

## 14 – EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH

This section provides a synthetic overview of the principal data provided by various educational institutions. The tables contain data regarding the number of classes, pupils and teachers, both for nursery school, primary school and lower and upper secondary school. With regard to university education the tables provide data regarding the number of enrolments and graduates per faculty in the three state universities in the Region (Palermo, Messina and Catania) and the Free University “Libera Università - KORE” in Enna. The data refers to the 2009-2010 academic/school year. Updated information for 2010-2011 had not become available by the time this yearbook went into print..

The school year 2009-2010 saw an increase of 3,243 in the number of children attending infant schools; at the same time the overall number of sections rose from 5,211 to 5,240 (+0.6%); the average number of children per section rose slightly when compared to the previous year (22.3), although this figure remains lower than the figure for the country as a whole (23.6). This indicator is subject to variations among the Sicilian Provinces, ranging from 20.6 in Ragusa to 23.1 in Palermo and Agrigento.

The number of children in Sicily attending primary school dropped again (by 0.5%) in the school year 2009/10, which confirms the trend from the period 2004 to 2009, during which the falls recorded in the overall totals ranged from 0.6% to 1.7%. In lower secondary schools, on the other hand, there was a slight increase in the number of pupils (+0.2%); this was accompanied by a reduction of 166 in the number of classes, with a consequent increase in the number of students per class (from 20.9 to 21.4).

In upper secondary schools, in the school year 2009/10, as in the previous two-year period, there was a drop in the number of pupils enrolled (-3.2%). The most popular secondary schools are still the technical-vocational institutes, which attract more than half the Regional school population, whereas the numbers enrolled at classical and scientific “lyceums” make up 35.2% of the total. The school population seems to be falling in all areas, with the greatest drops in classical lyceums (-4.2%) and in art-institutes and schools of art (-4.7%).

In 2009/10 the number of permanent full-time teaching staff fell noticeably when compared to the previous school year, at all levels, with the exception of infant school, in which staff numbers remained more or less stable. The number of students per teacher ranged from 10.1 in lower secondary schools to 12.9 in infant schools.

Statistical data regarding university education in the academic year 2009/10 shows that, when compared to the previous academic year, there was a 0.5% fall in the numbers of those enrolled in the principal Sicilian universities;

this trend was particularly evident at the University of Messina (-7.8%) and Enna (-16.3%), whilst there were increases in the universities of Palermo (+3.9%) and Catania (+0.5%). Although it still had the highest overall number of registered students (18,258 students), the Faculty of Law has shown a consistently negative trend over the last ten years (-1.4% in 2009/10). On the contrary, the opposite was true for the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, where numbers rose by 4.7% in the last academic year. In all, 53% of students had not passed the required exams in the prescribed time; in the academic year 2009/10 this number increased by 13.7% over the previous year.

As for the Research and Development (R&D) sector, in Sicily in 2008 (last data available), expenditure destined for this sector amounted to 4% of the national total and a sum of 775,281,000 Euros, showing an increase of 3.1% over the year 2007. University expenditure accounted for 66.8% of the total sum, whilst the Public Administration accounted for only 7.8%, a figure which was once again lower than the figure for the previous year by 19.9%. The private sector, which covered 24.4% of expenses, showed a rise of 13%. As regards personnel engaged in R&D in Sicily, in the same year (2008), there was a 16.9% increase in the overall number of full-time equivalent units employed, 66% of whom were university personnel. In all, personnel employed in R&D in Sicily represented 4.2% of the corresponding total at the national level.

## ***Glossary***

**Drop-out rate:** number of students enrolled (per 100) who interrupt their studies in that same school, or university course.

**Freshman:** student enrolled in the first year of a university degree or diploma course.

**Intra-muros research expenditure:** expenditure for scientific research and experimental development (R&D) provided by business enterprises and public bodies, and carried out by their own personnel and their own equipment.

**Primary and lower secondary school certificate:** qualification awarded on passing the exams at the end of the primary and lower secondary school cycle.

**School-attendance and enrolment rate:** percentage ratio between students enrolled in the educational level in question and the resident population belonging to the corresponding theoretical age-group. For upper secondary schools the theoretical age in question is 14 to 18, for university 19 to 25.

**School section:** class in nursery school

**Secondary-school-leaving certificate:** qualification awarded on completion of upper secondary school studies.

**Transition-rate:** percentage ratio between persons who have completed a given level of education and those who are enrolled in the first year of the next level (excluding those repeating the year), in the subsequent school or academic year.

**University degree:** qualification awarded on completion of a traditional 4-6 year university course or a new first-level degree course lasting three years.

**University diploma:** qualification awarded on completion of a university diploma course, or at a specialized school, and lasting two or three years (short degree-course)

### ***Further reading***

#### Publications

The University in figures –various years – Ministry for the University and Research

The state school: synthesis of data – Various years - Ministry for Education, the University and Research

University and Work for Secondary-school-leavers (Surveys 2004 and 2007) - ISTAT

Research and Development in Italy (2008) - ISTAT

Innovation in Italian enterprises (2002-2004)

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2011 - ISTAT

#### Internet

<http://www.istat.it/>

School-leavers and Study (2007)

School-leavers and Work (2007)

Entering the labour market for graduates (2007)

Research and development in Italy (2008, forecasts for 2009/2010)

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2010 – Chapter 7: “Education”

Chapter 21: “Research, development and innovation”

[www.istruzione.it](http://www.istruzione.it)

Premises, pupils, classes, staff in state schools – school year 2009/10

Pupils with non-Italian citizenship – state and non-state schools – school year 2010-2011

The School in figures 2009-2010

The University in figures 2009-2010