

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 “Libera Università (lit. Free University) - KORE” in Enna. The data refers to the 2012-2013 school year, whereas the latest available data for the university refers to academic year 2011-2012.

The school year 2012-2013 witnessed a drop of 11 units in the number of children attending infant schools, whereas the overall number of sections rose from 5,188 to 5,246 (+1.1%). The average number of children per section remained practically the same when compared to the previous year (22.4), although this is still lower than the figure for the country as a whole (23.9). This indicator is subject to variations among the Sicilian Provinces, ranging from 20.2 in Ragusa to 23.6 in Palermo.

The number of children in Sicily attending primary school dropped again (by -0.2%) in the school year 2012-2013, which confirms the trend emerging from the period 2008-2012. There was also a drop in the number of pupils (-2.1%) in lower secondary schools, as well as a fall of 91 in the number of classes.

In upper secondary schools, in the school year 2012-2013, as in the previous two-year period, there was a drop in the number of pupils enrolled (-1.1%). The most popular secondary schools are still the technical-vocational institutes, which attract more than half of the Regional school population, whereas the numbers enrolled at classical and scientific “lyceums” make up 44.9% of the total.

In 2012-2013 the number of permanent full-time teaching staff, at all levels of education, fell considerably when compared to the previous school year. The number of schoolchildren per teacher ranged from 10.2 in lower secondary schools to 12.8 in infant schools.

Statistical data regarding university education in the academic year 2011-2012 showed that there was an overall fall in the numbers of those enrolled in the Sicilian universities of Catania (-5.4%) and Messina (-2.1%); the University of Enna reported a 6.7% increase, whereas numbers for the University of Palermo remain substantially the same. The Faculty of Law had the highest overall number of registered students (20,405), which represented a drop in 2011-2012 of -0.7%; on the other hand the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery,

saw a 2.9% increase in the number of enrolled students in the last academic year. A total of 43.6% of students overall had not passed the required exams in the prescribed time, and this percentage was much higher in the academic year 2011-2012 than in the previous year.

As regards the Research and Development (R&D) sector, in Sicily in 2011 (last data available), expenditure in this sector amounted to 3.7% of the national total and a sum of 690,025,000 Euros, showing a 1.4% increase over the year 2010. University funds provided 57.3% of the total sum, whilst the Public Administration provided only 13.4%, a figure which nevertheless showed a 11.5% increase over the previous year. As regards the private sector, which covered 29.4% of funding, there was also an increase, albeit a little lower, of +2.6%. With regard to personnel engaged in R&D in Sicily, in the same year (2011), there was a 1.5% rise in the overall number of full-time equivalent units employed, 55.1% of whom were university personnel. In all, personnel employed in R&D in Sicily represented 3.8% 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 (2010) - ISTAT

Innovation in Italian enterprises (2008-2010)

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2013 - ISTAT

Internet

Istat - <http://www3.istat.it/>

School-leavers and Study (2007)

School-leavers and Work (2007)

Further studies and the labour market for school-leavers (2007)

Research and development in Italy (2011)

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2013 – Chapter 7: “Education”

Chapter 21: “Research, development and innovation”

Ministry for Education, the University and Research

<http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/hub>

Foreign students in the Italian school system, school year 2011/12

The School in figures 2009-2010

The University in figures 2011-2012