



Agència  
per a la Qualitat  
del Sistema Universitari  
de **Catalunya**

## **EMPLOYERS**

# **THE OPINION OF THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION REGARDING THE EDUCATION RECEIVED BY INDIVIDUALS WHO RECENTLY GRADUATED**







Agència  
per a la Qualitat  
del Sistema Universitari  
de **Catalunya**

## **EMPLOYERS**

# **THE OPINION OF THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION REGARDING THE EDUCATION RECEIVED BY INDIVIDUALS WHO RECENTLY GRADUATED**

© Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema  
Universitari de Catalunya

C. dels Vergós, 36-42  
08017 Barcelona

First edition: July 2019

The contents of this document are covered by a Creative Commons Attribution–Non-commercial–No Derivative Works 3.0 license. Their reproduction, distribution and public communication are permitted provided that the name of the author is stated and that they are not used for commercial purposes.

For the full license, see:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/es/legalcode.es>



With the cooperation from the sector of



Also with the cooperation of



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION .....  | 6  |
| ■ Graduates working in the public sector .....  | 6  |
| ■ Which study programmes are more prevalent in the Public Administration? .....   | 8  |
| ■ Access to the labour market for graduates working in the Public Administration .....  | 9  |
| THE OPINION OF THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION REGARDING THE EDUCATION RECEIVED BY THE<br>RECENTLY GRADUATED INDIVIDUALS THEY HAVE RECRUITED ..... | 10 |
| ■ Characteristics of the administrations that have taken part in the survey .....   | 10 |
| ■ Recruitment by the Local Administration of individuals who recently graduated .....   | 12 |
| ■ Difficulties in recruitment .....   | 16 |
| ■ Skills .....  | 17 |
| ■ Cooperation from the Administration with universities .....   | 19 |
| ■ In-house training of recently graduated individuals .....   | 20 |
| ■ Forecast .....  | 21 |
| CONCLUSIONS .....   | 23 |
| Data sheet .....  | 24 |
| Drafting committee .....  | 25 |

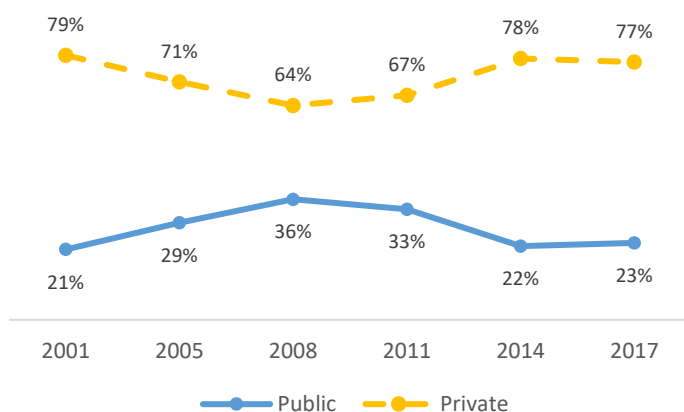
## CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

The goal of this report is to gain an acquaintance of the opinion of one part of the Public Administration regarding the university education received by the recently graduated individuals they have recruited in the past 3 years. The analysis is based on a survey that was primarily sent to all **local entities in Catalonia**<sup>1</sup> and the results are set out in the following section.

Prior to showing the results of the survey, it is pertinent to place into context the background, i.e. which study programmes were undertaken by the recently graduated individuals working in the public sector and, more specifically, the Public Administration. Data from the survey on **access to the labour market conducted by AQU Catalunya** every three years makes it possible to understand the employment situation of university graduates 3 years after completing their education, along with the characteristics of their employment since 2001.<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Graduates working in the public sector

*Figure 1. Trend in the recruitment of individuals who recently graduated according to their incorporation into the public or private sector (%)*



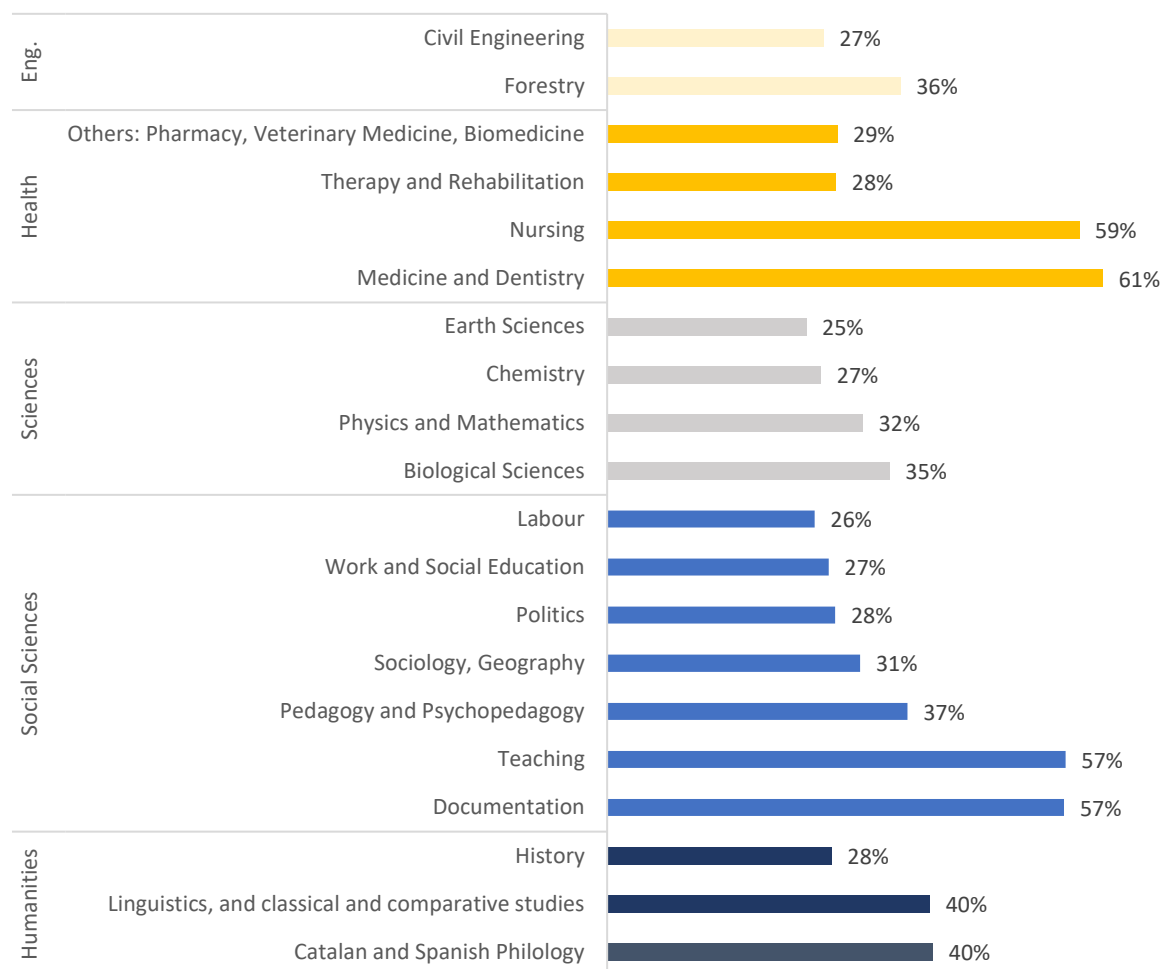
**23% of individuals who recently graduated were working in the public sector in 2017**

