn season, from which 98 students (from 14 study programs) have completed the questionnaire. After the cleaning process, 85 questionnaires were considered valid. The major number of questionnaires were completed by the Bachelor programs, followed by the integrated 5-years cycles, and Professional Master Programs.
2. The students have preferred mainly to undertake the professional practice during the second semester of the last year of studies, which is argued as in alignment with the major time in disposal since the last semester of studies is dedicated to the professional practice and final exam preparation.
3. The main city where the internship occurred is Tirana, understandable for the fact that the majority of the students, are still living in Tirana since they are still continuing their studies.
4. Most preferred institution/business to conduct the internship are considered the private studios/businesses which are chosen by 72% of the students, followed by the administration/public institution with 12% and municipalities with 9%.
5. The students were asked to state and evaluate the possibility for having an internship abroad. In this section, 56% of the students stated that they have thought about having an internship abroad. For the reasons of lack of information in applying, lack of contacts, financial limitations and the development of thesis in the same period, this option was not taken in consideration
6. In the section for the evaluation of the Office of Student Support and Career Counseling, the students declared that they have been offered clear information regarding the professional practices procedures in the mass of 94%, while related with the guidance and timing for the internship, 90% of them were satisfied with the work of OSSCE in this direction.
7. Students have listed the services that they consider are offered by OSSCE, which is dominated by the general information regarding the internship opportunities (voted by 70% of them). Followed by a database of companies/institutions (45%), personal assistance in finding an

appropriate company for the development of the internship (39%) and career counseling (37%). The workshops in negotiation skills, application capabilities decision making were considered less valuable.

8. For the actual OSSCE, the students have identified 2 main components that this office can improve by underlying the search for companies, capable for offering internships and the possibilities offered abroad and regarding the different activities that they would appreciate from the OSSCE, are evaluated the: a) training possibilities (47%), b) social cultural activities.
9. 1/3 of the students have declared that they have found the internship through their personal work, while 22% of them through the help of the professors and 13.5% through the OSSCE. The majority of them (63%) have stated that they have received payment for the internship, while the time of application for the internship is divided in different periods in relation with the initiation of the internship.
10. The integration of the students in the work processes has been highly evaluated by 95% of the students as an easy process and 75% of them has stated that the institution or company have provided personal projects to work for the interns. Also the opportunities provided for them during the professional practice were offered in the case of 97% of the students. The evaluation regarding the professional practice is overall perceived and assessed highly by the students which have answered.
11. Considering the relation between the theoretical knowledge and skills gained during the academic years in relation with the application in the professional practice is stated as positive, since 94% of the students have underlined a high confidence on their education, regarding the skills implementation.
12. The students have also given opinions on their supervisors, which is related with the regularly check of progress (96% of the students feeling positive), where 39% of the students (in a 47% response rate) have had the opportunity to present their work and 45% of this group have had the collaboration with the supervisor in terms of regular updates on the work of the intern.

### 3.7 CUOLGC evaluation of internships from students



#### Introduction

The “GRaduates Advancement and Development of University capacities in Albania” (GRADUA) project, is a Capacity Building in Higher Education project and a structural one, aimed at strengthening relations between higher education systems and the wider economic and social environment. GRADUA is co/financed by the Erasmus+ programme of the European union, and has a duration of three years (2017-2020). The project system implementation is characterized by a “bottom-up” approach, starting from graduates and universities, for modernizing and developing the higher education sector within society, enlarging the relations between universities and business world, in order to improve the quality of the higher education system and to enhance graduates' employability.

One of the work packages of the GRADUA project, consists on *Creating sustainable University-Enterprise cooperation through capacity building dynamics*. The WP is aimed to strengthen relations/cooperation with private enterprises and organize traineeships/internships in a more structured way, with more support, coaching and monitoring from the universities staff.

With the aim of monitoring of the existing professional traineeships/internships, in order to identify the needs and gaps and eventually to adjust them according to the best practices, besides companies questionnaire, a questionnaire for students has been developed in order to assess their experience on professional traineeships/ internships.

It should be noted that Catholic University "Our Lady of Good Counsel" itself, organizes each year its internal campaign for the analysis of students' perceptions on the professional traineeships/internships performed, under the responsibility of the Statistics and Internal Quality Assurance office.

The professional traineeship/internship program is an integral part of the curricula (compulsory with relevant credits) for almost all the study programs. Also their successful fulfillment, is a condition for sitting the State Exam (Pharmacy, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Physiotherapy). In most cases, professional traineeships are integrated with a large number of scientific research activities, i.e. preparation of graduation thesis.

The offices in charge for programming, supporting, coordinating, monitoring and certifying the training programs, are deans, study program coordinators, tutors, and career offices that collaborate with each other in order to run the process and to guarantee a qualitative one.

Also, based on the inter institutional agreements for releasing joint/dual degrees with Italian partner Universities, to students is given the opportunity to train abroad at public and private institutions that meet the relevant standards and criteria and are affiliated with our University.

This is more frequent for the students of the study program in Medicine and Pharmacy, who do their professional traineeship at health structures and open network pharmacies in Italy (Rome, Bari, Milan).

During the second semester of the academic year 2018 – 2019, at the Catholic University "Our Lady of Good Counsel", students who already completed their professional traineeship/internship program, gave their opinion on this matter, by responding to the above mentioned questionnaire, with reference to Gradua project activities.

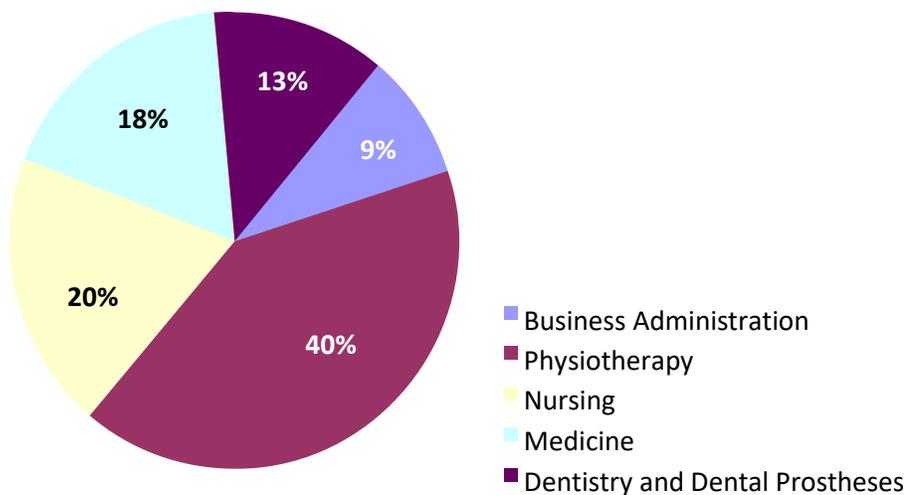
In order to have a diversity for a better assessment, the questionnaire was distributed to students at Bachelor and Master level.

### Analysis of the questionnaire responses on professional traineeships/internships

The students questionnaire on the professional traineeship/internship, is organized in different sections, consisting on: General information (study program, semester, location, training abroad); Career Office/Other offices Services; Students experience (performance, progress, evaluation).

The total number of questionnaires collected is 56. Respondents/students come from different study programs, such as: Medicine (Master of Science, Integrated study program), Physiotherapy (Bachelor), Nursing (Bachelor), Business Administration (Bachelor), Pharmacy (Master of Science, Integrated study program), and Dentistry and Dental Prostheses (Master of Science, Integrated study program).

Fig. 3.7.1 Population according to study programs

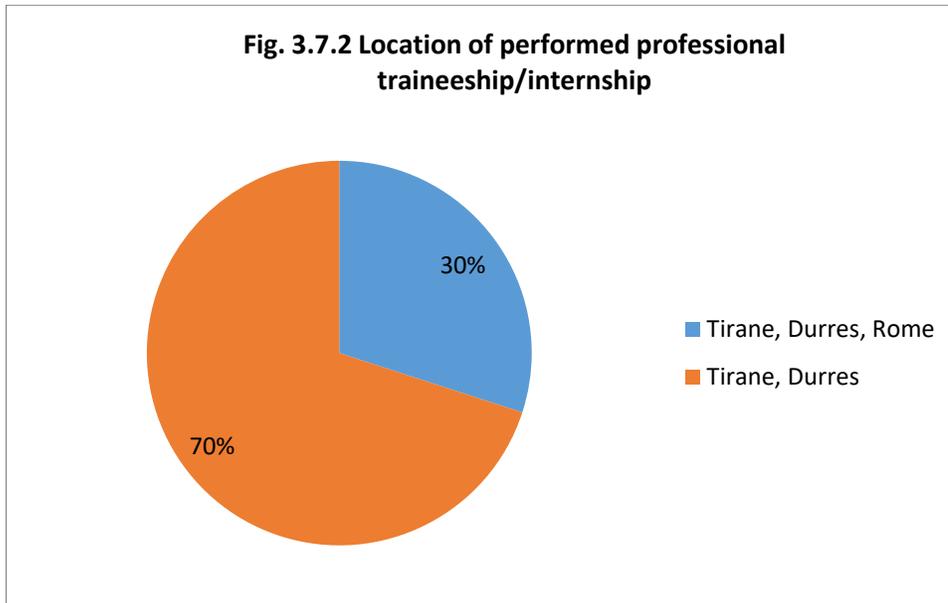


Source: CUOLGC students' survey

39 students (which constitute the 69% of the total population) are enrolled in Bachelor programs and 17 students (representing 31% of the population) are enrolled in Master of Science Integrated study programs.

### Location of performed professional traineeship/internship

All students completed their professional traineeships during the second semester in cities such as Tirana, Durrës, Rome (Italy).



Source: CUOLGC students' survey

The students, completed their professional traineeship/internship in Albania (Tirana or Durrës), at the following institutions:

- Mother Teresa University Hospital centre;
- Sanatorium Sh.N.;
- Regional Hospital Durrës;
- University Trauma Centre;
- National centre of children development and rehabilitation;
- Salus Hospital;
- Banks, Audit companies etc.

but also at the Foundation Our Lady of Good Counsel health structures as:

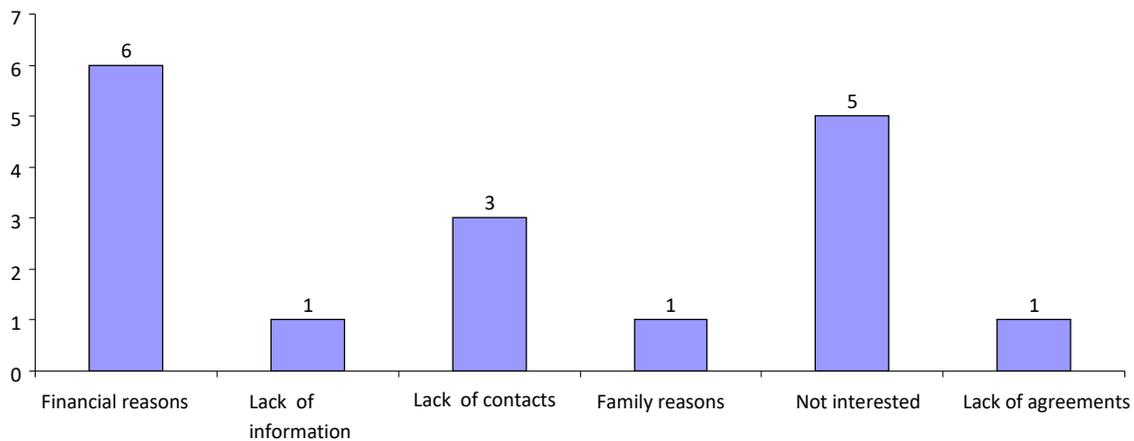
- Polyclinic "Father Luigi Monti";

- Centre of Advanced Simulation in Medicine;
- Centre for Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine;
- University Dental Clinic.

The majority of students who responded (67%), wanted to pursue a professional traineeship abroad, but only a part of all students actually did it abroad (30%), precisely in Italy, mainly students of the study program in *Medicine*.

The rest of the students who responded, did not wish to complete a professional traineeship/internship abroad (33%), mainly because of financial reasons, but also because they were not interested in or unable to contact companies operating abroad.

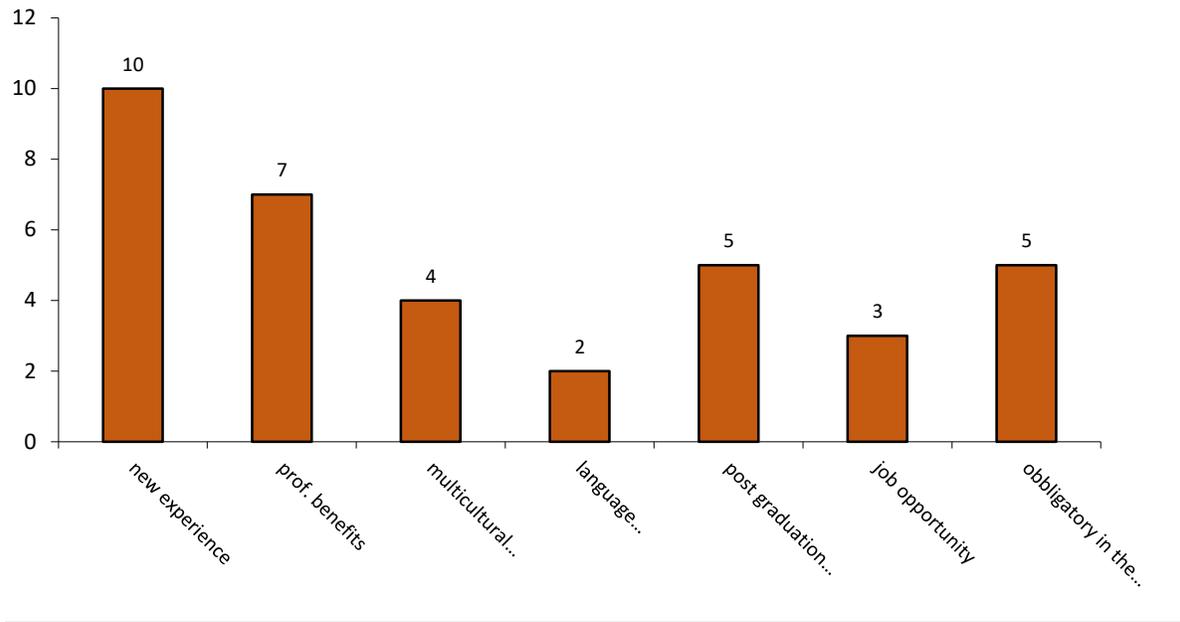
**Fig. 3.7.3 Reasons for not doing a traineeship/internship abroad**



Source: CUOLGC students' survey

Students who have completed their professional traineeship/internship abroad feel that such decision, has helped them in some directions, mainly as a new experience, as a professional benefit, working in a multicultural environment, but also as an information opportunity for the next studies after graduation.

**Fig. 3.7.4 Reasons of traineeship/internship abroad**



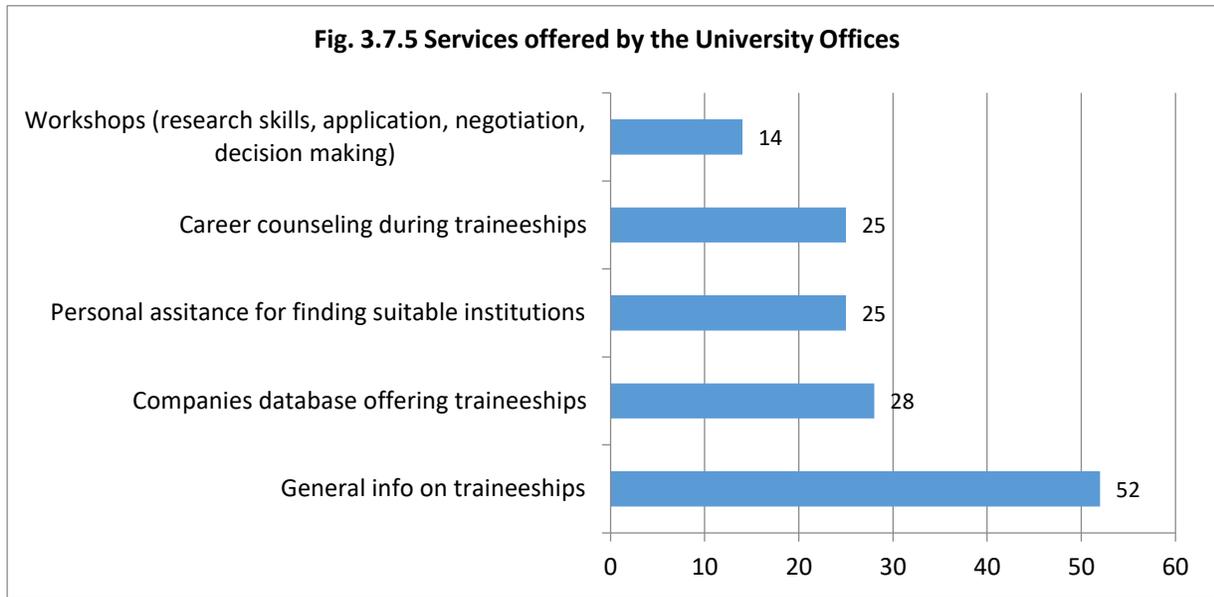
Source: CUOLGC students' survey

### **University Career Office and other offices supporting the professional traineeships/internships**

The evaluation by the students, of the services offered and supporting the professional traineeships/internships, is inclusive, and concerns many offices at the time as the career office, study program coordinators and tutors.

