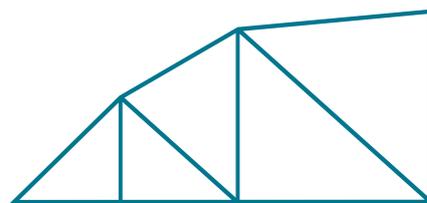


# OU-I 2015

REPORT

University-Business  
Observatory

EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY



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## REPORT

University-Business  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2015 Report is one of the first achievements of the University-Business Observatory established by the Fondazione CRUI in 2014, with the participation of university experts and representatives of the business world, with the aim of fostering cooperation and dialogue between the labour market, research and the youth.

The initiative stems from the conviction that Italian universities can contribute considerably to the Country's economic and social development and to enhance the competitiveness of enterprises.

In order to achieve its objectives, the Observatory has deemed it advisable to start by analysing the relationships between universities and the labour market, setting up several Working Groups made up of academicians and representatives of the business world, focusing on the following topics:

- 1 Student careers and employment opportunities of Italian university graduates;
- 2 Relevant on-the-job skills and new university-business relational systems;
- 3 Start-ups, Spin-offs and Patents;
- 4 Third Mission Evaluation and Indicators;
- 5 Regulatory Framework of the national and regional policies on university-business relations;
- 6 Analysis of Good Practices.

The single analyses carried out by the single Working Groups can be accessed on the Observatory's Website [www.universitaimprese.it](http://www.universitaimprese.it).

The outcome of such analyses (integrated with the data relative to the enterprises' university graduate employment plan, developed in collaboration with Unioncamere, the Union of Italian Chambers of Commerce) laid the foundation of the 2015 Report, which was jointly drafted by the Steering Committee and the coordinators of the Working Groups. The main elements that characterise each one of the topics analysed will be illustrated alongside the issues that need to be tackled in order to improve the dialogue between universities and businesses.

The analysis of the results mainly reveals that, despite the existing constraints due to university budget restrictions, which have become structural over time, and the small size of Italian companies, the dialogue between universities and businesses is growing stronger also in our Country. Indeed, the survey detected several interesting cases of cooperation across Italy, showing that relational capacities and activities with enterprises are growing and that the acquisition of a university diploma is an advantage, in terms of finding employment, also in times of economic crisis. Counterbalancing the innumerable fruits borne by the cooperation between universities and businesses, there are

also several critical elements that are illustrated in the following factsheets. Therefore, the 2015 Report concludes by making several proposals (in chapter 6 and in the factsheet below), to be submitted to universities, enterprises and institutions (national, regional and local), with the aim of outlining the integrated platform needed to support the dialogue between universities and

businesses; of enhancing and better targeting technology transfer activities; and of designing curricula more in line with corporate needs. These suggestions are briefly summarised under the heading Objectives and Actions to be Implemented; the proposed Actions will be detailed in Operating Programmes, which will comprise the Observatory's next task.

### U-B OBSERVATORY PROPOSALS

OBJECTIVE 01	Define an integrated platform to support the dialogue between universities and businesses
PROPOSED ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Simplify national, regional and university rules regulating university-business relational systems and the management of non-public investments.</li> <li>▪ Create a single national database containing students' careers and job opportunities, with the aim of supporting universities in planning and monitoring the effectiveness of curricula and of enterprises' recruitment systems.</li> <li>▪ Even out the relative weight assigned to the three institutional activities (research, teaching and supporting cultural and economic growth), by promoting consensus on the relevant indicators.</li> </ul>
OBJECTIVE 02	Enhance and target technology transfer activities
PROPOSED ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Upgrade and integrate present competences of technology transfer human resources of both universities and enterprises, with a view to improving specialisation, critical mass and coordination.</li> <li>▪ Increase the number of academic business incubators (providing for at least one certified incubator per region), and make sure they are integrated with significant scientific facilities.</li> </ul>
OBJECTIVE 03	Design curricula more in line with corporate needs
PROPOSED ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhance the professionalization of training activities, also through experimental forms of teaching (inter alia, by promoting internships, apprenticeship contracts and 1st level Master programmes), the acquisition by students of cross-sector and multi-disciplinary skills and, for students attending Laurea Magistrale (II° cycle university degree) or Research Doctorate programmes, greater knowledge of business subjects.</li> </ul>

IN ORDER TO SUPPORT  
THE ABOVE ACTIVITIES,  
THE OBSERVATORY SUGGESTS

- Enhance student counselling at admission, throughout the course and before graduation, with the aim of facilitating an informed choice of the university course and adequate knowledge of future employability.
- Establishing working groups made up of entrepreneurs, university experts and local policy makers in order to monitor the initiatives promoted by the Observatory within the single implementing structures;
- Highlighting the most relevant cases and good practices in the university-business relations, in order to promote the drivers of a positive impact in terms of jobs, corporate competitiveness and the upgrading of university education and research.