The trend is procyclical: recruitment in the public sector is more widespread in times of economic growth.

<sup>1</sup> The survey was sent to the Civil Service Directorate General of the Catalan Government, although participation has been very poor.

<sup>2</sup> The results are weighted by a factor that corrects eventual proportional variations in the sample.

**Figure 2. Proportion of recently graduated individuals working in the public sector in 2017 according to academic fields and sub-fields**



Note: the academic sub-fields with percentages of individuals employed in the public sector of 25% or higher are shown.

**The study programmes of Nursing and Medicine, along with Teaching and Documentation exhibit the highest levels of public sector employment**

## ■ Which study programmes are more prevalent in the Public Administration?

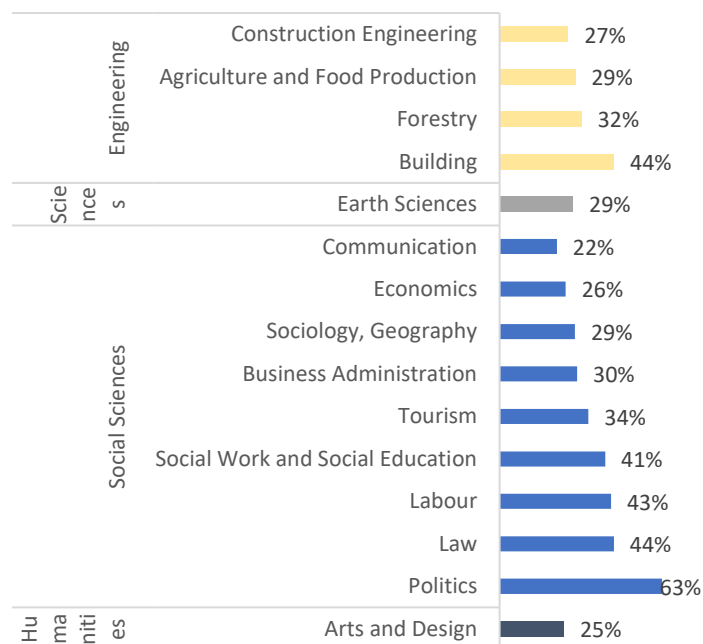
**Table 1. Distribution of graduates working in the public sector according to the specific service area**

| Service area                                      | % of graduates |
|---|----------------|
| Education, culture and research                   | 44.0           |
| Social care and healthcare                        | 25.0           |
| <b>Public Administration</b>                      | <b>13.9</b>    |
| Consumer services                                 | 5.8            |
| Business services                                 | 5.6            |
| Industry  | 1.9            |
| Energy and raw material production                | 1.2            |
| Information and communication                     | 0.8            |
| Real estate, insurance and financial institutions | 0.7            |
| Communication technologies                        | 0.7            |
| Construction                                      | 0.5            |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>100.0</b>   |

**14 % of recently graduated individuals recruited in the public sector are employed by the Public Administration**

Moreover, and in answer to the huge importance of the fields of education and health in the public sector, 7 in every 10 graduates recruited in the public sector work in the aforesaid fields.

**Figure 3. Proportion of graduates working in the public sector (specifically in the Public Administration) according to academic fields and sub-fields**



**University study programmes in the field of Social Sciences have a larger percentage of graduates employed in the Public Administration**

Politics: more than half of graduates in this sub-field work for the Public Administration.

In the field of Engineering, it is noteworthy that 47% of graduates in Building work for the Public Administration.

Note: the academic sub-fields with percentages of 25% or higher are shown.