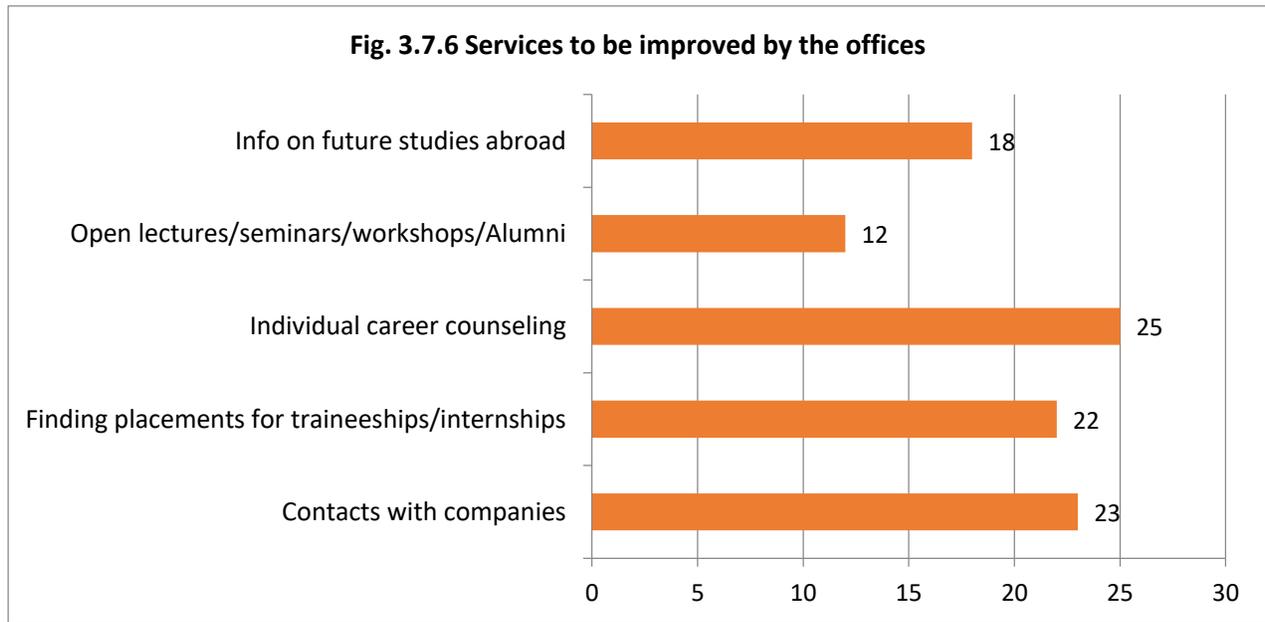
The majority of students did not have to apply for professional traineeships/internships as the institutions where that traineeships would be conducted are affiliated with the University, and the traineeships are directly organized and coordinated by the latter.

The main services offered by the offices responsible for professional traineeship/internships are: general information on the opportunities of professional traineeship/internship (93%); providing a database of companies/institutions offering professional traineeships/internships (55%); personal assistance in finding a suitable company/institution for professional traineeship/internship (45%); career counseling during the professional traineeship/internship (45%). While different types of workshops (research skills, application, negotiation, decision making, etc.) are offered less (25%).



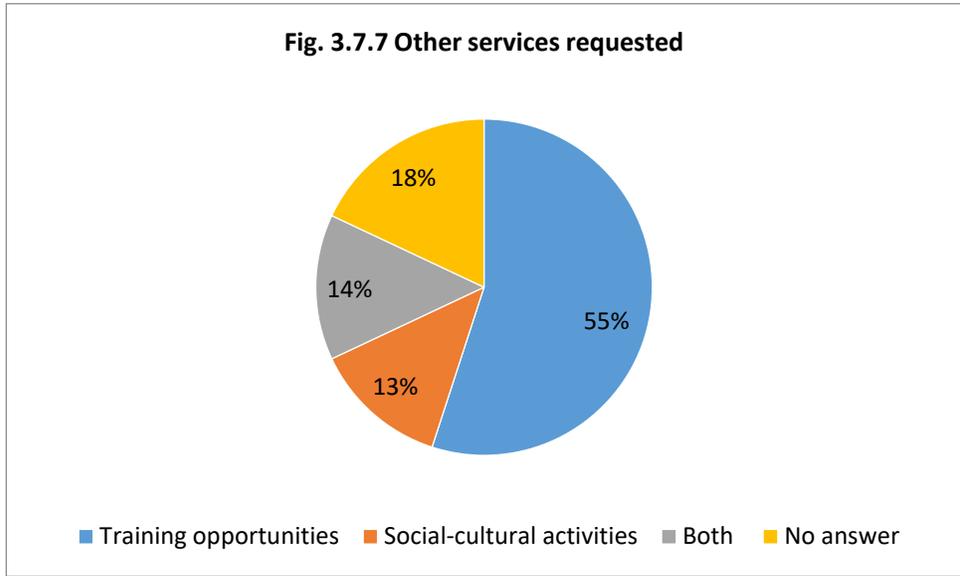
Source: CUOLGC students' survey

According to the students, the university should mainly improve the contacts with the business companies and the individual career counseling. Less important are considered the open lectures / workshops and alumni.



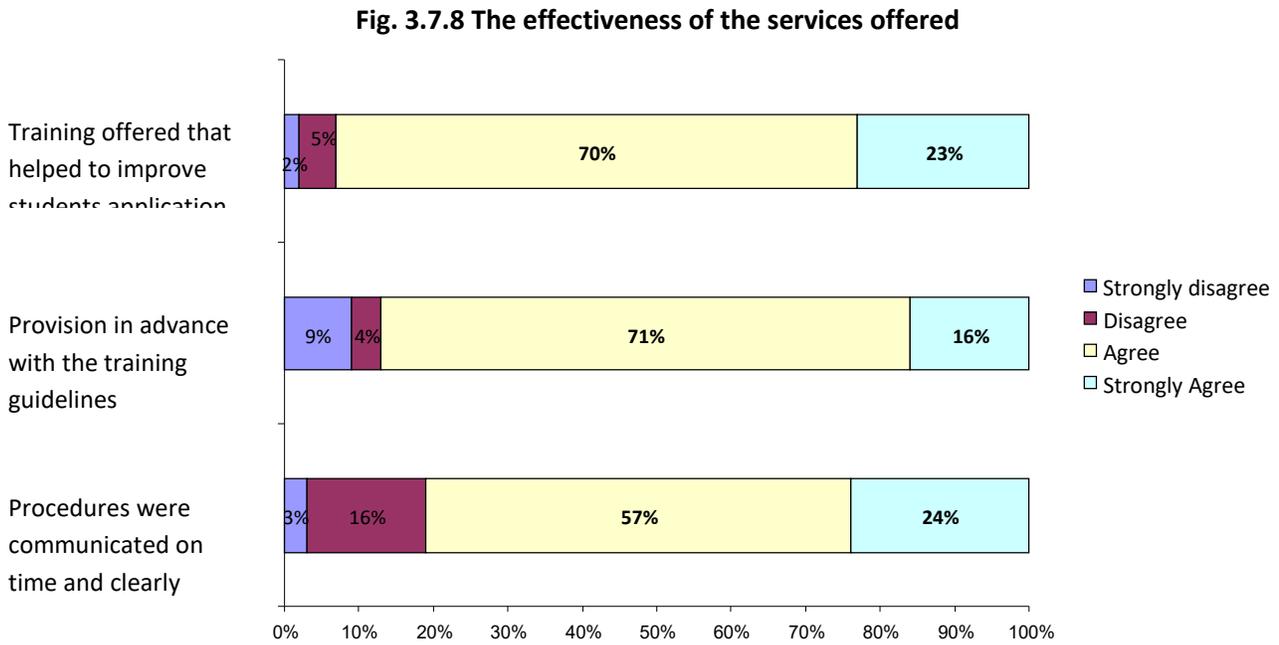
Source: CUOLGC students' survey

Also, the other services that the responsible offices have to offer more, are mainly related to the training opportunities (55%).



Source: CUOLGC students' survey

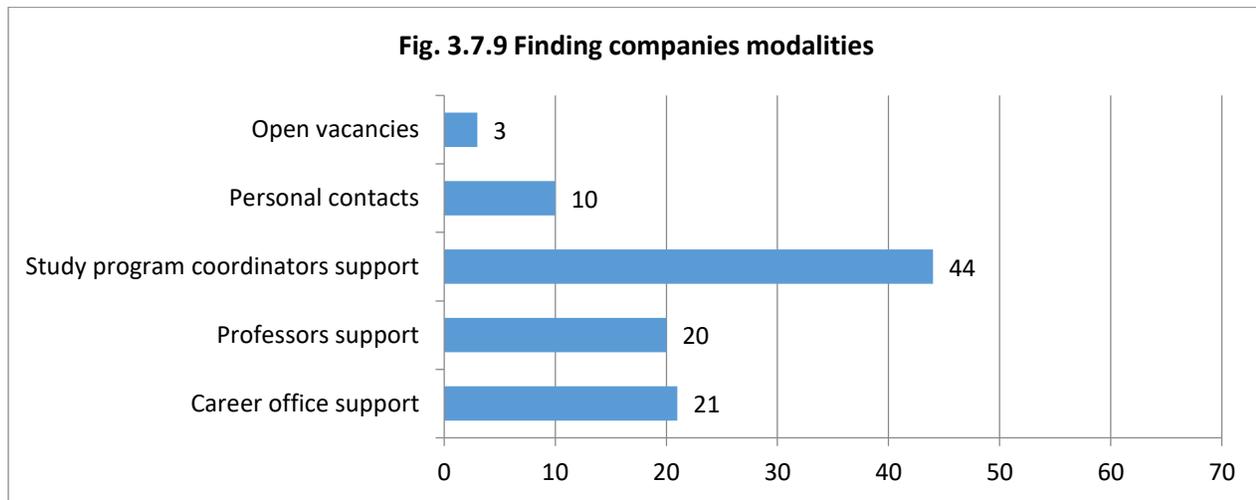
In terms of communication of procedures, relevant guidelines and modalities of application, on average most students (87%) agree or fully agree on the effectiveness of these services offered by the University.



Source: CUOLGC students' survey

### Professional traineeship/internship experience

The finding of the company/institution or placement is done in most cases by the Catholic University itself, based on inter-institutional agreements with various public and private entities that meet relevant standards, inside or outside the country, especially for study programs in Medicine, Dentistry and Dental Prosthesis, Nursing and Physiotherapy. Whereas for the study program in Business Administration this process can also be performed by the students themselves with the assistance of career office, study program coordinators, professors and tutors, always in entities that meet the traineeship standards, requirements and criteria.

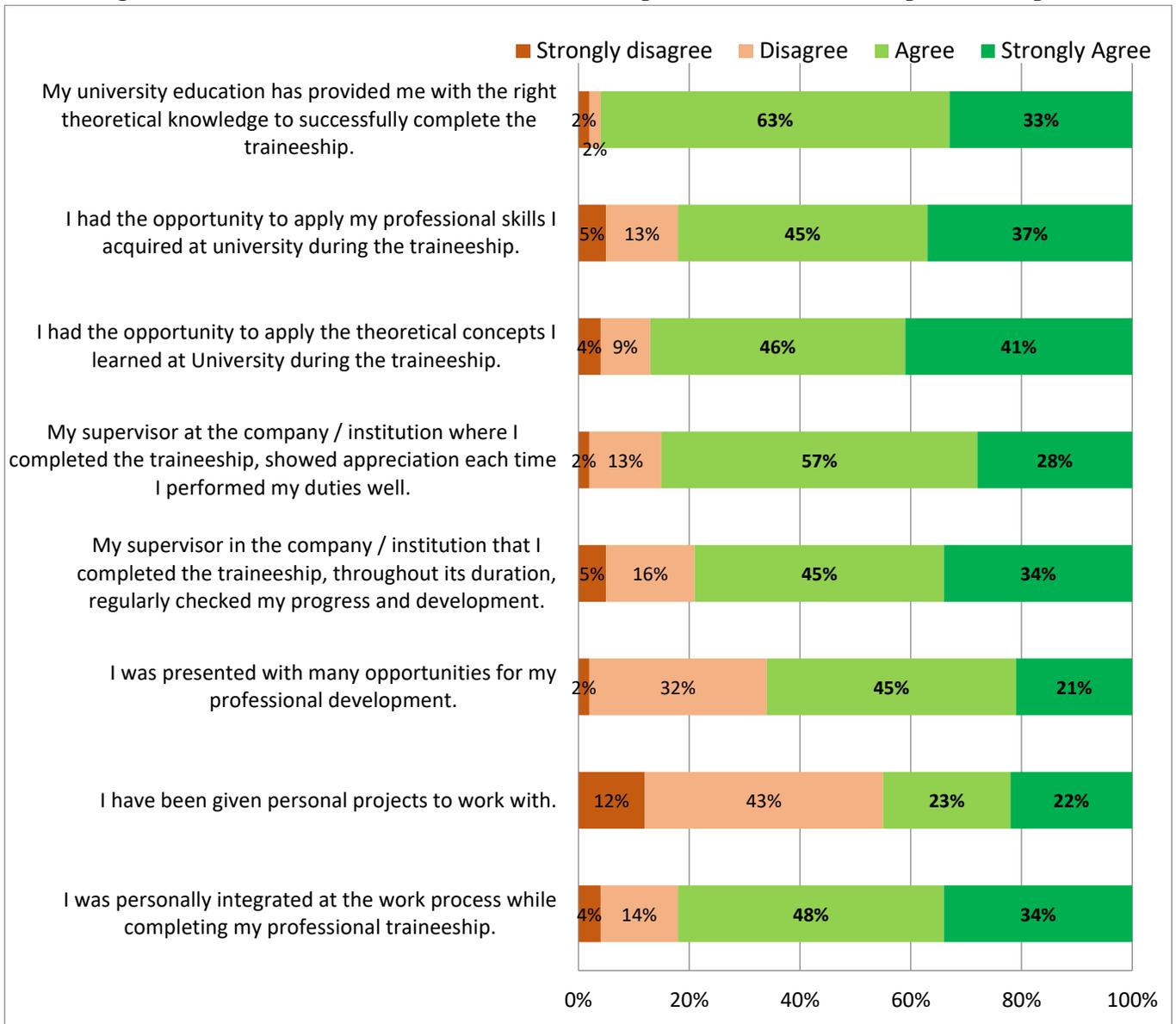


Source: CUOLGC students' survey

None of the students are paid by the company or institution where the traineeship is conducted.

Regarding the characteristics of the professional traineeship/internship, it can be noted that the university provides the education necessary to successfully complete the traineeship (96% of respondents agree or completely agree). For other characteristics, respondents provided the following answers:

**Fig. 3.7.10 Statements on characteristics of the professional traineeship/internship**



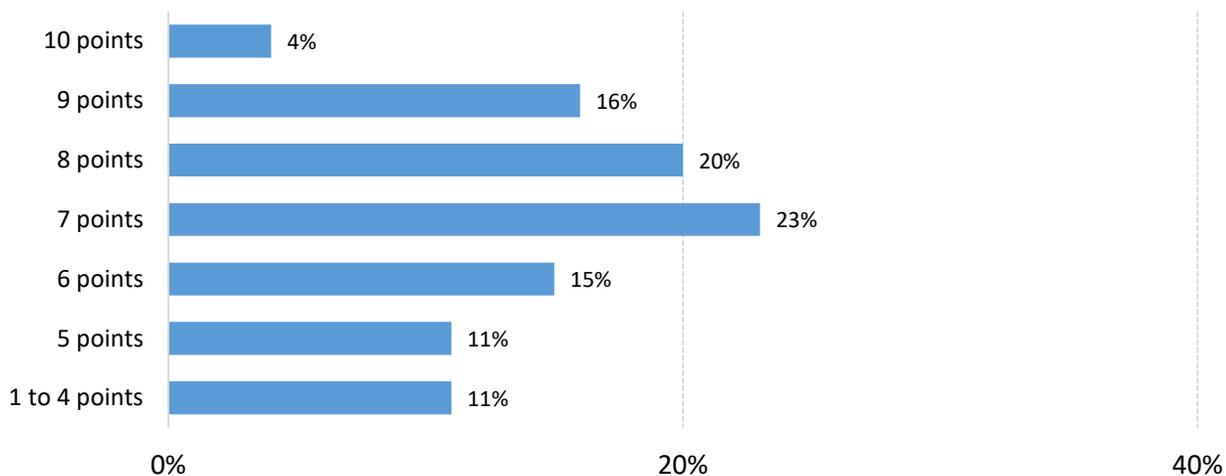
Source: CUOLGC students' survey

If students have been given personal projects to work with (only 45% agree/strongly agree), this depends on the study program characteristics, and on the professional traineeship/internship objectives.

Concerning the subjects of study/single courses, it is not possible to come to a conclusion on one or some specific subjects, since the respondents have different preferences, but the subjects/courses are mainly the applied professional ones.

Students are generally satisfied with the professional traineeship/internship. Thus, 63% of students evaluated the professional traineeship/internship with 7 to 10 points Likert scale, while the rest with lower points.

**Fig. 3.7.11 Overall satisfaction regarding the professional traineeship/internship completed**

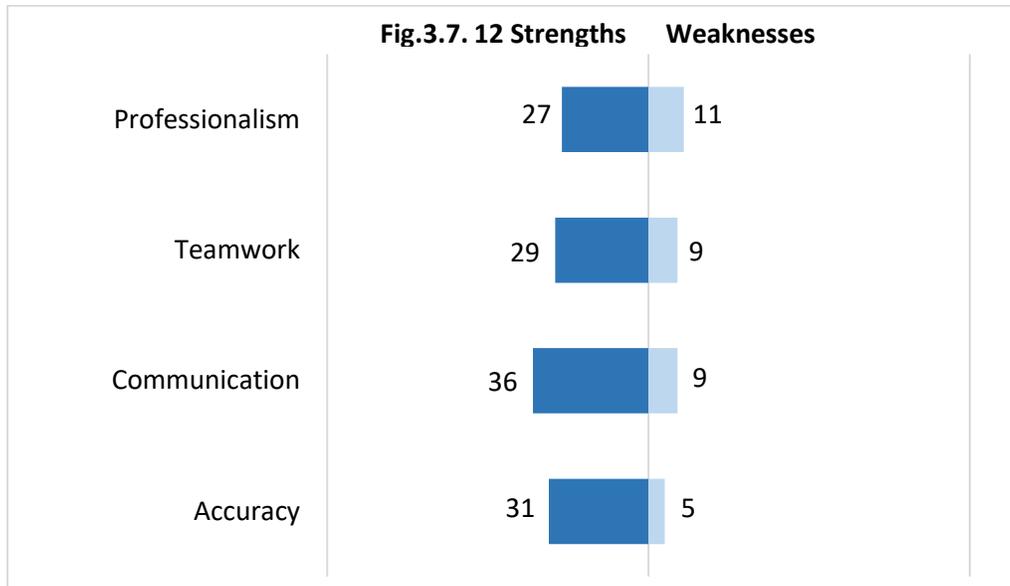


Source: CUOLGC students' survey

11% of students are not satisfied with the traineeship (1-4). None of the students explained the reasons of this dissatisfaction that they have with regard to the professional traineeship/internship.