## STUDENT CAREERS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATES

MAIN EVIDENCE

- The existence of a low percentage of university graduates also among the young, which is made even worse by the recent drop in enrolments (the structural causes include the long-dated delay in promoting widespread education campaigns, the low level of expectations among the very young and high dropout rates).
- The confirmed advantage of graduates over non-graduates in finding a job during the economic recession.
- The low schooling level of the Italian population, especially among the older generations, compared to the average of the 27 EU member States, is also reflected in the low schooling level among managers and executives.
- A strong positive correlation between the education level of entrepreneurs and the demand for graduates (an entrepreneur with a university degree recruits three times more graduates compared to a non-graduate one). Generally speaking, the low demand for graduates and the limited capacity of using them to a full advantage also originates from the basic characteristics of Italy's entrepreneurial class.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

- The need to quantitatively and qualitatively upgrade Italy's human capital and enhance the production system's capability of using it to a full advantage. This upgrading is also based on improving the quality of university education.
- The firm need to implement an information system with a universal reach, starting with the current presence of a national survey who covers approximately 92% of the graduates, in order to plan, monitor and perform an ex-post verification of the effectiveness of university education at internal (training) and external (employment) level.
- The information on the effects of high-level training is inadequately leveraged, partly because of the insufficient spread of the use of statistics and quality assessment.

## SKILLS REQUIRED ON THE JOB

**MAIN EVIDENCE** ■ Growing awareness of the importance to alternate work and training.

**PRINCIPAL FINDINGS** ■ The need to enhance student counselling at admission and graduation in order to facilitate an informed choice of the training course and adequate knowledge of future employability.

■ The need to include, in Laurea Magistrale (II° cycle university degree) and Research Doctorate programmes, subjects promoting entrepreneurship and the business culture.

■ The excessive diversity in terminology and plurality of laws supporting the alternation of work and training, which risks to stifle the interest of enterprises.

■ Encourage the spread of cross-sector and multidisciplinary skills, also through experimental forms of teaching.

## TRANSFER UNIVERSITY SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO ENTERPRISES

**MAIN EVIDENCE** ■ Enhancement of technology transfer professional skills and activities within universities (patenting, licensing, start-ups/spin offs, incubators).

■ The Italian system is dynamic but has a reduced overall impact on the transfer of technology to the production system.

■ Higher number of patents awarded (focusing on Europe and the United States rather than Italy).

**PRINCIPAL FINDINGS** ■ Need to collect qualitative evidence, in order to identify the drivers of a positive impact on Italy's competitiveness and take advantage of its growth potential.

■ The average number of university employees engaged in technology transfer is still too small, in comparison with international competitors.

■ Need to increase the number of university-business incubators up to at least one certified incubator in every region and assuring its integration with significant scientific facilities.

## THIRD MISSION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

**MAIN EVIDENCE** ■ Growing awareness of the role that the university can have in terms of the social development of local areas.

■ An increasing number of national and international university quality assessment and ranking efforts which also consider Third Mission activities.

■ The increase in total revenue from universities' third party job processing activities, although it tends to be concentrated in only a few cases.

- PRINCIPAL FINDINGS**
- The professionalization process connected to Third Mission activities is still under way.
  - Lack of consensus on indicators to be used in surveying Third Mission activities.

### SOME GOOD PRACTICES IN U-B RELATIONS

- MAIN EVIDENCE**
- Scarce knowledge among the general public of existing good practices.
  - Presence of interesting experiences throughout Italy.
- PRINCIPAL FINDINGS**
- Need to collect the cases pointed out by enterprises.
  - Need to improve the institutional communication on the topic, also relying on digital solutions (videos and social networks).