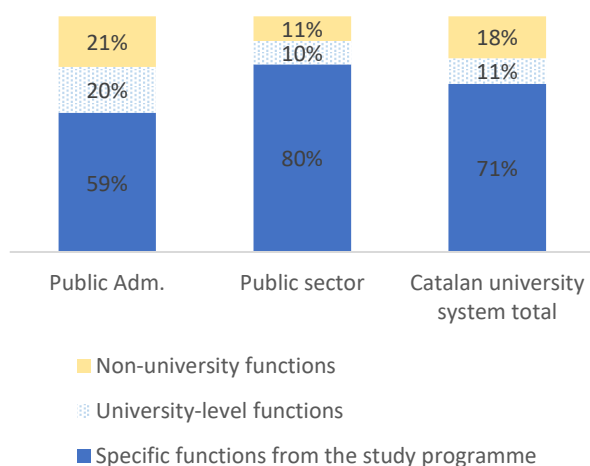


## ■ Access to the labour market for graduates working in the Public Administration

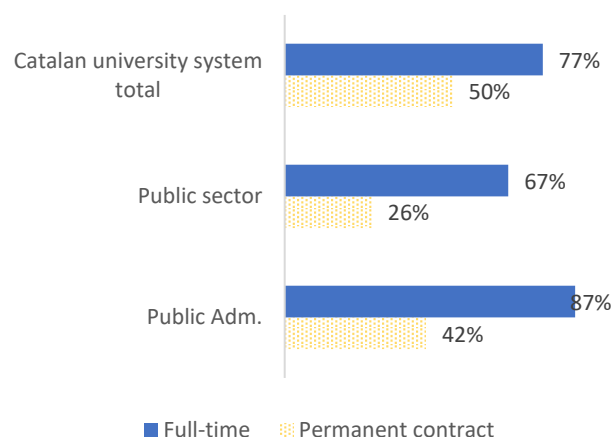
This section sets out indicators relating to three groups: the results for the public sector show the average for all individuals working in the public sphere; the results for the Public Administration take into consideration all individuals who work specifically for the Public Administration, in addition to working in the public sector; lastly, the results for the Catalan university system show the average for all degree programmes delivered in Catalonia.

All the results are gleaned from the survey on access to the labour market from 2017.

**Figure 4. Functions performed at work in 2017 (%)**



**Figure 5. Permanent and full-time contracts in 2017 (%)**



**Figure 6. Overall job satisfaction (rating from 0 to 10)**



### Good employment conditions in the Public Administration

Only 59% of the recently graduated individuals working for the Public Administration perform specific functions from the study programme, although a further 20% perform university-level functions.

Employment conditions in the Public Administration are somewhat positive: 42% are on a permanent contract and 87% are working full-time. Accordingly, their level of job satisfaction is high.

## THE OPINION OF THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION REGARDING THE EDUCATION RECEIVED BY THE RECENTLY GRADUATED INDIVIDUALS THEY HAVE RECRUITED

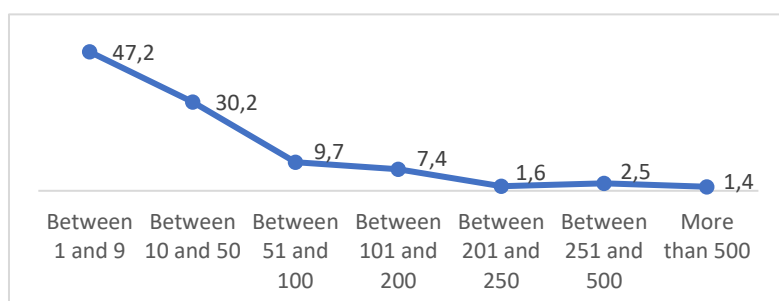
### ■ Characteristics of the administrations that have taken part in the survey

*Table 2. Type of administration taking part in the survey (%)*

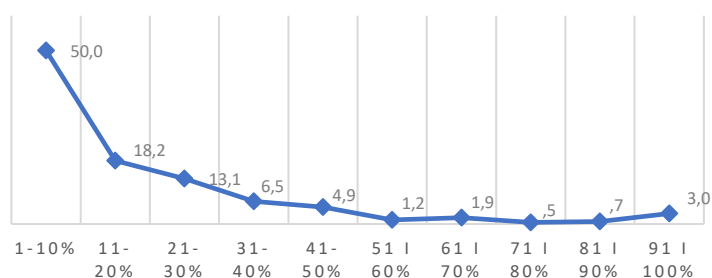
| Type of administration     | %     |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Local Administration       | 99.3  |
| Town council               | 91.2  |
| County council             | 4.6   |
| Decentralized local entity | 2.8   |
| Provincial council         | 0.7   |
| Civil service              | 0.7   |
| Total                      | 100.0 |

**Almost all responses were from local administrations and 91% were town councils**

*Figure 7. Administrations taking part in the survey according to number of employees (%)*



*Figure 8. Administrations according to the proportion of employees with a university qualification as a percentage of the total staff (%)*

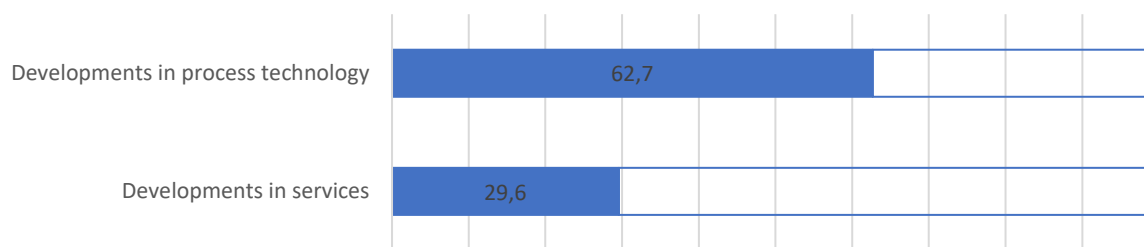


**Half of participating local entities are small administrations with virtually no senior technical staff**

Around half of the administrations taking part employ fewer than 10 workers and 30% employ between 10 and 50.