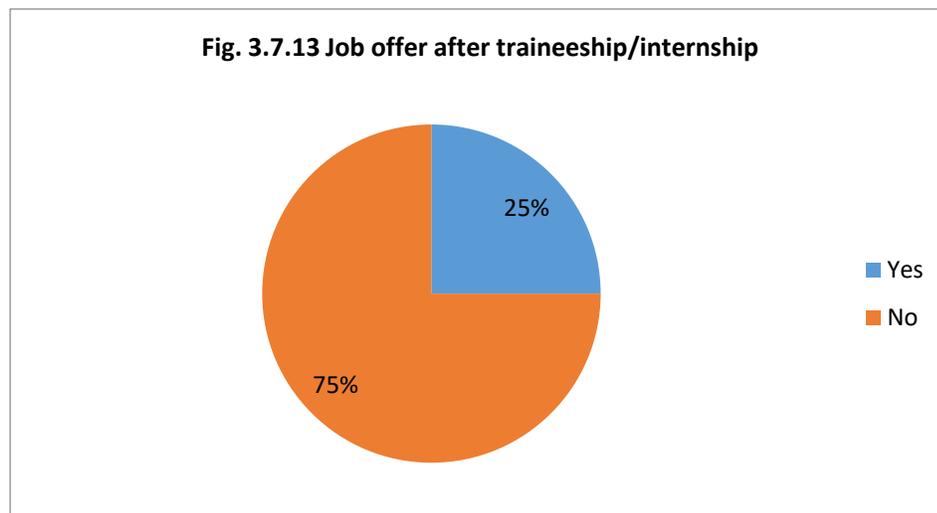
### **The performance during the professional traineeship/internship**

Regarding the performance of the students, the majority of them express positively and widely about their strengths. So almost everyone has two or more strengths, among which are accuracy/correctness (55%), communication (64%), teamwork (52%) and often professionalism (48%). As for the weaknesses, 17 students (30%) did not express at all, while 11 of them think that professionalism was the weakest point. The rest has an even distribution between accuracy/correctness, communication and teamwork:



Source: CUOLGC students' survey

The majority of respondents did not receive a regular job offer from the institution where the professional traineeship/internship was completed (75%).



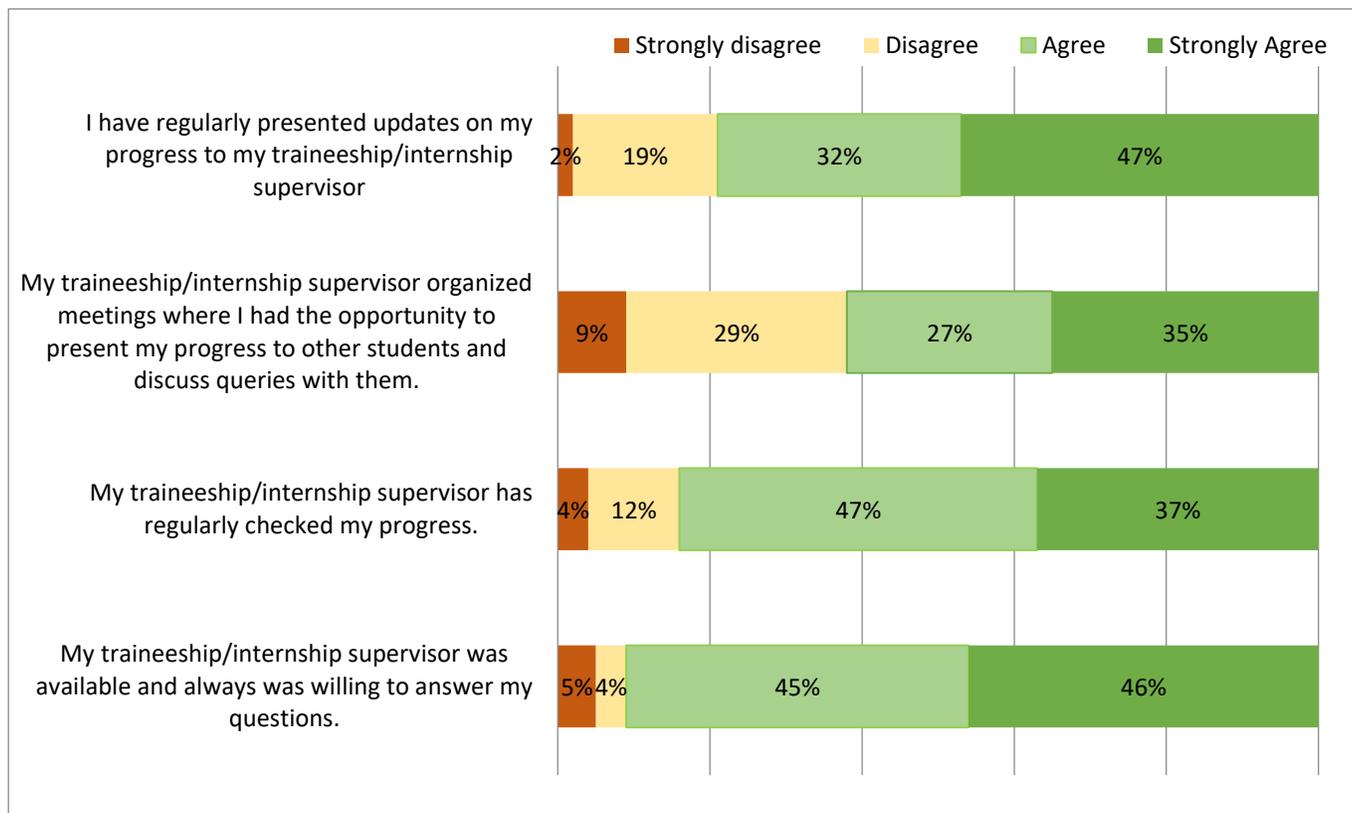
Source: CUOLGC students' survey

75% of respondents would like to work in the field in which the company operates, while the rest do not want to, giving no explanations for this choice.

### The progress during the professional traineeship

All students /respondents have a traineeship supervisor/tutor appointed by the university (according to the study program regulation). Regarding the characteristics of the supervisor/tutor, the respondents stated:

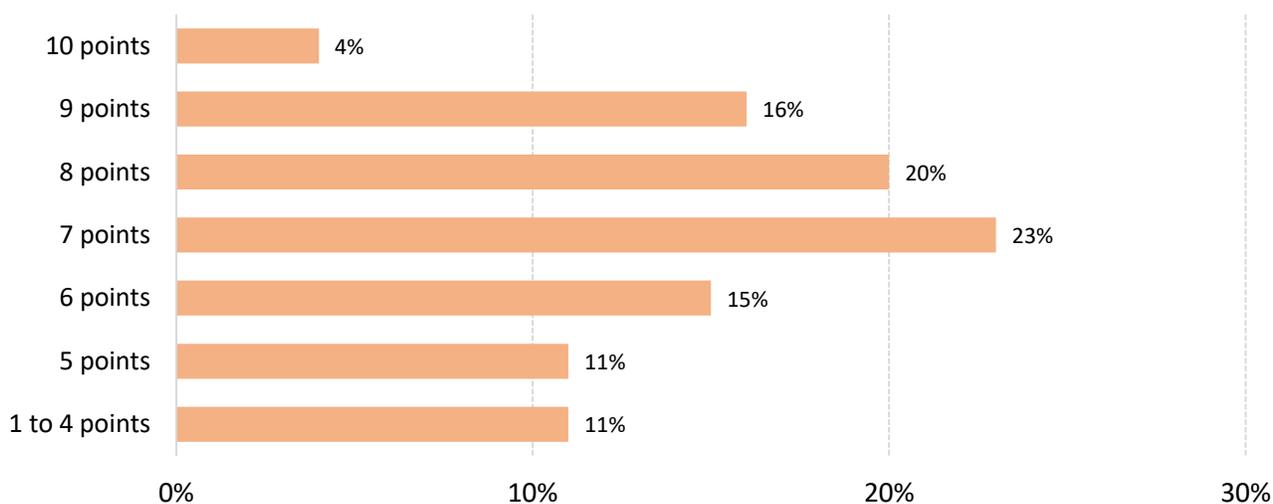
**Fig. 3.7.14 Students feedback on the traineeship/internship supervisor**



Source: CUOLGC students' survey

In general, students are satisfied with the supervisor/tutor of professional traineeship/internship (71% of them evaluated with 7 to 10 points Likert scale), while 10% of respondents with points 1 to 4.

**Fig. 3.7.15 Evaluation of the supervisor on 10 points Likert scale**



Source: CUOLGC students' survey

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

1. 30% of the students, mainly of Medicine study program, have done their professional traineeship/internship abroad, precisely in Italy. This opportunity is given by the university in the framework of the internationalization strategy and inter institutional agreements for releasing joint/dual degrees with Italian partner Universities. This percentage is higher in the University reality, because in this assessment campaign, are not included the students of the study program in Pharmacy who at the time, were physically in Italy for their professional traineeship/internship program.
2. Students who did not wish to complete a professional traineeship/internship abroad, claimed that was mainly because of financial reasons, but also because they were not interested.
3. It is recommended to find alternative financial supports (i.e mobility scholarships), besides the ones that the university already gives to students that go abroad, in order to motivate students to have these international experiences.
4. There is a good collaboration between offices responsible for professional traineeship/internships (deans, study program coordinators, tutors, career office) at the University and general information, database of companies/institutions, personal assistance in finding a suitable company/institution and career counseling are the services that student feel are offered more.
5. Although the students feel that there is still room for improvement mainly about the university contacts with the business companies and the individual career counseling.

6. In terms of communication of procedures, relevant guidelines and modalities of application, on average most students (87%) agree or fully agree on the effectiveness of these services offered by the University.
7. The university provides the education necessary to successfully complete the professional traineeship (96%) and students had the opportunity to apply the theoretical concepts (87%) and professional skills (82%) during the professional traineeship/internship. They were personally integrated at the work process (82%).
8. Students are generally satisfied with the professional traineeship/internship. 63% of students evaluated the professional traineeship/internship with 7 to 10 points Likert scale.
9. All students had a supervisor at the hosting company or at home university during the traineeship that regularly checked their progress (84%), was available and answered their questions (91%). In general, students are satisfied with the supervisor/tutor of professional traineeship/internship (71% of them evaluated with 7 to 10 points Likert scale).
10. It is recommended to find out the reasons why 10% of respondents are not very satisfied with their supervisor or the professional traineeship overall, in order to make future improvements.

### 3.8 AU evaluation of internships from students



#### INTRODUCTION

Albanian University (AU) is a private, independent and secular institution of Higher Education, licensed in April 2004 by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania.

AU is part of GRADUA, a co-funded project by the Erasmus + Programme of the European Union, initiated in October 2017, with a time span of 3 years.

GRADUA aims to create an innovative IT-based platform for tracking graduates and hiring them in support of policy making and higher education reforms. In the framework of its implementation and in compliance with the project objectives, AU has conducted a survey for the professional traineeship with the graduates of the academic year 2018-2019.

The professional traineeship is part of the curriculum, mostly in the last semester of the last year of studies and aims to develop students' knowledge, skills and attitudes to be high-level professionals by trying and improving competencies in concrete situations and in order to come up with solutions based on a situation-based approach.

#### METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

To obtain detailed information on the professional traineeship, AU conducted a questionnaire with graduate students. The questionnaire was conducted online in google forms as well as in hard-copy format when the graduate students would show up to receive their diploma.

In this survey participated 307 graduates of Bachelor and Master studies from the three Faculties of AU (Faculty of Medical Sciences, Faculty of Applied and Economic Sciences and Faculty of Social Sciences), 10 Departments and 37 study programs. The survey was conducted on the population of 1397 graduates (until summer graduation) and 1628 graduates (until autumn graduation).

The questionnaire consisted of 19 questions of different categories, closed, open and Likert-type scale questions, which aimed to obtain information on the implementation of the professional traineeship, its effectiveness, the support that the student received from AU and specifically from the respective Offices in support of them; the relationship with the professional traineeship supervisor, etc. An interesting part of this questionnaire is the self-evaluation that graduates make by expressing their opinion, through 2 questions, on how they have performed during the professional traineeship. The time span for the data collection lasted from June to September 2019 and all the collected data were analyzed in Excel.

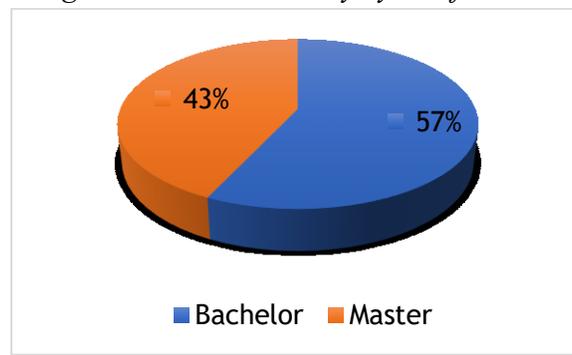
## ANALYSIS OF THE GRADUATES PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP IMPRESSIONS SURVEY

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The first section of the questionnaire consisted in some general information regarding the study program that the graduate completed, the city and the company/institution where they conducted the professional traineeship.

The questionnaire was completed by 307 graduates, 175 Bachelor studies graduates and 132 Master studies graduates. Most of the graduates that took the survey are Bachelor studies graduates (57%).

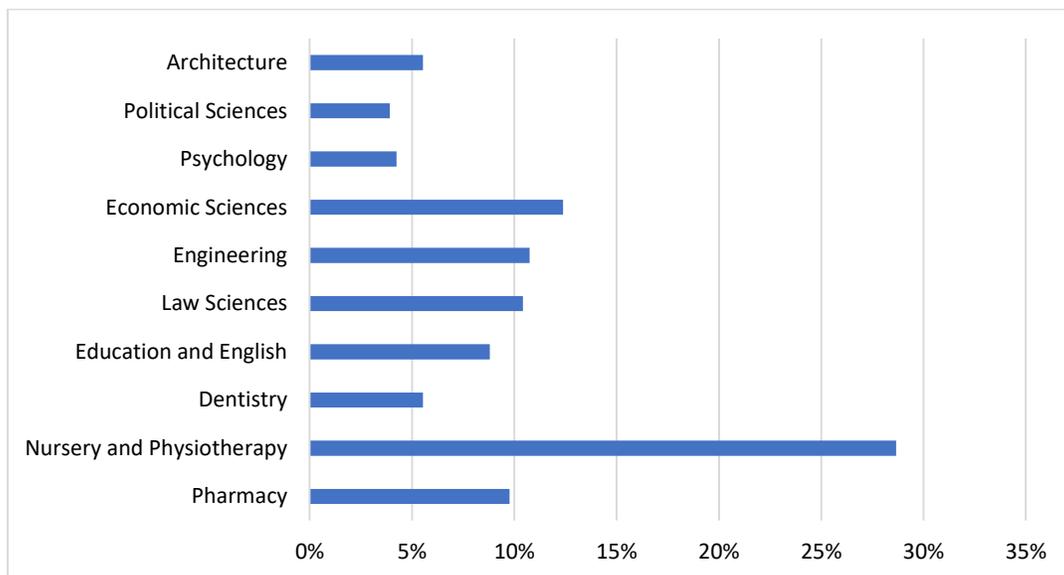
*Figure 3.8.1: Students by cycle of studies*



Source: AU students' survey

The Department of Nursing and Physiotherapy has the greatest number of participants in the survey (29%), followed by the Department of Economic Sciences (12%).

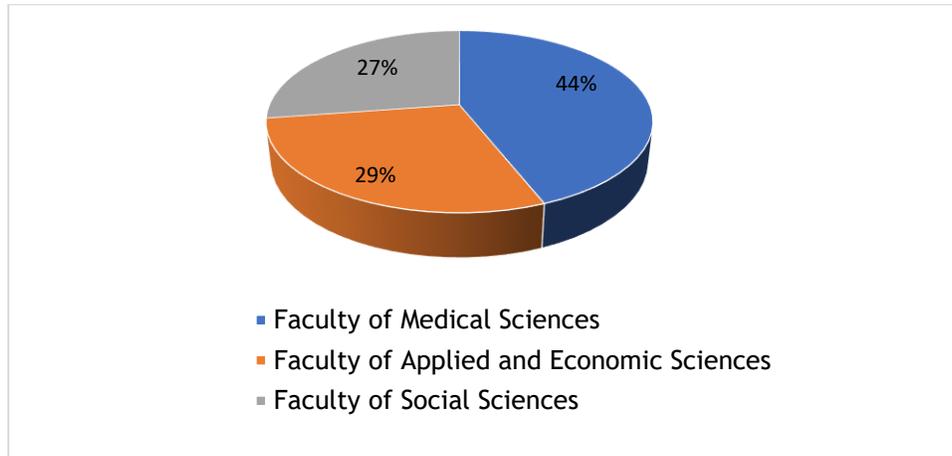
*Figure 3.8.2: Students by study program*



Source: AU students' survey

When analyzed the number of the participants by Faculty, the Faculty of Medical Sciences has the greatest number of participants (44%), followed by the Faculty of Applied and Economic Sciences (29%) and the Faculty of Social Sciences (27%). The difference between the Faculty of Applied and Economic Sciences with the Faculty of Social Sciences is only 2%. Both these faculties have a +10% difference with the Faculty of Medical Sciences, difference which applies also in the total number of the graduates by each faculty, not only in this surveys sample.