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE OBSERVATORY

**Steering Committee:** led by the Observatory Coordinator, it is the body that steers and plans the Observatory's activities. Its members are experts and representatives of institutions and enterprises that are particularly attentive to the dialogue between universities and businesses.

**Prof. Angelo Riccaboni**  
Observatory Coordinator,  
President of the Fondazione CRUI

**Dr. Eugenio Aringhieri**  
CEO, Dompé Farmaceutici

**Dr. Ivanhoe Lo Bello**  
Vice President for Education,  
Confindustria

**Dr. Aldo Bonomi**  
Director, Consorzio AASTER

**Dott. Fabrizio Pagani**  
Head of Minister's Technical Secretariat,  
Ministry for Economy and Finance

**Dr. Carlo Borgomeo**  
President, Fondazione CON IL SUD

**Dott. Alessandro Profumo**  
President, Monte dei Paschi di Siena

**Dr. Mario Di Loreto**  
Director People Value, Telecom Italia

**Prof. Marco Simoni**  
Economic Advisor of the  
Italian Prime Minister

**Prof. Enrico Giovannini**  
University "Roma Tor Vergata"

**Eng. Fabrizio Landi**  
Finmeccanica

**Dott.ssa Laura Rocchitelli**  
Managing Director, Rold Group S.P.A

**Group of Experts:** it is the advisory body of the Steering Committee, and has the task of providing opinions and contributions on the Observatory's several research areas.

**Dr. Domenico Arcuri**

CEO, Invitalia – National Agency for Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development

**Dr. Andrea Bairati**

Director Innovation and Education, Confindustria

**Prof. Andrea Bonaccorsi**

Executive Committee, ANVUR

**Prof. Andrea Cammelli**

Director, Almalaurea

**Prof. Marco Cantamessa**

President, PNICube

**Dr. Fabrizio Colonna**

Bank of Italy

**Dr. Massimo Culcasi**

Vice President for recruitment, ENI Corporate University

**Dr. Denise Di Dio**

Technical Secretariat, Ministry of Education, University and Research

**Dr. Daniele Fano**

Independent Expert (Economist)

**Dr. Paola Garibotti**

Head of territorial and sectorial development plans Area, Unicredit

**Prof. Anna Gervasoni**

General Manager, AIFI – Italian Association of Private Equity and Venture Capital

**Eng. Claudio Giuliano**

Chair Venture Capital Committee, Innogest SGR

**Dr. Francesco Luccisano**

Head of Minister's Technical Secretariat, Ministry of Education, University and Research

**Dr. Marco Masi**

Head of Education, University and Research Area, Regional Authority of Tuscany

**Dott. Domenico Mauriello**

Head of Research Unit, Unioncamere

**Dott.ssa Laura Mengoni**

Head of Education and Human Resources Area, Assolombarda

**Prof. Andrea Piccaluga**

President, Netval - Network for the Valorisation of University Research

**Prof.ssa Laura Ramaciotti**

University of Ferrara

**Ing. Nicola Redi**

Director for Investments, Vertis SGR

**Dott.ssa Ida Sirolli**

Head of Research and Education Unit, Telecom Italia

**Prof. Maurizio Sobrero**

University of Bologna

**Dott. Roberto Torrini**

Director, ANVUR

**Prof. Lorenzo Zanni**

University of Siena

**Prof. Vincenzo Zara**

Rector, University of Salento

**Working Groups:** by scholars and practitioners, it implements the activities outlined by the Steering Committee by performing ad hoc analyses and in-depth studies.

- 1 "Student careers and employment opportunities of Italian university graduates", coordinated by Prof Andrea Cammelli (Almalaurea).
- 2 "Relevant on-the-job skills and new university-business relational systems", coordinated by Prof Vincenzo Zara (Rector of the University of Salento, Pedagogical Commission, CRUI) and by Dr Daniele Fano (Independent Expert).
- 3 "Start-ups, spin-offs and patents", coordinated by Professors Andrea Piccaluga (Netval) and Marco Cantamessa (PNI Cube).
- 4 "Third Mission Quality Assessment and Indicators", coordinated by Prof Maurizio Sobrero (University of Bologna).
- 5 "Regulatory Framework of the national and regional policies on university-business relations". Contact person: Prof Laura Ramaciotti (University of Ferrara).
- 6 "Analysis of Good Practices", contact person Prof Lorenzo Zanni (University of Siena).