Moreover, the proportion of employees with a university qualification compared to the total is low: 50% of administrations report that less than 10% of their staff have a university qualification.

**Figure 9. Administrations that have introduced developments in process technology and/or in services (%)**



Note: "Developments in services in the administration" refer to substantially enhanced services / "Major changes in process technology" refer to new equipment or software, or new forms of management (just-in-time production, quality and/or knowledge management).

## **63% of administrations have introduced developments in process technology**

These developments are related to new equipment or software, or new forms of management in the organisation. Also, 30% have incorporated developments in services in the administration.

It should be pointed out that these developments have been promoted by the Catalan Open Government Consortium (Administració Oberta de Catalunya, or OAC in Catalan), which aims to foster the digital transformation of Catalan administrations and promote swift, logical and cooperative governments.

## ■ Recruitment by the Local Administration of individuals who recently graduated

**Table 3. Administrations that have recruited recently graduated individuals or graduates with some prior experience in the past 3 years according to the size of the administration**

|                                 | Have recruited recently graduated individuals or graduates with some prior experience | Have not recruited individuals | Total |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------|
| Total number of administrations | 209   | 225                            | 434   |
| % of administrations            | 48.2%   | 51.8%                          | 100%  |
| % of small administrations      | 27.8%   | 72.2%                          | 100%  |
| % of large administrations      | 66.4%   | 33.6%                          | 100%  |

Note: small administrations refer to those with fewer than 10 employees while medium/large administrations are those with 10 or more employees.

**Table 4. Main reasons for not having recruited recently graduated individuals in the past 3 years**

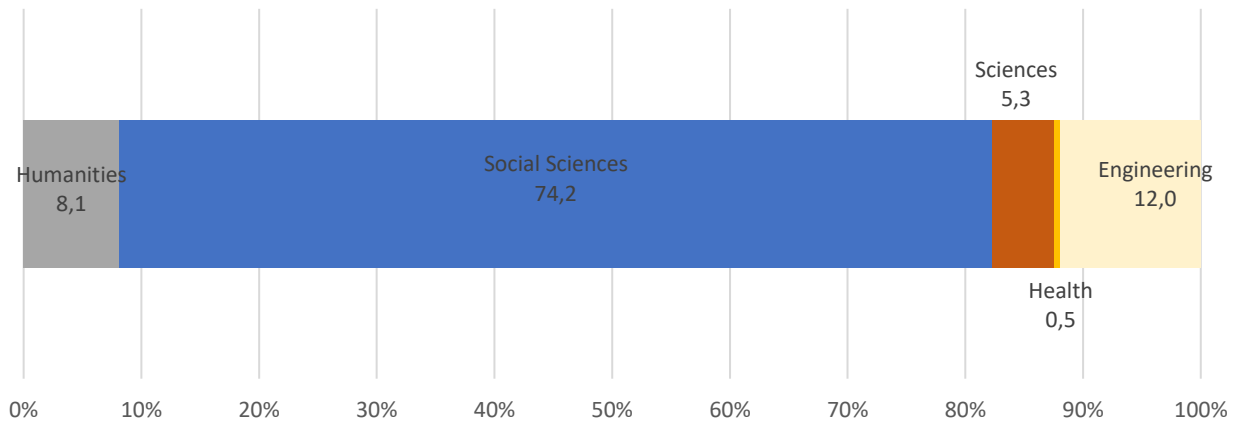
|   | % of administrations |
|---|----------------------|
| Lack of vacancies   | 71.1%                |
| The activity of the centre does not require the recruitment of employees with this level of qualification | 11.6%                |
| The graduates recruited have extensive prior work experience  | 6.7%                 |

### Almost half of the administrations surveyed have recruited recently graduated individuals in the past 3 years

Recruitment capacity varies according to the size of the administration: 28% of the administrations surveyed employing fewer than 10 individuals have recruited recently graduated individuals or graduates with some prior experience, while this percentage rises to 66% for administrations with 10 or more employees.

The main reason for not having recruited individuals in the past 3 years is a lack of vacancies.

**Figure 10. Academic field in which most of the recently graduated individuals recruited by the Administration qualified (%)**

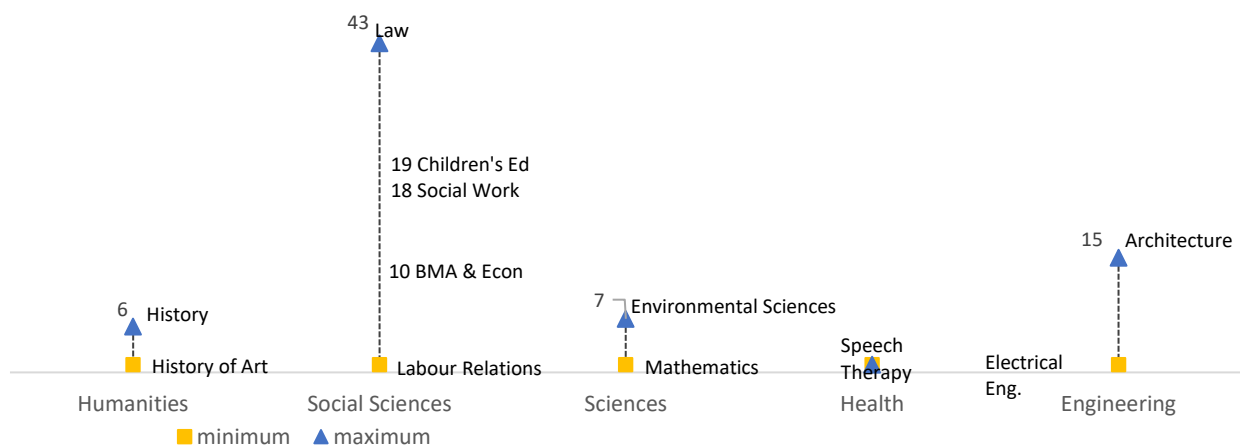


## Local administrations have largely recruited individuals from the field of Social Sciences

Many of the graduates that have been recruited by the Local Administration qualified in the degree programmes of Law, Children's Education, Social Work and Business Management and Administration (BMA).