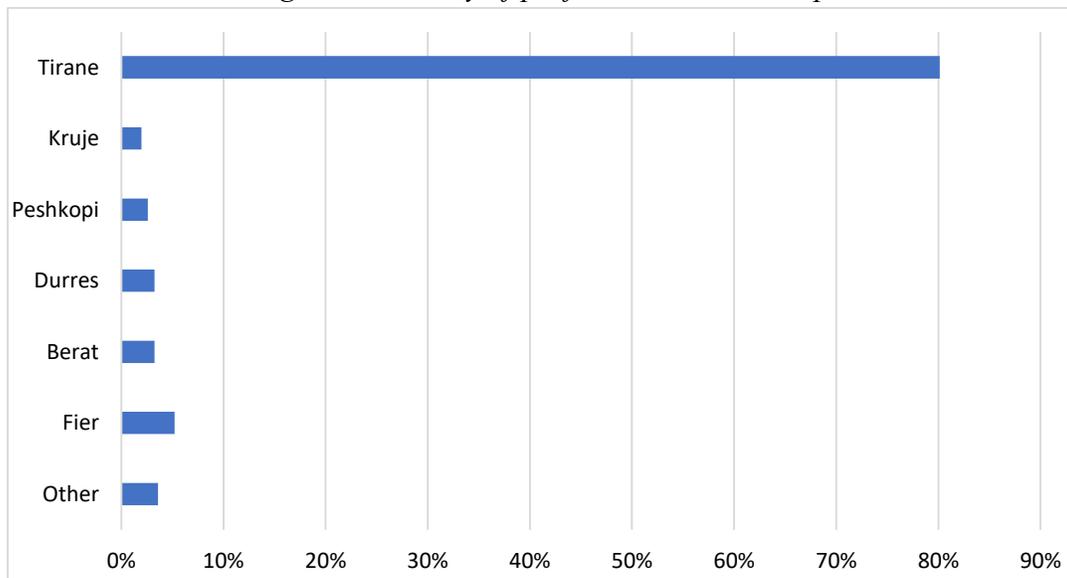
*Figure 3.8.3: Students by Faculty*



Source: AU students' survey

Graduates were asked about the city where they completed their professional traineeship. Most of the graduates (80%) answered "Tirana", the city where the university is placed. Only 20% chose other cities.

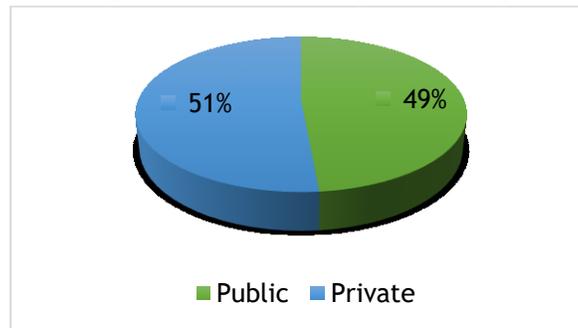
*Figure 3.8.4: City of professional traineeship*



Source: AU students' survey

Most of the graduates completed their professional traineeship in institutions and organizations of the private sector (51%), although the difference with the public sector is only 2%. 49% of the graduates completed their professional traineeship in organizations and institutions of the public sector.

Figure 3.8.5: Sector of traineeship



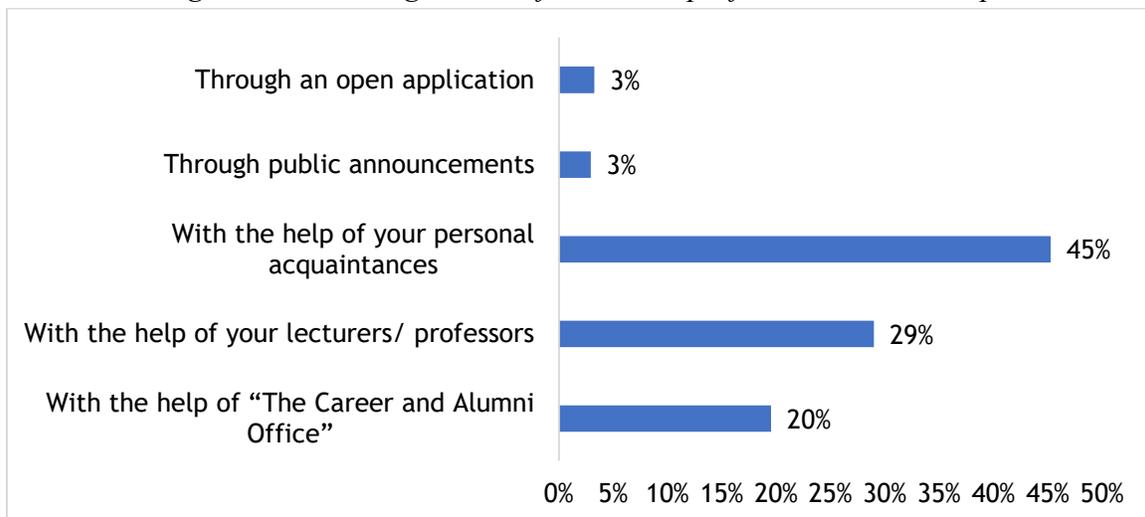
Source: AU students' survey

## YOUR PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP

The second section of the questionnaire consisted in questions about the professional traineeship, their evaluation and satisfaction about it.

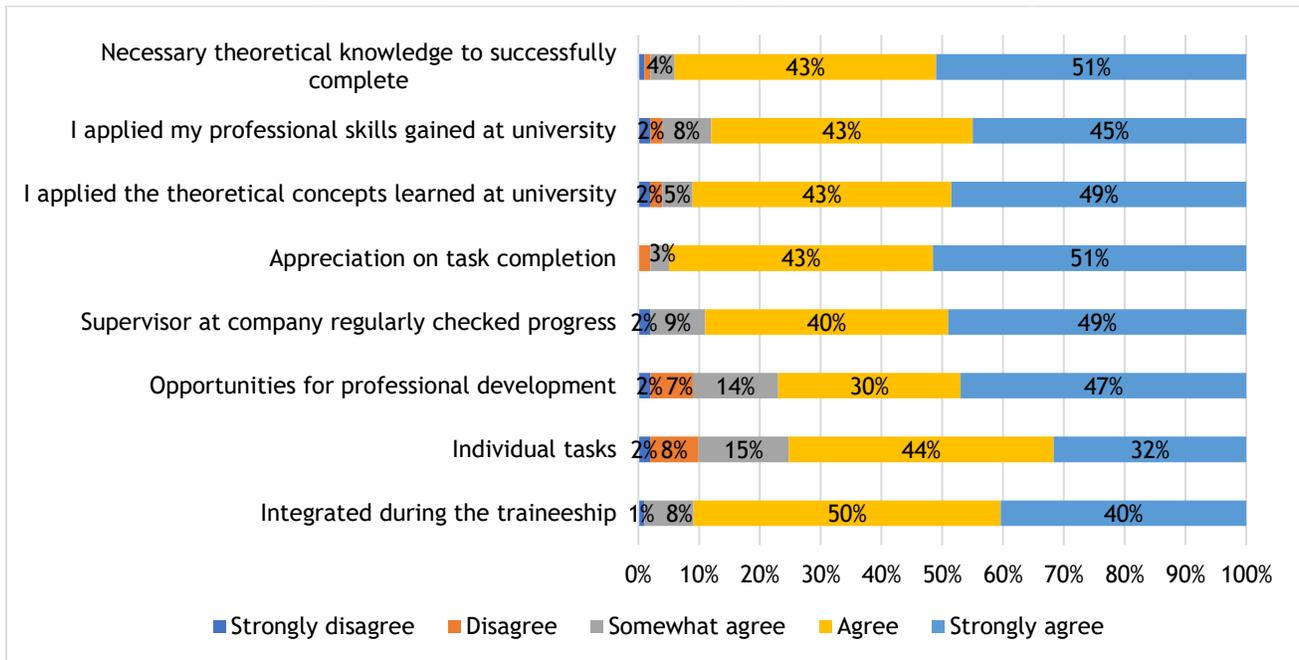
Most of the graduates found their professional traineeship with the help of their personal acquaintances (45%); 29% of the graduates have found it with the help of lecturers, 20% with the help of the Career and Alumni Office and 6% through open applications and announcements.

Figure 3.8.6: How graduates found their professional traineeship



Source: AU students' survey

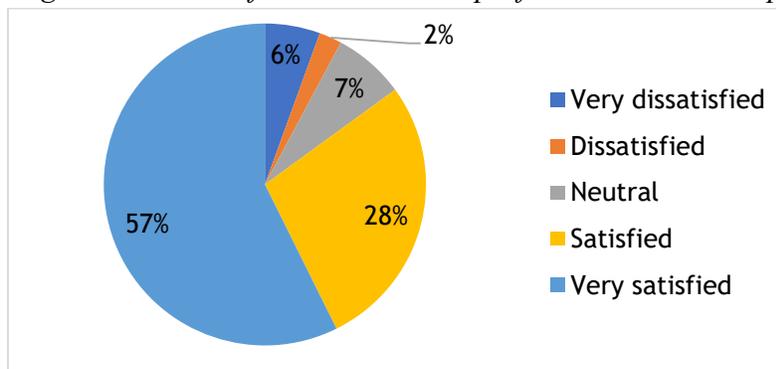
Figure 3.8.7: Evaluation about the professional traineeship



Source: AU students' survey

According to figure 3.8.7, graduates strongly agreed that during the professional traineeship they felt integrated (40%), the supervisor in the company gave them individual tasks (32%), appreciated them when they completed the tasks (51%), regularly checked their progress (49%) and they applied their theoretical concepts learned in university (49%) and their professional skills also (45%).

Figure 3.8.8: Satisfaction about the professional traineeship



Source: AU students' survey

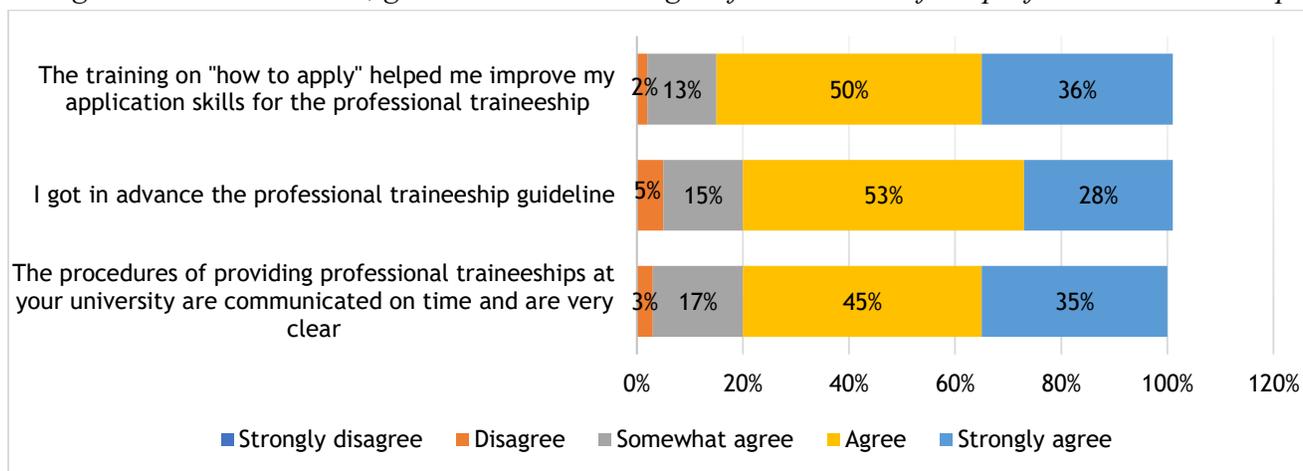
When asked about how satisfied they are about their professional traineeship, most of the graduates (85%) are satisfied with the professional traineeship, 7% of them are neutral and only 8% of the graduates are dissatisfied.

## CAREER AND ALUMNI OFFICE SERVICES AT ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY

The third section of the questionnaire consisted in questions about the Career and Alumni Office of the university and the facilitation that this office provides to students regarding traineeships.

Most of the graduates reported that they got in time the necessary information about the procedures a student needs to follow to provide a professional traineeship (80%), they got in time the guideline (81%) and they improved their applications skills (86%) with the help of the trainings offered by the university.

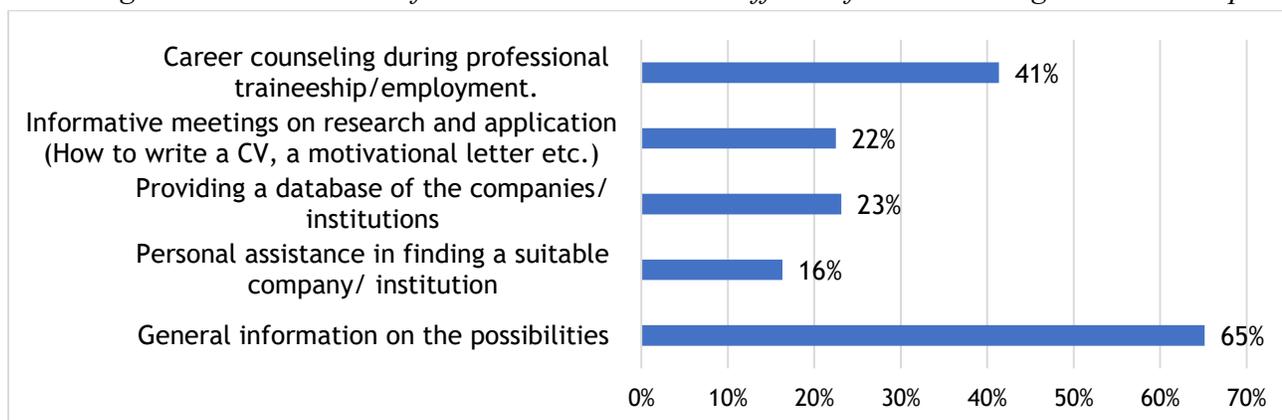
*Figure 3.8.9: Procedures, guidelines and trainings before the start of the professional traineeship*



Source: AU students' survey

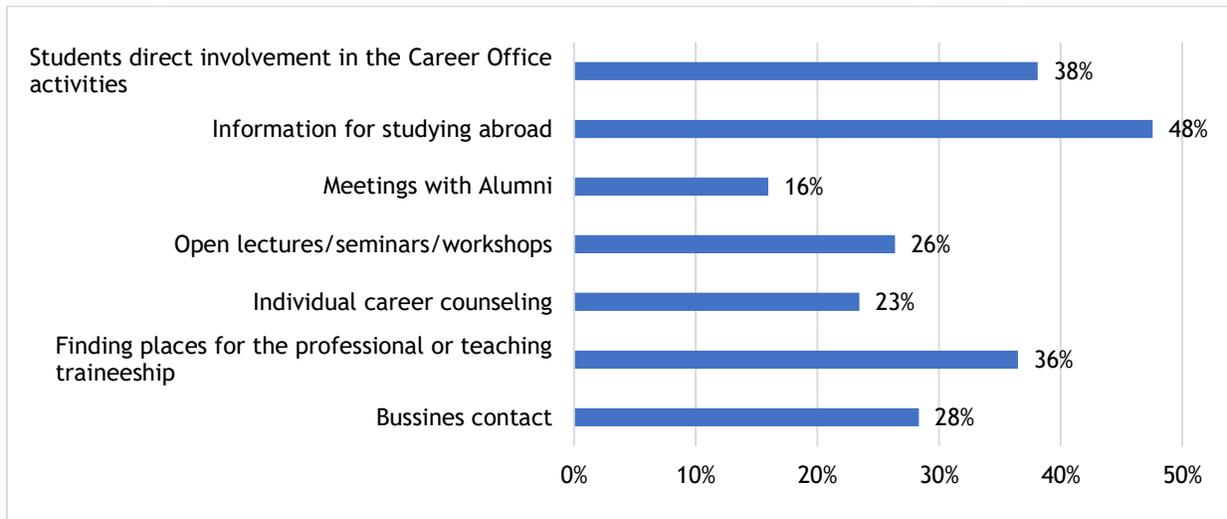
According to figure 3.8.10, 65% of the graduates reported that the Career and Alumni Office of the university provided them with general information about the possibilities of the professional traineeship; 41 % report that the office offered career counseling during the traineeship. In this question the graduates had the opportunity to choose more than one answer. On average, a graduate chose 1.7 answers.

*Figure 3.8.10: Services of the Career and Alumni Office before and during the traineeship*



Source: AU students' survey

Figure 3.8.11: What services should the Career and Alumni Office improve?



Source: AU students' survey

When asked about the services that the Career and Alumni Office should improve, the graduates chose on average 2.2 answers (they could choose more than one answer).

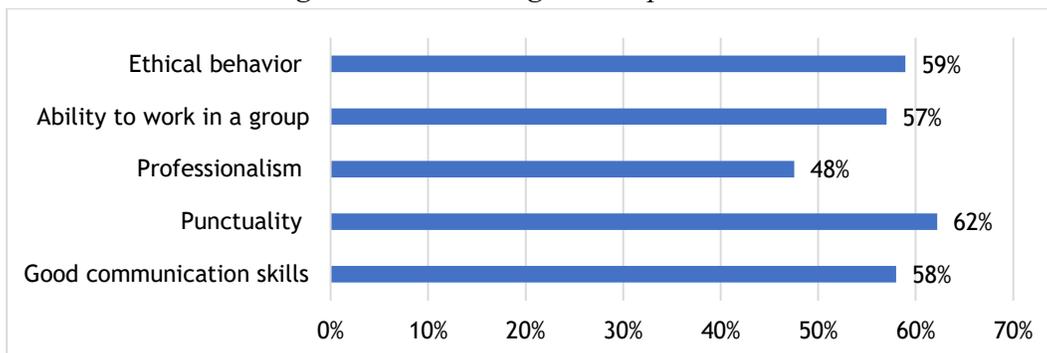
Most of them (48%) say that the information for studying abroad is the one that needs to be improved; 38% chose their direct involvement in the offices activities and 36% chose finding places for the professional traineeship; only 16% were interested in the improvement of the meetings with Alumni.