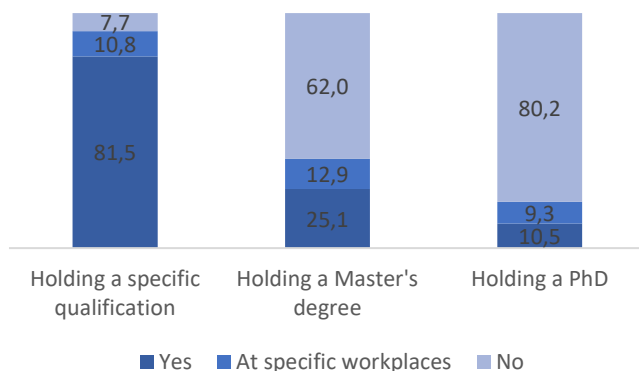
12% of local administrations have recruited individuals who largely qualified in the field of Engineering and, indeed, they mostly studied Architecture.

**Figure 11. Number of administrations that have recruited individuals who recently graduated according to the degree programme they pursued**



Note: other study programmes are found between the minimum and maximum values (except in the field of Health where only one graduate has been recruited from the Speech Therapy study programme). Only certain study programmes are shown within the field of Social Sciences.

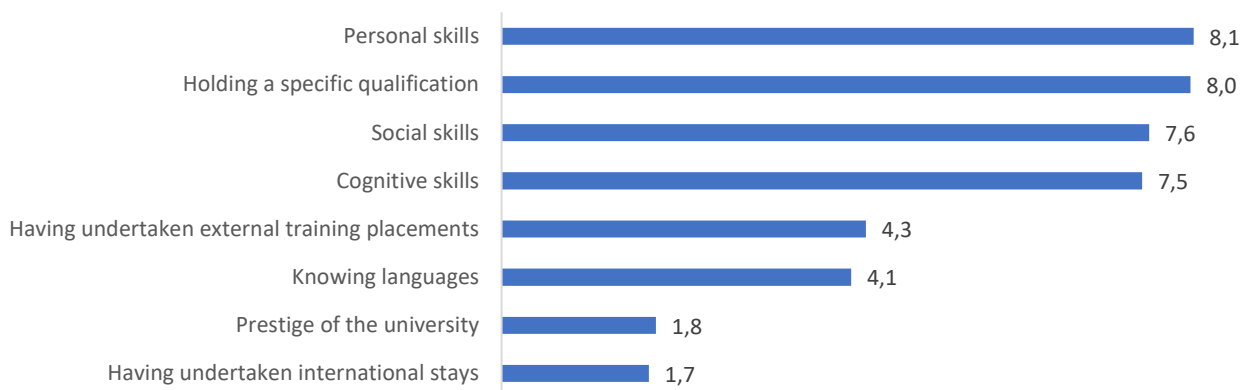
**Figure 12. Importance of a formal education for the recruitment of recently graduated individuals or graduates with some prior experience (% of administrations)**



**Holding a specific qualification is vital in the recruitment by the Local Administration of staff with a higher education degree**

Holding a Master's degree is important when it comes to recruitment for 38% of administrations, while a PhD is only relevant for 20%. These figures are higher than the values reported by private enterprise. Indeed, generally speaking the system for recruitment to the

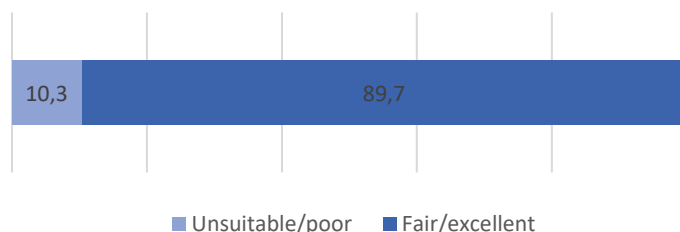
**Figure 13. Relevance of the following factors when recruiting recently graduated individuals (from 0 to 10)**



**Aside from the specific qualification, personal, social and cognitive skills constitute the most highly valued factors in recruitment**

These skills are given ratings of 8.1, 7.6 and 7.5, respectively. Having undertaken external training placements, knowing languages, the prestige of the university and having undertaken international stays do not appear to be relevant factors in an individual's recruitment.

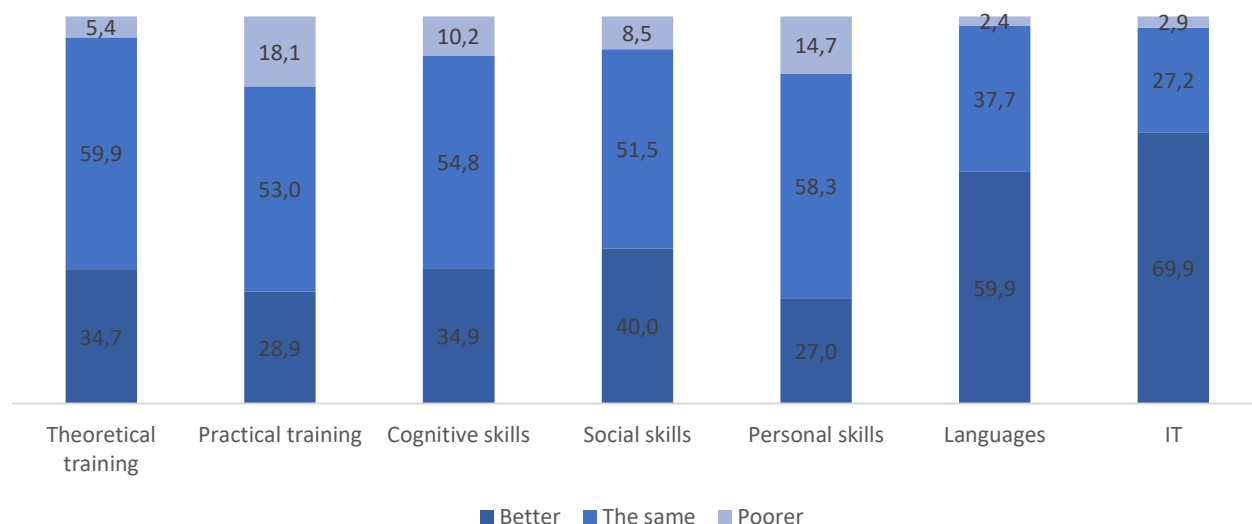
**Figure 14. Suitability of the profiles of individuals who recently graduated to the needs of the workplace where they have been recruited (%)**



### Recently graduated individuals are suited to the needs of the workplace

90% of administrations consider that the recently graduated individuals they have recruited in the past 3 years are suited to the needs of the workplace.

**Figure 15. Change in the education received by individuals who recently graduated compared to 5 and 10 years ago (%)**

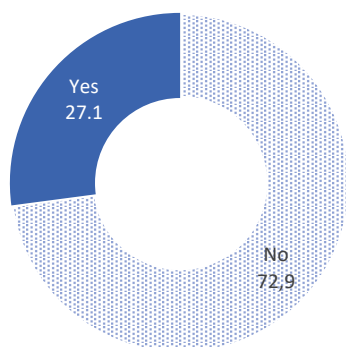


### More than half of administrations consider that university education has improved in terms of languages and IT skills compared to 5 and 10 years ago

Furthermore, more than half feel that the education received in terms of theoretical and practical training, and cognitive, social and personals skills has remained constant.

## ■ Difficulties in recruitment

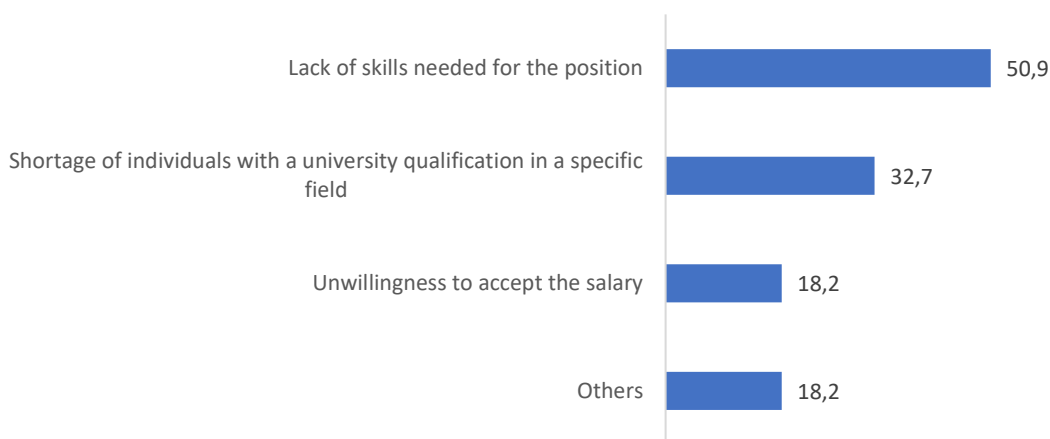
Figure 16. Administrations that encountered difficulties in recruiting staff with suitable profiles (%)



### 1 in every 4 administrations have encountered difficulties in recruitment

27% of administrations have encountered difficulties in recruiting individuals with suitable profiles. It should be pointed out that this percentage is lower than the figure from the employers' study from 2014, which showed that 42% of all companies surveyed encountered difficulties.

Figure 17. Reasons for difficulties in recruiting staff with suitable profiles (% of administrations)



### The primary reason for difficulties in recruitment is the lack of skills needed for the position on the part of candidates

This is followed by 1 in every 3 administrations citing a lack of qualified individuals in a specific field.



## ■ Skills

**Table 5. Percentage of administrations reporting that there is room for improvement in cross-disciplinary skills in university education**

|  | %    |
|--|------|
| Documentation                            | 4.3  |
| Numerical skills                         | 7.2  |
| Languages                                | 7.2  |
| Negotiation skills                       | 7.2  |
| Theoretical training                     | 10.0 |
| Oral expression                          | 11.0 |
| Leadership                               | 11.5 |
| Capacity for learning and self-learning  | 13.4 |
| Use of most common IT tools              | 18.2 |
| Written expression                       | 22.5 |
| Team work                                | 22.5 |
| Responsibility at work                   | 24.9 |
| Focus on public service                  | 26.3 |
| Autonomous work                          | 27.8 |
| Ability to offer new ideas and solutions | 29.7 |
| Problem solving and decision-making      | 49.8 |
| Practical training                       | 61.7 |

**Figure 18. General level of satisfaction with the skills of individuals who recently graduated, overall and according to the size of the administration (from 0 to 10)**



### Practical training is the main area where improvement is needed

62% of administrations report that the leading area for improvement in university education is practical training.

Furthermore, 50% state that problem solving and decision-making also show scope for improvement in terms of the education received by individuals who recently graduated.