### PERFORMANCE DURING YOUR PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP

The fourth section of the questionnaire consisted on questions about the self-evaluation of the graduate during the professional traineeship.

When asked about their strengths, graduates chose on average 2.8 answers among 5 specified answers, and an open alternative to add by themselves characteristics they value as strengths. 62% of the graduates chose punctuality, 59% chose ethical behavior, 58% chose good communication skills, 57% chose the ability to work in a group and the least chosen strength was professionalism with 48%.

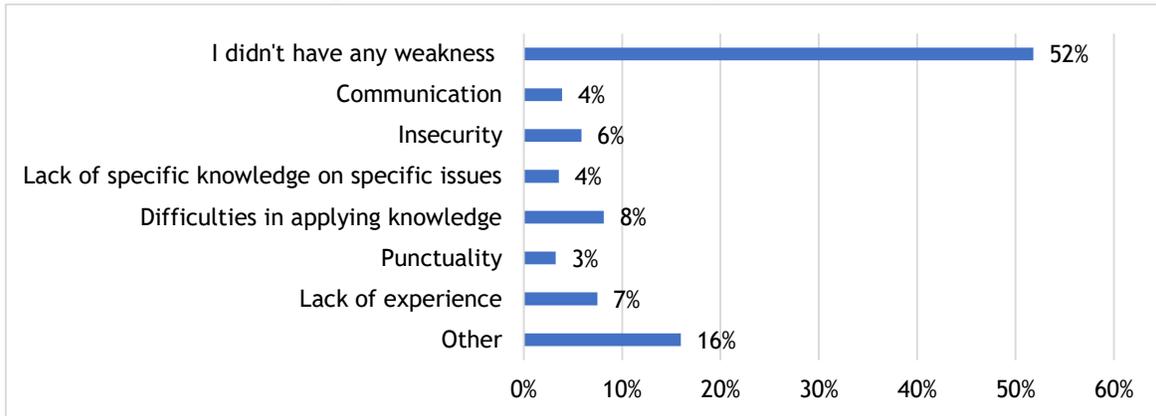
Figure 3.8.12: Strengths as a practitioner



Source: AU students' survey

According to figure 13, 52% of the graduates didn't specify any weaknesses; the question was open so they could write by themselves what they perceived as weaknesses during the professional traineeship. Some of the weaknesses mentioned by the graduates were: lack of experience (7%), difficulties in applying knowledge (8%), insecurity (6%), communication (4%), lack of specific knowledge on specific issues (4%), punctuality (3%) and other weaknesses (16%).

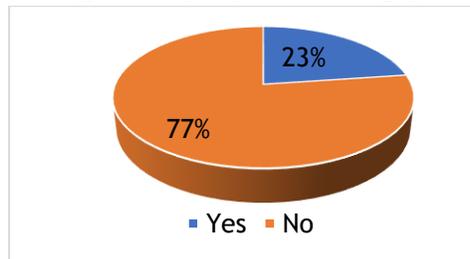
Figure 3.8.13: Weaknesses as a practitioner



Source: AU students' survey

According to figure 3.8.14, 77% of the graduates reported that they haven't been offered a job by the company/organization where they completed the professional traineeship; only 23% have been offered a job.

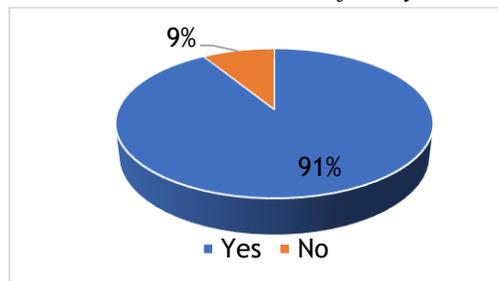
Figure 3.8.14: Have you been offered a job from the org. you completed the traineeship?



Source: AU students' survey

When asked about the field they would like to work in, 91% of the graduates reported that they would like to work in the same field they completed the professional traineeship; 9% would prefer to work in another field.

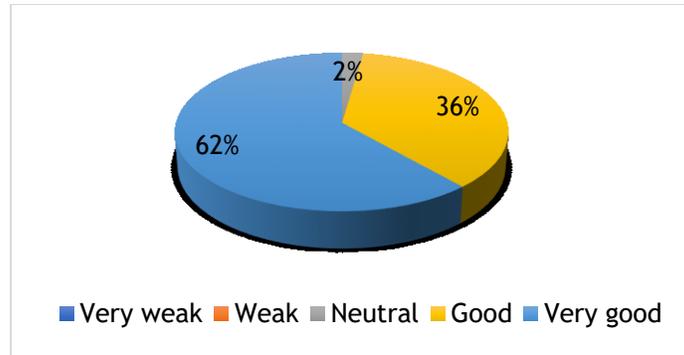
Figure 3.8.15: Would you like to work in the same field you completed your traineeship?



Source: AU students' survey

Regarding their overall performance during the traineeship, 98% of the graduates reported that they performed good, only 2% chose neutral and none chose weak.

Figure 3.8.16: Performance evaluation during the traineeship



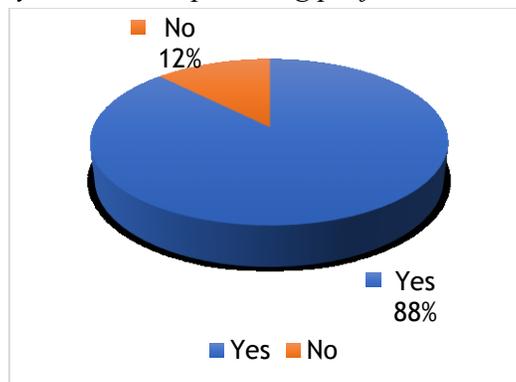
Source: AU students' survey

### STUDY PROGRESS DURING THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP

The last section of the questionnaire consisted in question about the supervising professor during the professional traineeship and its support.

According to figure 17, 88% of the graduates reported that they have been followed by a supervisor during the professional traineeship; 12% reported that they did not have a supervisor.

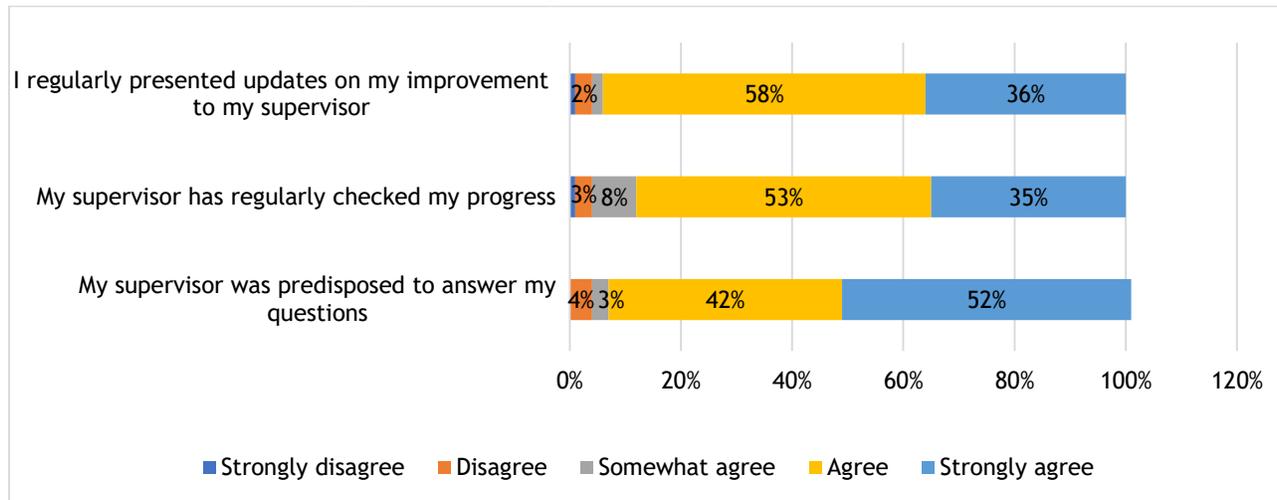
Figure 3.8.17: Did you have a supervising professor during your traineeship?



Source: AU students' survey

With regards to the communication with the supervisor, 94% of the graduates agreed that the supervisor was predisposed to answer their questions, 85% reported that the supervisor regularly checked their progress and 94% reported that they regularly presented updates on the improvements made to their supervisor.

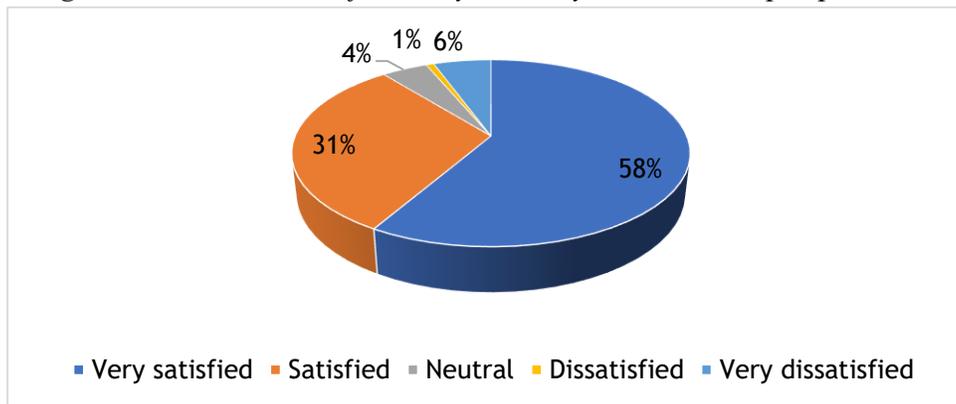
Figure 3.8.18: Supervisor-student communication



Source: AU students' survey

When asked about the level of satisfaction they feel about their supervisor during the professional traineeship, according to figure 19, 87% of the graduates answered satisfied and very satisfied, 4% were neutral and 7% were dissatisfied.

Figure 3.8.19: How satisfied are you with your traineeship supervisor?



Source: AU students' survey

## CONCLUSIONS

The graduates survey on professional traineeship included 307 responses from Bachelor and Master studies. The participation of the Bachelor studies graduates was higher (+14%) than those of Master studies.

The survey served to better understand student feedback about the professional traineeship they follow as part of their curriculum, the support of the Career and Alumni Office of the university, their experience with the supervisor and the qualities that helped them more during it.

Its results help the university to improve weaknesses and to continue developing successful practices.

Upon completion of the survey the following results were noted:

➤ Strengths

- Most of the graduates (85%) were satisfied with their professional traineeship;
- Most of the graduates (80%) got in time the necessary information about the procedures a student needs to follow to provide a professional traineeship.

➤ Suggestions

- The “Career and Alumni Office” should support more students in finding the company/organization where they will pursue their professional traineeship;
- The university should organize more trainings and activities about applications in traineeships/jobs, since students find these activities very helpful;
- The most required service to be improved by the Career and Alumni Office was providing information about studying abroad.

## PART 4

### Students' Survey for the Internship during the pandemic period

#### Introduction

During the academic year 2019-2020 while we were preparing the final report on student internships the Albanian society was faced with COVID19 – one of the first countries to be exposed and suffer from this pandemics. Most of the students had been designated to the institutions or companies where they would conduct their internships. To assess the internship process during this academic year, an online questionnaire was developed in July 2020. This questionnaire was also used to evaluate the level of information that students have about the GRADUA project.

The questionnaire was developed in Google Form and it was shared on GRADUA social networks and via email with the help of career offices. 645 students completed the questionnaire – the results are shown in table 4.1.

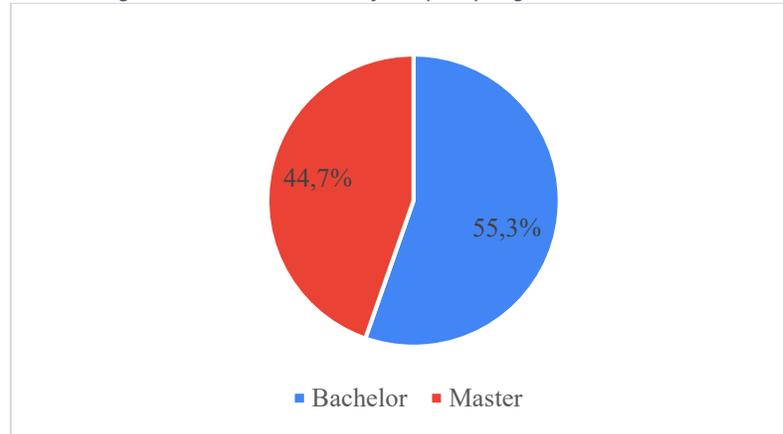
*Table 4.1 The sample distribution by university*

University	Frequency	Percent
Agricultural University of Tirana (AUT)	160	24.8%
Tirana University (TU)	132	20.5%
Polytechnic University of Tirana (PUT)	48	7.4%
University of Medicine in Tirana (UMT)	76	11.8%
European University of Tirana (EUT)	15	2.3%
Polis University (PU)	94	14.6%
Catholic University Our Lady of Good Counsel (CUOLGC)	22	3.4%
Albanian University (AU)	95	14.7%
Other	3	0.5%
Grand Total	645	100.0%

Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

55.3% of the students that had fulfilled the questionnaire were bachelor students and 44.7% of them were science or professional master students (figure 4.1).

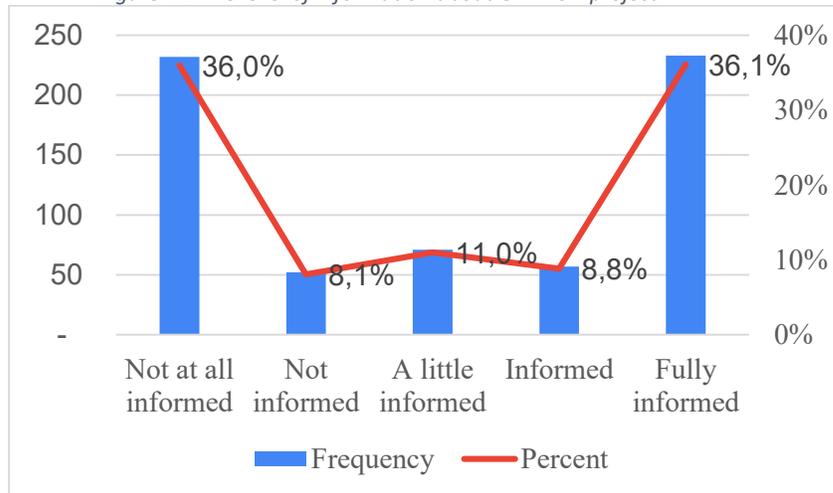
Figure 4.1 The distribution of sample by degree level



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

GRADUA project has launched the platform more than 2 years ago. Most students were informed or somehow-informed. However, a significant share, namely 44% appear not to be informed, which implies the need for more dissemination efforts.

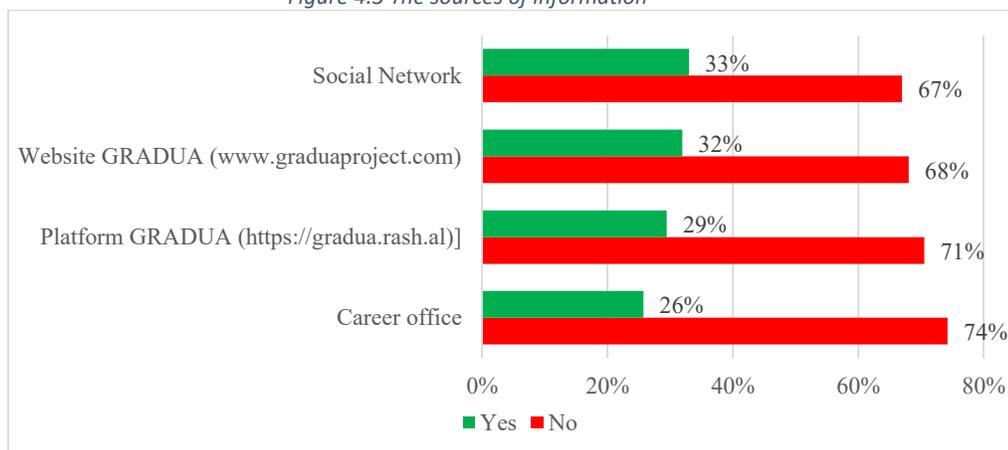
Figure 4.2 The level of information about GRADUA project



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

Students were also asked about the sources of information related to the platform. According to the figure 4.3 the most important source were social networks (33%), however, there are no major differences with other categories/types of information source. This distribution could be affected also by COVID19, since students were not physically present at University, thereby not accessing direct contact to career offices.

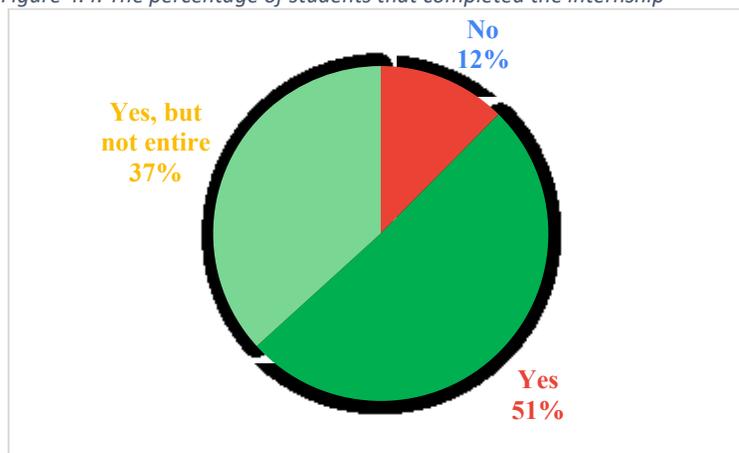
Figure 4.3 The sources of information



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

According to the survey results, 12% of the respondents did not carry out the internship, while 37% did so on partial basis. That can be explained by the restrictions related to COVID19. For example, public transport (the main means of communication for students) was on halt for several months, while many institutions and businesses followed strict guidelines or practices related to physical presence of existing staff and were far likely to host interns under these circumstances.

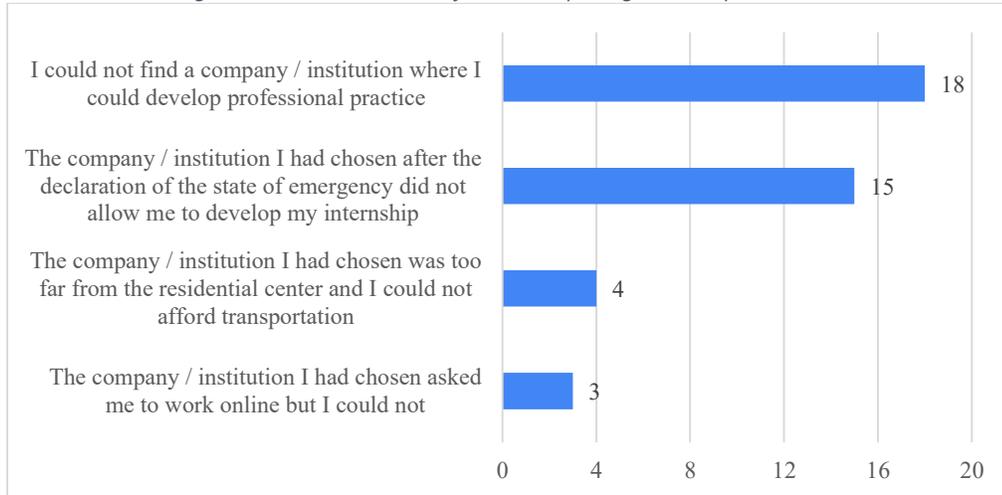
Figure 4.4. The percentage of students that completed the internship



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

Students who did not carry out the internship were also asked about the reasons why. Apparently, they could not find a company or institution to host them, and/or the companies/institutions where they could do the internship did not allow them to do so due to COVID19 situation (figure 4.5).

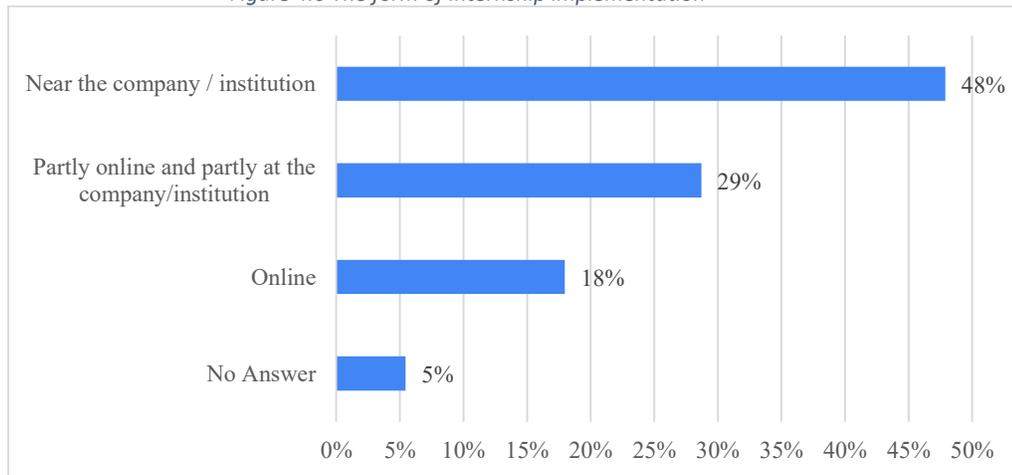
Figure 4.5 The main reasons for not completing internships



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

Less than half of the respondents claim to have carried out the internship at the company/institution facilities. 18% state that they did the internship online while 29% though a mixed approach (figure 4.6).

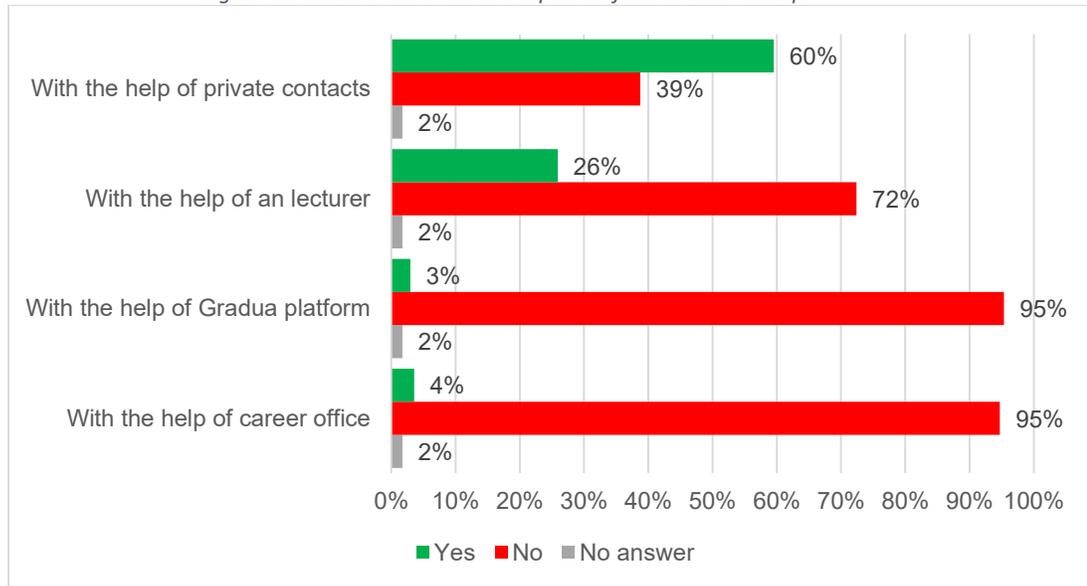
Figure 4.6 The form of internship implementation



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

This academic year, the main form of acquiring an internship location/affiliation was through private or personal contacts or network. Some claim to have found the institutions/companies through GRADUA, which is a positive signal of the GRADUA platform potential, as well as an indication that more can and should be done to promote it to the students and companies/institutions (figure 4.7).

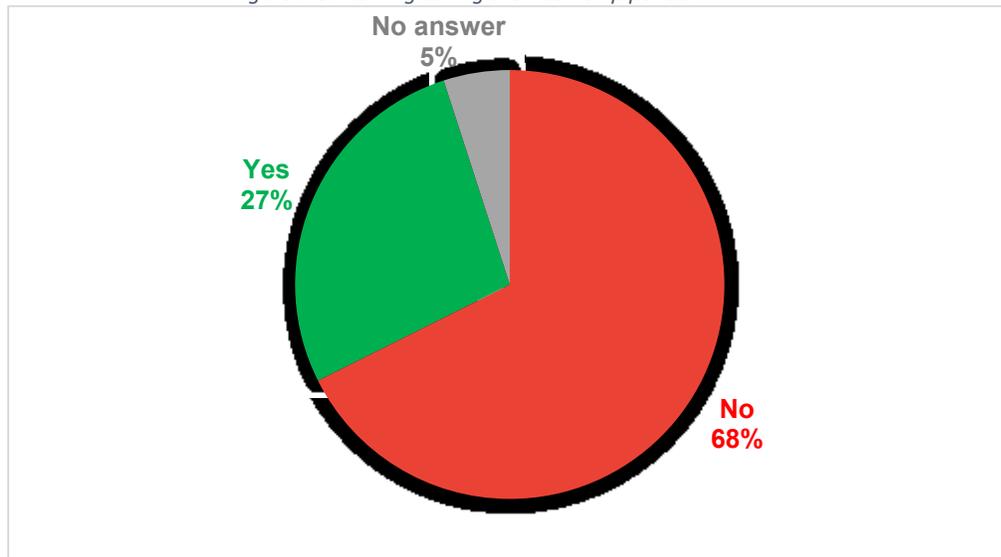
Figure 4.7 Sources that students exploit to find their internship



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

In the survey conducted during 2019 for the evaluation of internships, students were not asked whether or not they were employed during the internship period. In the context of the analysis of data collected by the GRADUA platform it was noticed that a significant percentage of students were employed during the study period. Therefore we checked how many of them did internships at the institutions/companies where they were employed. From the survey we conducted in July 2020, 27% of students answered that they were at work during the internship period.

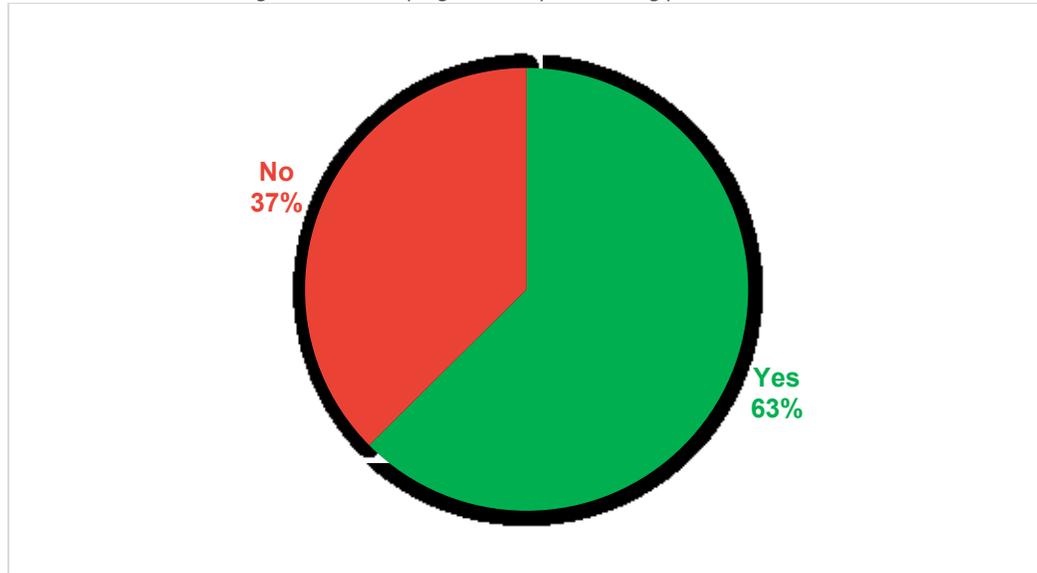
Figure 4.8 Working during the internship period



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

As expected a large share (63%) of students who were employed during the internship period had had done the internship at the same institution/company.

Figure 4.9 Developing internship at working place



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

In the context of various meetings held in the context of the project, was repeatedly highlighted the importance of internships in the professional preparation of the students, while on the other hand, it would be preferred that students who carry out internships for longer than one month be paid for that, even modest, to motivate participating students. According to the survey results only 16.7% were paid, most of whom were also employed at the same institution; 3.4 % were paid despite not being employed (in the same institution).

Table 4.2 Payment for internship and working activate

Working during Internships	Payment for internship		
	No	Yes	No answer
No	57,1%	3,4%	0,2%
Yes	13,0%	13,3%	0,2%
No answer	0,3%	0,0%	0,0%

Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

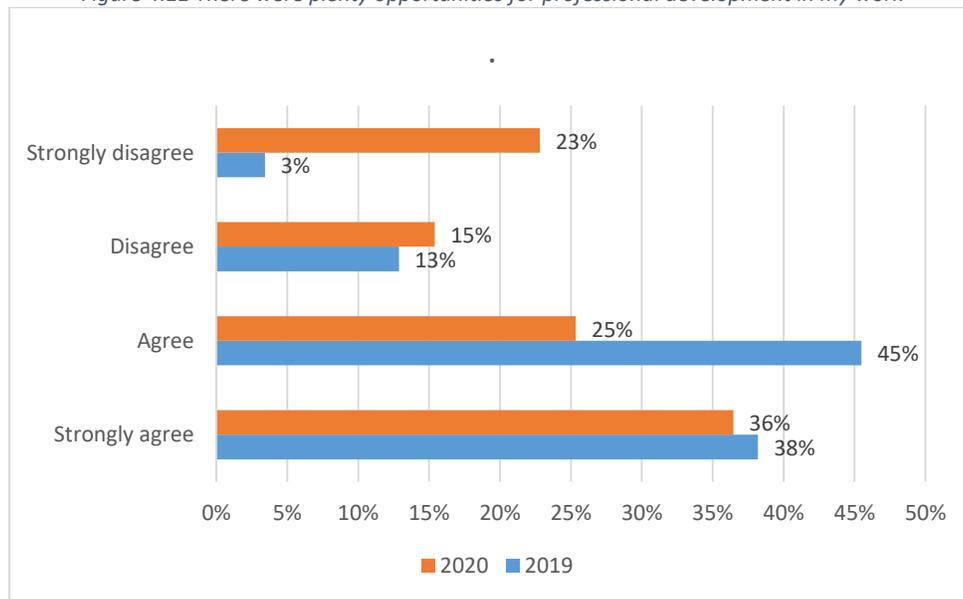
Figure 4.10 The company/institution was far away from home.



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

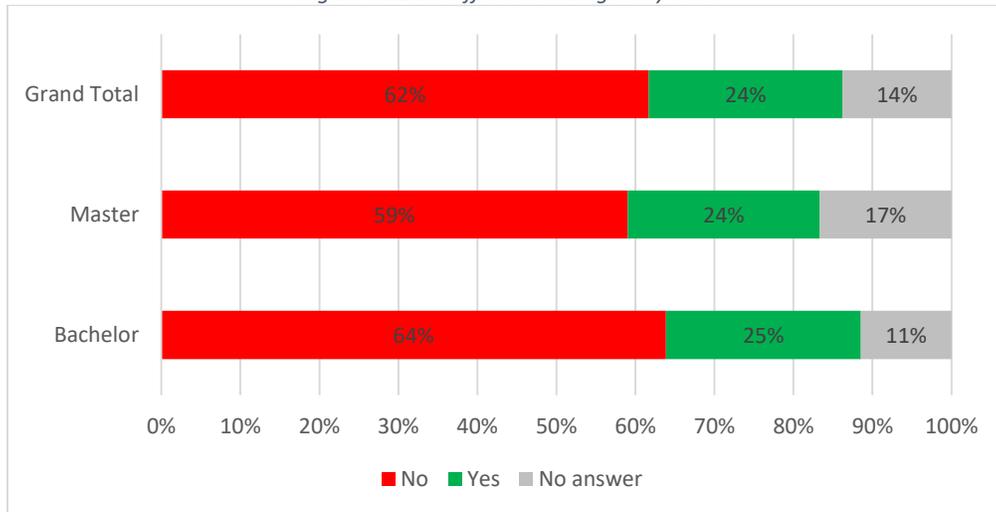
Comparing the information from the two different datasets (corresponding to two different years), students appear to be less likely to develop the professional skills during the internship. As can be seen in the figure below, the percentage of students who agree or strongly agree that during the internship they had the opportunity to develop their professional capacities in 2020, is significantly lower when compared to 2019 (figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11 There were plenty opportunities for professional development in my work



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

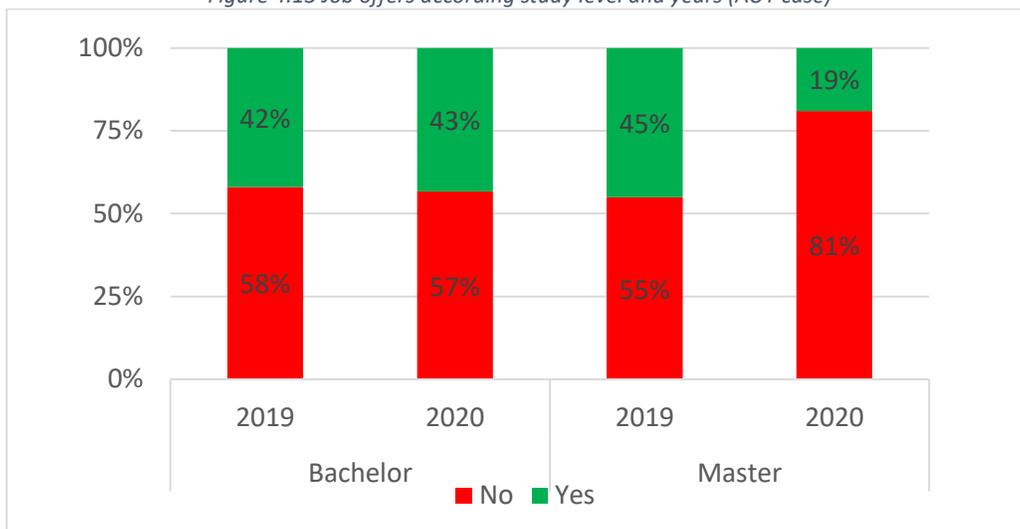
Figure 4.12 Job offers according study level



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

From the survey conducted during the pandemic period it was observed that the percentage of students who had received job offers had no significant differences between the levels of study. Meanwhile, when we were focused on AUT case, it was noticed that the students of master level had received fewer job offers than those of the bachelor level, this also compared to the data observed during 2019 (19% vs 45%).

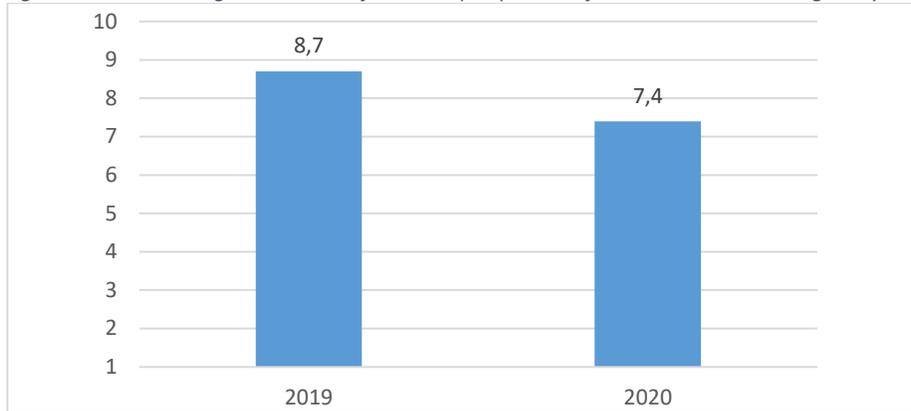
Figure 4.13 Job offers according study level and years (AUT case)



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

Students were asked to make an evaluation of the internship, which reflects their level of satisfaction, using the same grading system that is used to assess students' performance. For this question, we had 589 valid responses. It resulted that the average evaluation of respondents was about 7.5 (SD=2.8), indicating a good satisfaction from internship program, but lower than the evaluation during 2019 survey.