Nevertheless, these cross-disciplinary skills also tend to be most widely reported as showing scope for improvement in the education received by graduates in Catalonia.

### Small administrations are most satisfied with the skills of individuals who recently graduated

Despite shortcomings in the education received by recently graduated individuals, the general level of satisfaction with their skills is 7.3 and, when broken down, the figure is higher for administrations employing fewer than 10 workers.

**Table 6 Percentage of administrations reporting that there is room for improvement in cross-disciplinary skills in university education according to the size of the administration**

|  | Small | Medium/large |
|--|-------|--------------|
| Documentation                            | 3.5   | 4.6          |
| Numerical skills                         | 5.3   | 7.9          |
| Negotiation skills                       | 5.3   | 7.9          |
| Oral expression                          | 5.3   | 13.2         |
| Languages                                | 8.8   | 6.6          |
| Theoretical training                     | 8.8   | 10.5         |
| Team work                                | 10.5  | 27.0         |
| Written expression                       | 12.3  | 26.3         |
| Leadership                               | 14.0  | 10.5         |
| Capacity for learning and self-learning  | 17.5  | 11.8         |
| Focus on public service                  | 19.3  | 28.9         |
| Autonomous work                          | 22.8  | 29.6         |
| Use of most common IT tools              | 24.6  | 15.8         |
| Responsibility at work                   | 24.6  | 25.0         |
| Ability to offer new ideas and solutions | 24.6  | 31.6         |
| Problem solving and decision-making      | 43.9  | 52.0         |
| Practical training                       | 70.2  | 58.6         |

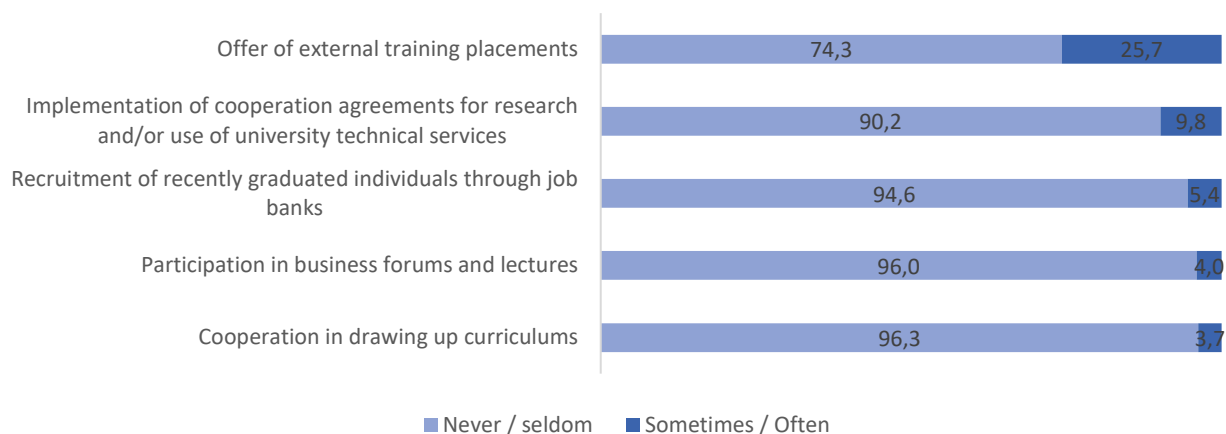
## Differences in skills needs between small administrations and medium/large administrations

The proportion of small administrations reporting a need to improve practical training is 12 pp higher than medium/large administrations, while this difference stands at 9 pp for IT skills and 6 pp for capacity for learning.

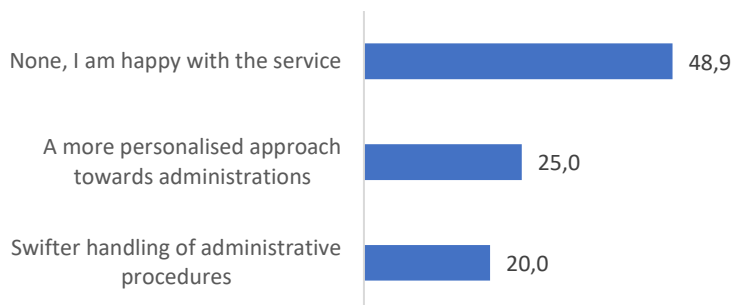
On the other hand, small administrations appear to show greater satisfaction than medium/large administrations when it comes to team work skills (-16 pp), written expression (-14 pp) and focus on public service (-10 pp), among other areas.

## ■ Cooperation from the Administration with universities

**Figure 19. Extent to which the Administration cooperates with universities according to the type of activity (%)**



**Figure 20. Areas for improvement in job banks or training placements organised by universities (% of administrations)**



**Figure 21. Satisfaction with job bank services or training placement services (on a scale of 0 to 10)**

7,1 ★★★★★★

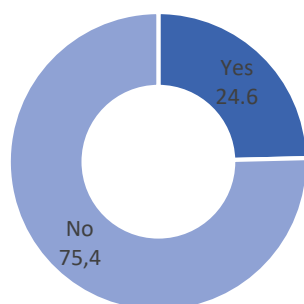
### Cooperation between the Administration and universities is virtually non-existent

The only activity on which a significant degree of cooperation takes place is external training placements during study programmes: 26% have cooperated with universities on this activity. The percentage varies between 9% for small administrations and 41% for medium/large administrations (not shown on the graph).

Of the administrations that have been associated with university job bank or external training placement services, half are satisfied with the service and rate their level of satisfaction at 7.1.

## ■ In-house training of recently graduated individuals

**Figure 22. Administrations funding training for graduates (%)**



**Table 7. Type of training funded by administrations (%)**

|   | %    |
|---|------|
| Training solely or largely during working hours | 89.6 |
| On-the-job training                             | 39.6 |
| Solely or largely off-the-job training          | 33.3 |

**Figure 23. Reasons for funding training (%)**



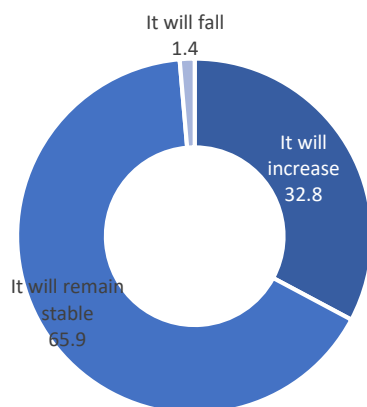
### 25% of administrations fund training for the recently graduated individuals they recruit

90% of this training is largely carried out during working hours. For most, the aim of this training is to improve employees' specific knowledge and to improve their basic and theoretical training related to the sector. It is worth pointing out that funding for training is virtually non-existent in small administrations (not shown on the graph).

Along these lines, it should be highlighted that public administrations benefit from a range of training programmes delivered at the School for Public Administration and the Catalan Federation of Municipalities.

## ■ Forecast

**Figure 24. Trend in qualified employment in the Local Administration (%)**



**Table 8. Reasons for the increase in employment (%)**

| Reasons                                 | %    |
|---|------|
| Organisational or technological changes | 73.6 |
| Staff rotation                          | 25.6 |
| Increased activity                      | 13.2 |
| Others                                  | 11.6 |

### Good prospects for the Local Administration

1 in every 3 administrations believe qualified employment will increase on account of organisational or technological changes. By and large, this trend of growth is envisaged to take place in administrations employing more than 10 individuals (not shown).

**Figure 25. Skills that will gain importance in the Local Administration\***



### ICT skills will gain importance in the Local Administration

The most sought-after skill relates to ICTs (e-administration, IT, etc.). Legal skills (legal consultancy) and economic skills (accounting, finance, etc.) are also becoming increasingly important.

**Figure 26. Most important areas of employment\***



**Figure 27. Least important areas of employment\***



### The most highly sought-after areas of employment in the Local Administration in future will relate to ICTs, law and economics, along with citizen information

Areas of employment linked to skills that will become increasingly important are in fact the most sought-after areas of employment, too.

On the other hand, areas of employment related to face-to-face citizen information (due to e-administration), low-skilled labour and administration will experience a decline.

\*These are open questions. Responses with the same meaning have been grouped into categories. Figures 25, 26 and 27 show categories referred to more than 3 times.

## CONCLUSIONS

The main results of the study are as follows:

- Half of the local administrations surveyed employ fewer than 10 individuals and employees with a university qualification account for a low proportion of all staff.
- Administrations that have recruited individuals largely employ those who graduate in the field of Social Sciences, particularly in Law, Children's Education, Social Work and Business Management and Administration. From the field of Engineering the recruitment of individuals graduating in Architecture is also noteworthy.
- Graduates are suited to the needs of the workplace.
- Holding a specific qualification is a key factor in an individual's recruitment for most administrations. A Master's degree and PhD are valued by 38% and 20% of administrations, respectively.
- Aside from the qualification, personal, social and cognitive skills are the foremost factors in recruitment, unlike the following ones: having undertaken an external training placement, knowing languages, the prestige of the university and having undertaken international stays.
- 27% of administrations have encountered difficulties in recruiting staff with suitable profiles, essentially due to candidates lacking the skills needed.
- Cross-disciplinary skills which show scope for improvement in the education received in order to work for the Administration are practical training, autonomous work and problem solving (as is the case with other study programmes). Nevertheless, the results vary depending on the size of the administration.
- Cooperation with universities is virtually non-existent. Only 1 in every 4 administrations offer students external training placements and almost none make use of the university job bank service.
- Skills needs in the coming years are clearly related to ICTs (particularly e-administration). Graduates with legal and economic skills are also sought-after profiles.
- Areas of employment that will witness a decline in importance include face-to-face citizen information (owing to the promotion of e-administration) and low-skilled labour.

## DATA SHEET

### ***Survey for the Civil Service and local entities***

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Population         | People in charge of recently graduated individuals recruited by the Civil Service<br>All local entities in Catalonia |
| Survey period      | From 5/03/2018 to 23/03/2018   |
| Survey type        | Online   |
| Average time taken | If they recruited individuals: 10'40"  |

|                | Population | Sample | Response rate | Sample error |
|----------------|------------|--------|---------------|--------------|
| Local entities | 1,059      | 431    | 40.7%         | 3.7%         |
| Civil Service  | 16         | 3      | 18.7%         | 53.7%        |
| Total          | 1,075      | 434    | 40.4%         | 3.7%         |

### ***Survey on access to the labour market (2017)***

|                   | Population | Sample | Response rate | Sample error |
|-------------------|------------|--------|---------------|--------------|
| Graduates in 2013 | 30,262     | 15,563 | 51.4%         | 0.56%        |



## DRAFTING COMMITTEE

### Editors

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Sandra Nieto Viramontes | Project manager, Internationalisation and Knowledge Generation Department |
| Anna Prades Nebot       | Project manager, Internationalisation and Knowledge Generation Department |

### Contributors

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Martí Casadesús Fa | Director |
|--------------------|----------|

*The Local Administration and the education received by individuals who recently graduated*

Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya  
July 2019 · AQU-26-2019

*The Local Administration and the education received by individuals who recently graduated*



Agència  
per a la Qualitat  
del Sistema Universitari  
de **Catalunya**



[www.aqu.cat](http://www.aqu.cat)



@aqucatalunya