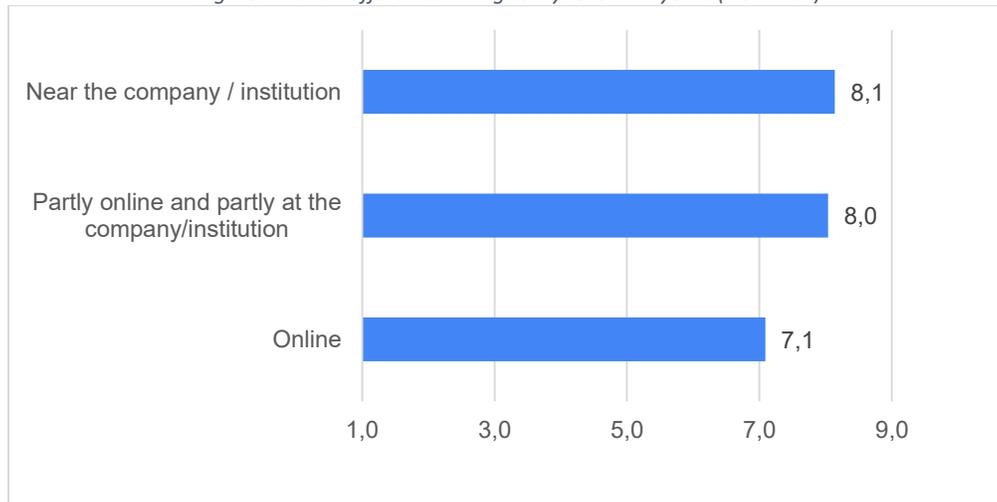
Figure 4.14 The average evaluation of internship experience for AUT' students during two years



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

Traditionally, internship has always taken place through physical presence at the premises of the company/internship. Due to Covid-19, the option to do the internship online was feasible and in some cases the only option. While some students opted for the online option, others chose mixed approach. It appears that the online form was the least effective form (figure 4.15).

Figure 4.15 Job offers according study level and years (AUT case)



Source: Students' survey during the pandemic period

## Conclusions

- The share of students who were not at all informed about GRADUA project (36%) turned out to be almost the same as that of students who were fully informed (36.1%). The most important source were social networks (33%), and the less important source (26 %) was career office. It may be concluded that that one of the factors that has affected the relative low importance of career offices was the lockdown due to the pandemic.

- According to the survey results, 12% of the respondents did not carry out the internship, while 37% did so on partial basis. Apparently, many students could not find a company or institution to host them, and/or some companies were reluctant to host students for internships due to COVID19 situation
- 48% of the respondents claim to have carried out the internship at the company/institution facilities, 18% state that they did the internship online while 29% though a mixed approach.
- 27% of the surveyed students answered that they were at work during the internship period. As expected a large share (63%) of students who were employed during the internship period had done the internship at the same institution/company. Only 3.4% of the students who were not employed during the internship period were paid. Thus, internships are rarely paid, unless are combined with existing working relations.
- Comparing the information from the two different datasets (corresponding to two different years), students appear to be less likely to develop the professional skills during the internship. The percentage of students who agree or strongly agree that during the internship they had the opportunity to develop their professional capacities in 2020, is significantly lower when compared to 2019.
- In the case of AUT, based on 2020 survey, it resulted that the share of master students who received a job offer was much lower when compared to bachelor students (19% vs 45%). One possible explanation could be that master students are more likely to consider only highly qualified jobs, for which there was scarcity of available options during and due to Covid-19.
- The average evaluation of respondents for the internship was about 7.5 (SD=2.8, from 1 to 10), indicating an overall satisfaction related to the internship program, but lower than the evaluation during (pre-Covid-19) 2019 survey.

It appears that online internships have been less effective

## Part 5-Pjesa e pestë

### Hyrje

Praktikat tradicionalisht janë konsideruar si një instrument shumë i rëndësishëm për t'i sjellë studentët më afër ndërmarrjeve (private). Zhvillimi i kurrikulës së re të studimit zakonisht e ka pasqyruar këtë rëndësi, duke i ofruar hapësirë të konsiderueshme praktikave, zakonisht në programin e fundit të studimit. Ka disa përfitime që mund të vërehen nga praktikat. Ata mund të zbatojnë njohuritë teorike, mjetet dhe konceptin e fituar në universitet, duke përmirësuar kështu kuptimin e njohurive nga një këndvështrim më praktik i perspektivës. Gjithashtu, studentët mund të përmirësojnë mundësitë e punësimit. Ndodh shpesh që, kur studentët performojnë mirë gjatë praktikës, kompania pritëse u ofron atyre mundësi punësimi. Edhe në rast se kjo nuk ndodh, studentët kanë shanse më të mira për të gjetur një punë pas përfundimit të suksesshëm të praktikave, për shkak të përvojës së fituar, të pasqyruara në njohuritë teknike si dhe në CV-të e pasuruara. Praktikat e studentëve mundësojnë ndërveprim më intensiv midis stafit akademik mbikëqyrës dhe kompanive pritëse, të cilat mund të lindin interes të përbashkët për bashkëpunim përtej praktikave, të tilla si hulumtimi për zgjidhjen e problemeve të ndërmarrjes, etj.

Marrë në konsideratë të gjitha përfitimet pozitive nga trajnime/praktikat profesionale, universitetet gjithnjë janë përpjekur të përmirësojnë këto procese. Gjatë dekadës së kaluar numri i studentëve është rritur me shpejtësi dhe ky fakt duhet të ishte shoqëruar me një rritje të numrit të marrëveshjeve midis universiteteve dhe bizneseve. Për këtë, projekti GRADUA ka një fokus specifik në këtë drejtim. Një nga paketat e punës së projektit GRADUA, konsiston në krijimin e bashkëpunimit të qëndrueshëm universitet-ndërmarrje përmes dinamikës së ndërtimit të kapaciteteve. Paketa e punës synon të forcojë marrëdhëniet / bashkëpunimin me ndërmarrjet private dhe të organizojë trajnime / praktika në një mënyrë më të strukturuar, me më shumë mbështetje, trainim dhe monitorim nga stafi i universiteteve.

Për të pasur një praktikë të mirë, tre komponentë duhet të bashkëpunojnë me njëri-tjetrin gjatë gjithë kohës: universitetet, ndërmarrjet dhe studentët. Kjo ishte arsyeja që ne vendosëm të bënim anketa me ndërmarrjet dhe studentët, gjithashtu për të kërkuar zyrat e karrierës për sugjerimet e tyre.

### Organizimi i Raportit

Raporti është i ndarë në 5 pjesë.

- Pjesa e parë paraqet rekomandimet dhe konkluzionet e arritura në studimet / vrojtimit e kryera nën projektin GRADUA.
- Pjesa e dytë paraqet rezultatet e vrojtimit me ndërmarrjet për praktikat e studentëve.
- Pjesa e tretë paraqet tetë tema të veçanta në lidhje me vlerësimin e praktikave nga studentët e secilit universitet.
- Pjesa e katërt paraqet një seksion kushtuar përparimit të praktikave dhe problemeve të hasura nga studentët për shkak të COVID-19.
- Pjesa e pestë paraqet konkluzionet dhe rekomandimet e arritura në gjuhën shqipe.

## Rekomandimet dhe Konkluzionet

### 5.1 Rekomandimet dhe konkluzionet e ndërmarrjeve

Një nga aktivitetet e parashikuara në këtë projekt, ishte kryerja e një ankete me ndërmarrjet në lidhje me praktikatat dhe punësimin, duke marrë parasysh sektorë të ndryshëm dhe fusha të punësimit (që korrespondojnë me disiplina të ndryshme).

Disa nga konkluzionet dhe rekomandimet e mbledhura nga ndërmarrjet e anketuara dhe takimet e organizuara në UT dhe UMT janë:

- Ka përfitime të ndryshme nga praktikatat. Përfitimi kryesor i perceptuar është motivimi i "ndjekjes së kokës" domethënë, kompanitë i shohin praktikatat si një mundësi për të identifikuar dhe rekrutuar punonjësit e ardhshëm. Rreth 1/5 janë më të motivuar nga arsye altruiste, thjesht duke ndihmuar studentët të zhvillojnë kapacitetet e tyre profesionale. Interesante, vetëm 3 (ose 6%) e shohin përfitimin e bashkëpunimit me stafin e kualifikuar (p.sh. profesorët që udhëzojnë studentët) si motivimin kryesor, këtu ka hapësirë për t'u përmirësuar.
- Praktikatat e organizuara mund të kenë përfshirje më aktive të ekspertëve ose stafit akademik, të cilët përmes dhe në bashkëpunim me studentë që janë pjesë e praktikave, mund të ndihmojnë kompanitë (për të përmirësuar menaxhimin).
- Përfaqësuesit e biznesit pretenduan se studentët në përgjithësi janë të saktë kur angazhohen në një kompani, por koha e praktikës profesionale nuk është gjithmonë e mjaftueshme për të përfunduar me sukses këtë proces.
- Shpesh praktika zgjat për një periudhë të shkurtër, gjë që nuk është e mjaftueshme që studentët të fitojnë përvojë të konsiderueshme profesionale ose që kompanitë të përfitojnë nga praktikantët. Është e kuptueshme që javët e para, apo edhe muajt, shërbejnë kryesisht për të bërë të njohur dhe në rastin kur praktikatat zgjasin për një periudhë më të shkurtër (më të shkurtër se 3 muaj), sesa nuk ka kohë të mjaftueshme për praktikantët për të siguruar vlera kontributin.
- Më shumë se  $\frac{3}{4}$  e të intervistuarve sugjerojnë që praktikatat duhet të jenë së paku 3 muaj, nga të cilët më shumë se  $\frac{1}{4}$  e mostrës preferojnë 6 muaj. Praktikatat e ardhshme duhet të marrin parasysh pikëpamjet ose preferencat e tilla.
- Strukturat universitare, të tilla si zyrat e orientimit në karrierë, luajnë një rol vendimtar për të mundësuar praktikatat, në bashkëpunim me ndërmarrjet. Megjithatë, gjithashtu rrjeti informal, ka tendencë të luajë një rol të rëndësishëm (kategoria e dytë, siç tregohet në tabelën 8 më poshtë), e cila është mjaft e kuptueshme në kontekstin lokal, ku rrjetet informale janë shumë të rëndësishme (në rastin e Shqipërisë).
- Përfaqësuesit e biznesit theksuan se ofrimi i këtyre mundësive studentëve mund të konsiderohet një investim jo vetëm për ta, por edhe për vetë kompaninë, për më tepër referuar kualifikimit të punonjësve të kërkuar në fushën e ndërtimit. Nga ana tjetër, ata pranuan se vendosja e lidhjeve për të mundësuar zbatimin e praktikave profesionale kërkonte angazhim dhe kohë për stafin e kompanisë. Pra, kompanitë janë të gatshme të mbështesin çdo alternativë, platformë që do të lejonte më pak angazhim dhe kosto, dhe më shumë cilësi dhe profesionalizëm për të siguruar burime njerëzore.

- Mundësitë që kompanitë shqiptare kanë për të ofruar partneritet, nëse kompanitë janë të kënaqura me angazhimin e studentëve dhe a duhet që kompanitë shqiptare të kenë kapacitetin për të ofruar një pagesë simbolike ose të plotë për studentët gjatë angazhimit të tyre në kompani që ofrojnë partneritet. Nëse kompanitë janë të kënaqura me angazhimin e studentëve dhe a duhet që kompanitë shqiptare të kenë aftësinë për të ofruar një pagesë simbolike ose të plotë për studentët gjatë angazhimit të tyre në kompani që ofrojnë partneritet.
- Mundësitë që kompanitë kanë për të punësuar studentë të praktikës përtej kohës së praktikës. Për mënyrat se si kompanitë përdorin për të njoftuar studentët për partneritetet që ata ofrojnë. Lidhur me çështjet e ngritura, kompanitë lokale janë të kënaqura me angazhimin e studentëve në praktikat profesionale, por theksuan që kompanitë angazhojnë stafin e tyre duke konsumuar kohë dhe kosto për sigurimin e studentëve në kryerjen e praktikave profesionale.
- Në përgjithësi, ata theksuan se gjetja e studentëve për realizimin e praktikave profesionale kryhet nga paraardhësit që kanë kryer masat paraprake të kompanisë, por kjo bëhet pas disa kontakteve nga stafi i kompanisë. Nga ana tjetër, përfaqësuesit e institucioneve financiare theksuan se koha për organizimin e praktikave është e mjaftueshme, por ata nuk shohin mundësi pagese për sa kohë që vlerësojnë se studentët po mësojnë dhe nuk ofrojnë punën e tyre për t'u paguar.

## 5.2 Sugjerimet dhe konkluzionet e marra nga vrojtimet me studentët

Për të pasur një pasqyrë më të plotë të problemeve të studentëve, si dhe një gamë të gjerë të profileve të studimit që mbulojnë nga universitetet e përfshira në këtë projekt, vrojtimi u kryen në secilin universitet (Tabela 5.1).

Table 5.1 Numri i studentëve të anketuar për secilin universitet

Universiteti	Nr. i Studentëve
Universiteti Bujqësor i Tiranës (UBT)	254
Universiteti i Tiranës (UT)	146
Universiteti Politeknik i Tiranës (UPT)	263
Universiteti i Mjekësisë Tiranë (UMT)	74
Universiteti Evropian i Tiranës (UET)	43
Universiteti Polis (UP)	98
Universiteti Katolik Zoja e Këshillit të Mirë (UNIZKM)	56
Universiteti Arteve (UART)	307
<b>Total</b>	<b>1244</b>

- Vrojtimi tregoi se studentët janë shumë të interesuar për të bërë praktikë jashtë vendit. Por me të vërtetë vetëm një numër shumë i vogël mundet.

- Rezultati ishte se pengesat më të mëdha për të përmbushur një praktikë pune jashtë vendit lidhen me mungesën e aksesit në informacion, mungesën e kontakteve dhe kapaciteteve financiare. Duhet përmendur që shumica e universiteteve shqiptare nuk kanë ndonjë marrëveshje me bizneset jashtë vendit në lidhje me praktikën e studentëve.
- Si rezultat, zyrat e karrierës duhet të përmirësojnë fuqimisht rolin e tyre në çështjet e trajnimit, praktikës dhe punësimit të studentëve. Më konkretisht, këto zyra duhet të përmirësojnë shërbimet e tyre për të siguruar mundësi në lidhje me praktikën, kontakt të drejtpërdrejtë me punëdhënësin, më shumë informacion se si të aplikojnë për studime jashtë vendit dhe përfshirjen e drejtpërdrejtë të studentëve në aktivitetet e zyrave të karrierës.
- Sidoqoftë, studentët nuk e ndiejnë rolin e zyrave të karrierës së universitetit, në gjetjen e një programi internshipi. Eshte e qartë se kontaktet private të studentëve, përmes të afërmeve, miqve të tyre, etj., janë metoda më e përdorur për të gjetur praktikën.
- Shumica e studentëve kërkojnë një praktikë, një muaj para se të fillojë periudha e praktikës. Në të vërtetë, supozohet se sa më shumë që kërkohet paraprakisht për një mundësi praktike, aq më shumë shanse do të kenë studentët për ta gjetur atë.
- Vlen të theksohet se studentët përfshihen në mënyrë efektive në operacionet e përditshme të biznesit gjatë praktikës së tyre. Me fjalë të tjera, programet e praktikës janë një pjesë efektive e kurrikulës së universitetit.
- Studentët ranë dakord që praktika shërbeu si një mundësi për të pasur një ofertë pune. Kështu, praktikën janë një portë e rëndësishme për të hyrë në tregun e punës.
- Mbikëqyrësit luajnë një rol të rëndësishëm në mbështetjen e praktikantëve, gjatë periudhës së praktikës.
- Lidhur me kohëzgjatjen e praktikës, studentët përgjithësisht ranë dakord që do të duheshin 3 deri në 6 muaj.
- Ndërsa lidhur me mundësitë e pagesës nga bizneset, studentët deklaruan se nuk ishin paguar. Vetëm shumë pak raste citohen nga studentët të cilët pranojnë se biznesi ka paguar për to.
- Shumica e studentëve kanë specifikuar që programet profesionale kompjuterike dhe lëndët kryesore kanë qenë të dobishme gjatë praktikës së tyre profesionale.
- Studentët të cilët nuk dëshironin të kryenin një praktikë profesionale/ praktikë jashtë vendit, pretenduan se kjo ishte kryesisht për shkak të arsyeve financiare, por edhe sepse nuk ishin të interesuar.
- Rekomandohet që të gjendet një mbështetje alternative financiare (p.sh. bursa për lëvizje), përveç atyre që universiteti u jep tashmë studentëve që shkojnë jashtë vendit, në mënyrë që t'i motivoni studentët të kenë këto përvoja ndërkombëtare.
- Ekziston një bashkëpunim i mirë midis zyrave përgjegjëse për praktika profesionale / trajnime (dekanë, koordinatorë të programeve të studimit, zyra e karrierës) në universitet dhe studentëve. Dhënia e informacion të përgjithshëm, bazës së të dhënave të kompanive / institucioneve, ndihmës personale në gjetjen e një kompanie / institucioni të përshtatshëm dhe këshillimit të karrierës janë shërbimet që studentët mendojnë se u ofrohen më shumë.

- Megjithëse studentët mendojnë se ka ende vend për përmirësim kryesisht në lidhje me kontaktet universitare me kompanitë e biznesit dhe këshillimin individual të karrierës.
- Zyra e Karrierës dhe Alumni duhet të mbështesë më shumë studentë në gjetjen e ndërmarrjes / organizatës ku ata do të ndjekin praktikën e tyre profesionale.
- Universiteti duhet të organizojë më shumë trajnime dhe aktivitete në lidhje me aplikimet në trajnime / punë, pasi studentët i shohin këto aktivitete shumë të dobishme.
- Praktika / vizita studimore duhet të kryhen në disa nga kurset që lidhen me tregun e punës / fushën e studimit.
- Studentë kanë sugjeruar që praktika të zhvillohet për një periudhë më të gjatë kohore ose kenë më shumë se 1 praktikë profesionale gjatë studimeve.
- Programi i praktikës të ketë detyra individuale më specifike.
- Periudha e praktikës duhet të jetë fleksibël ose e njohur si praktikë profesionale / praktika të tjera të zhvilluara në kohë të ndryshme, para datave të caktuara për kalendarin e praktikës.

### 5.3 Rekomandime nga universitetet

Gjatë zbatimit të projektit u organizuan aktivitete të ndryshme, takime dhe workshop për qëllime të ndryshme, takime të tilla shërbyen gjithashtu si një mundësi për të shkëmbyer përvoja, mendime dhe për të dhënë rekomandime që janë të rëndësishme për qëllimin e projektit (veçanërisht në lidhje me Zyren e Karrierës dhe Alumni dhe praktiken profesionale). Rekomandimet kryesore janë renditur më poshtë:

1. Inkurajimi i studentëve për të praktikuar në rrethe ku ata mund të kenë familjet e tyre, përmes zbatimit të marrëveshjeve të bashkëpunimit me kompani / biznese / organizata në rrethe.
2. Zyra e Karrierës dhe Alumni duhet të zgjeroj bashkëpunimet me sektorin privat dhe publik në mënyrë që të ofrojnë më shumë mbështetje për praktikën.
3. Zyra e Karrierës dhe Alumni duhet të siguroj më shumë informacion mbi thirrjet publike dhe kanalet e informacionit / aplikimit për mundësi praktike, praktika dhe mundësi pune.
4. Pedagogët dhe stafi të cilët mund të kenë kontakte / marrin informacion mbi praktikat profesionale në institucione të ndryshme bëjnë lidhje me studentët përmes Zyrës së Karrierës dhe Alumni.
5. Departamentet / Kordinatori i Praktikës në bashkëpunim me vlerësuesin në kompani për të përfshirë më shumë detyra individuale në programin individual të praktikës.
6. Departamenti dhe Zyra e Karrierës dhe Alumni duhet të kryej disa aktivitete / takime informuese për realizimin e praktikës profesionale gjatë vitit të fundit të studimeve / vitit që do të zhvillohet praktika.
7. Departamenti dhe Zyra e Karrierës dhe Alumni duhet të krijoj një bazë të të dhënave me kompanitë sektoriale, pavarësisht nëse ato kanë marrëveshje bashkëpunimi ose jo, dhe ta bëjnë atë të disponueshme për studentët së bashku me materiale të tjera të praktikës.
8. Departamenti dhe Zyra e Karrierës dhe Alumni duhet të organizojë më shumë aktivitete dhe aktivitete jashtëshkollore me ekspertë të fushës;
9. Departamenti dhe Zyra e Karrierës dhe Alumni duhet të percaktojë mekanizma për të inkurajuar përfshirjen e studentëve në aktivitete jashtëshkollore që po organizohen.

10. Departamenti duhet të planifikojë takime raportuese dhe këshilluese midis studentëve që marrin pjesë në praktikë dhe drejtuesve të tyre. Nisur nga pohimet e studentëve, ku 16% e tyre deklaruan se nuk kishin mbështetje nga zyra e karrierës sugjerohet që zyra e karrierës duhet të rrisë numrin e anëtarëve të saj ose duhet t'i japë përparësi axhendës së saj.
11. Kompanitë që kohët e fundit operojnë në tregun shqiptar kanë filluar të zhvillojnë programe specifike kushtuar studentëve me qëllim punësimin e tyre në një të ardhme të afërt. Kështu, zyra e karrierës mund të fillojë të bashkëpunojë me kompani të tilla në mënyrë që të rrisë efikasitetin e saj dhe për pasojë krijimin e hapësirës së nevojshme në kompani për studentët.

#### **5.4 Rekomandimi i projektit gradua për praktikën profesionale**

Gjate organizimit të fazës së zbatimit të projektit GRADUA, në dy raste, takimi i mbajtur në Universitetin e Tiranës në dhjetor 2018 dhe ai i mbajtur në Universitetin e Mjekësisë në tetor 2019, sugjerimet dhe rekomandimet kryesore janë:

##### **1. Siguroni praktikantëve detyra reale në punë**

Në mënyrë që të sigurojnë një sukses të programit, kompanitë duhet t'u sigurojnë praktikantëve punë reale. Studentët dhe/ose të diplomuarit që janë praktikantë, duhet të bëjnë punë në lidhje me drejtimit e tyre. Është një aktivitet sfidues, por njihet nga organizata si e vlefshëm.

Nëse qëllimi i organizatës / ndërmarrjes është të konvertojë praktikën në kontratë e pune, organizata duhet të garantojë që ka një mbikqyrës që siguron detyra reale të punës duke kontrolluar përshkrimet e punës. Kompanitë duhet të organizojnë gjithashtu seanca orientuese për mentorët dhe të përmirësojnë afatin e punës.

##### **2. Orientimi për të gjithë aktorët e interesuar**

Është e rëndësishme që të gjithë "të jenë në të njëjtën anë", në mënyrë që të përmirësojnë komunikimin midis mentorëve dhe praktikantëve përmes sesionit orientues për të dy. Orientimet sigurojnë që të gjithë fillojnë me të njëjtat pritje dhe përcaktime të roleve. Kjo përfaqëson një investim të mirë të kohës dhe përpjekjes.

##### **3. Siguroni për praktikantët me një manual**

Manuali është thelbësor si një udhëzues për praktikantët, kështu që të arrihet njohuria maksimale rreth organizimit, rregullave dhe punës që duhet bërë, përfundimisht me një seksion në lidhje me "pyetjet e bëra shpesh". Organizatat mund të përdorin faqen e saj të internetit si një mjet komunikimi, me njoftime, oferta dhe reagime nga ish praktikantët.

Nga ana tjetër, universitetet duhet të pajisin studentët e tyre me manualë; preferohet një version on-line që mund të lidhet me faqen e ofertave të praktikës, të botuar brenda universitetit.

##### **4. Ndihma për akomodimin dhe zhvendosjen.**

Nuk janë shumë organizata pritëse që mund të përballojnë të sigurojnë strehim (falas ose të ulin çmimin) për praktikantët, por organizatat mund të marrin shumë vlerësime nëse e bëjnë këtë ose ofrojnë ndonjë lloj ndihme për shpenzimet e strehimit. Nëse nuk është kështu, vlerësohet ndihma për gjetjen e shtëpive të përballueshme. Për ata studentë / të diplomuar që duhet të zhvendosen në vendin e punës, mundësia e gjetjes së një strehimi afatshkurtër të përballueshëm mund të jetë shqetësuese. Në mënyrë që të bëjnë ofertat e praktikave të kompanive më tërheqëse, për të gjetur studentët / të diplomuarit më të mirë si praktikant, sesa si punonjës, firmat duhet të përpiqen të rrisin disponueshmërinë e strehimit të përballueshëm dhe të kenë një grup më të gjerë të kandidatëve (përfundimisht duke vendosur rregulla për përshtatshmërinë, etj për të shmangur çdo perceptim të trajtimit të pabarabartë.

## **5. Ofrimi i bursave**

Mundësia e një burse është një mënyrë e shkëlqyeshme për të rekrutuar për programin e praktikës. Ofrimi i një burse mund të rrisë numrin tuaj të kandidatëve me kualifikimet e dëshiruara.

Nga ana tjetër, bursa e ofruar nga universiteti për studentët e tij, mund të përfaqësojë një mjet për të shpërblyer studentët më të mirë ose ata që janë në disavantazhe.

## **6. Kompanitë të kenë një menaxher praktikant ose mentor**

Në mënyrë që të sigurojnë një gjendje të qetë dhe të qëndrojnë të përqendruar në kriteret e suksesit, kompanitë duhet të kenë një menaxher të përkushtuar ose një mentor të përkushtuar për programin e praktikantit. Dihet që shpesh madhësia dhe burimet e disponueshme për shumicën e programeve të praktikës nënkuptojnë që kjo nuk është gjithmonë e mundur. Një zgjidhje mund të jetë një zgjidhje afatshkurtër: punësoni një student të diplomuar (shikoni për një student që punon drejt një shkalle të përparuar të BNJ) për të qenë praktikanti juaj, dhe vendosni këtë praktikant të marrëdhënies të kolegjit përgjegjës për funksionimin e përditshëm të programit të praktikës.

## **7. Vizitat e stafit të zyrave të karrierës dhe fakultetit**

Si një praktikë më e mirë, universitetet duhet të organizojnë vizita nga stafi i zyrave të karrierës dhe fakulteti si një praktikë e rregullt. Stafi i IAL-ve ka relativisht pak mundësi për të vizituar vendet e punës së punëdhënësve për të parë nga afër llojet e përvojave që po marrin studentët e tyre. Në këtë kontekst, marrëveshja midis firmave dhe universiteteve duhet të ekzistojë; praktika do të përmirësojë marrëdhëniet midis grupeve të ndryshme të përfshira.

## **8. Ofroni trajnime jashtë klasave**

Sigurimi i studentëve për një trajnim të shkurtër, të tilla si një gjuhë kompjuteri, ose fusha të tjera të aftësive përfaqësojnë një mënyrë të prekshme për t'u treguar studentëve që jeni të interesuar në zhvillimin e tyre.

## 9. Reagime për praktikën pas postit

Reagimi mbi përvojën e studentit është thelbësor për të dy kategoritë e palëve të interesuara: universitetet dhe organizatat pritëse! Mund të bëhet përmes një pyetësoi të përhershëm në internet (si në rastin e Projektit GRADUA, pyetësorët për firmat dhe studentët janë në dispozicion në internet). Përndryshe mund të organizohen seanca të shkurtra të fokus grupit me praktikantë në organizatën pritëse ose në atë dërguese (p.sh. universiteti, fakulteti, departamenti, etj.). Mund të vlerësohet gjithashtu interesi i tyre për t'u punësuar nga organizata pritëse.

### 5.5 Konkluzione nga vrojtimi për praktikën gjatë periudhës së pandemisë

Gjatë vitit akademik 2019-2020 ndërkohe që ishim duke përgatitur raportin mbi praktikat e studentëve të zhvilluar në qershor 2019, shoqëria shqiptare u përball me COVID-19, një nga vendet e para që u ekspozua dhe vuajti nga kjo pandemi. Shumica e studentëve sapo kishin zgjedhur institucionet apo kompanitë ku ata do të kryenin praktikat e tyre. Për të vlerësuar procesin e praktikës gjatë këtij viti akademik, u zhvillua një pyetësor online në korrik 2020. Ky pyetësor u përdor gjithashtu për të vlerësuar nivelin e informacionit që studentët kanë në lidhje me projektin GRADUA. Disa nga rezultatet e arritura nga ky vërtetim janë:

1. Pjesa e studentëve që nuk ishin aspak të informuar për projektin GRADUA (36%) doli të jetë pothuajse e njëjtë me numrin e studentëve që ishin të mirë informuar (36.1%). Burimi më i rëndësishëm ishin rrjetet sociale (33%), dhe burimi më pak i rëndësishëm (26%) ishte zyra e karrierës. Mund të konkludohet se një nga faktorët që ka ndikuar në rëndësinë relativisht të ulët të zyrave të karrierës ishte bllokimi për shkak të pandemisë.
2. Sipas rezultateve të vërtimit, 12% e të anketuarve nuk kanë kryer praktikën, ndërsa 37% e kanë bërë kyer pjesërisht. Arsyt kryesore që ndikuan në mos zhvillimin e praktikave ishin: studentët nuk mund të gjenin një kompani apo institucion për t'i pritur ata, disa kompani nuk ishin të gatshme të prisnin studentë për praktikë për shkak të situatës COVID-19.
3. 48% e të anketuarve pohuan se kanë kryer praktikën në mjediset e ndërmarrjes / institucionit, 18% deklarojnë se e kanë bërë praktikën në online, ndërsa 29% e kanë zhvilluar pjesërisht online dhe pjesërisht pranë institucionit/kompanisë.
4. 27% e studentëve të anketuar u përgjigjën se ishin në punë gjatë periudhës së praktikës. Siç pritej, një pjesë e madhe (63%) e studentëve të cilët ishin të punësuar gjatë periudhës së praktikës kishin kryer praktikën në të njëjtin institucion / kompani. Vetëm 3.4% e studentëve që nuk ishin të punësuar gjatë periudhës së praktikës u paguan. Vlen për tu theksuar se praktikat rrallë paguhen, përveç nëse kombinohen me marrëdhëniet ekzistuese të punës.

5. Duke krahasuar informacionin e përftuar nga dy vrojtimit e kryera (që korrespondojnë me dy vite të ndryshme), studentët duket se kanë patur më pak mundësi të zhvillojnë aftësitë profesionale gjatë praktikës për këtë vit të vështirë. Përqindja e studentëve që bien dakord ose janë plotësisht dakord se gjatë praktikës ata patën mundësinë të zhvillojnë kapacitetet e tyre profesionale në vitin 2020, është dukshëm më e ulët krahasuar me vitin 2019.
6. Në rastin e Universitetit Bujqësor të Tiranës, bazuar në vrojtimin e vitit 2020, rezultoi se pjesa e studentëve master që morën një ofertë pune ishte shumë më e ulët se pjesa e studentëve të ciklit bachelor (19% vs 45%). Një shpjegim i mundshëm mund të jetë që studentët master kanë më shumë gjasa të marrin në konsideratë vetëm punë shumë të kualifikuara, për të cilat kishte mungesë opsionesh në dispozicion gjatë vitit 2020 për shkak të Covid-19.
7. Vlerësimi mesatar i të anketuarve për praktikën ishte rreth 7.5 (SD = 2.8, në një shkallë 1 në 10), duke treguar një kënaqësi të përgjithshme në lidhje me programin e praktikës, por më e ulët se vlerësimi gjatë (para-Covid-19) studimi 2019. Ndërkohë që praktikat profesionale të zhvilluara online kanë qenë më pak efektive.

## Appendix

### STUDENT'S PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP QUESTIONNAIRE-2019

Dear students,

Your impressions on the professional traineeship you have completed are important to us.

We would like for you to complete this questionnaire, which will help us improve our services later on.

Thank you!

1. What is your current level of study?

Bachelor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Master	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What is your program of study?

3. In which city did you complete your professional traineeship?

4. In which company/ institution did you complete your professional traineeship?

### YOUR PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP

5. How did you find the company/ institution you completed your professional traineeship at?

With the help of "The Career and Alumni Office"	<input type="checkbox"/>
With the help of your lecturers/professors	<input type="checkbox"/>
With the help of your personal acquaintances	<input type="checkbox"/>
Through public announcements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Through an open application	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Please give your evaluation on the level of agreement regarding the information below:

<b>Choose only one of the evaluations for each assertion</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I was personally integrated into the regular work process during my professional traineeship					
I was given individual tasks to work on					
I was offered many opportunities for my professional development.					
My supervisor at the company/institution I completed my practice regularly checked my progress and development during my practice					
My supervisor at the company/institution I completed my practice showed appreciation when I performed well on my tasks					
During my practice, I had the opportunity to apply the theoretical concepts that I learned at university					
During my practice, I had the opportunity to apply my professional skills that I gained at university					
My university education has provided me with the necessary theoretical knowledge to successfully complete the practice					

7. How satisfied are you with the professional traineeship you completed?

Very dissatisfied	
Dissatisfied	
Neutral	
Satisfied	
Very satisfied	

### **CARRER AND ALUMNI OFFICE SERVICES AT ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY**

8. Please give your evaluation on the level of agreement regarding the information below:

<b>Choose only one of the evaluations for each assertion</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The procedures of providing professional traineeships at your university are communicated on time and are very clear					
I got the professional traineeship guideline in advance					
The offered training on the application modes helped me improve my application skills for the professional traineeship					

9. Which of the following services has the Career and Alumni Office provided you, before and during your professional traineeship?

General information on the possibilities of professional traineeship.	
Personal assistance in finding a suitable company/ institution to complete the professional traineeship.	
Providing a database of the companies/ institutions offering professional traineeships.	
Informative meetings on research and application for finding professional traineeships/jobs. (How to write a CV, a motivational letter and how to present yourself in a job interview.)	
Career counseling during your professional traineeship/employment.	
Other:	

10. What services should your university's Career and Alumni Office improve?

Business contact	
Finding places for the professional or teaching practice	
Individual career counseling	
Open lectures/seminars/workshops	
Meetings with Alumni	
Information for studying abroad	
Students direct involvement in the Career Office activities	
Other:	

## **YOUR PERFORMANCE DURING YOUR PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP**

11. What were your strengths as a practitioner?

Good communication skills	
Punctuality	
Professionalism	
Ability to work in a group	
Ethical behavior	
Other:	

12. What were your weaknesses as a practitioner?

--

13. Have you been offered a job from the organization/ institution where you completed your professional traineeship at?

<b>YES</b>	
<b>NO</b>	

14. Would you like to work in the same field in which the company/ institution you completed your professional traineeship operates?

<b>YES</b>	
<b>NO</b>	

15. Please explain your answer? Why/ Why not?

---

---

16. How do you evaluate your performance during the professional traineeship?

Very poorly	
Poorly	
Neutral	
Well	
Very well	

## **YOUR STUDY PROGRESS DURING THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIP**

17. Did you have a supervising professor who observed you during your professional traineeship?

YES	
NO	

18. Please give your evaluation on the level of agreement regarding the information below:

<b>Choose only one of the evaluations for each assertion</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My practice supervisor was predisposed to answer my questions					
My practice supervisor has regularly checked my progress					
I regularly presented updates on my improvement to my supervisor					

19. How satisfied are you with your professional traineeship supervising professor?

Very dissatisfied	
Dissatisfied	
Neutral	
Satisfied	
Very satisfied	