ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 6 - number 191 Wednesday 23 february 2022

E-learning and online universities: trends during the pandemic

Boom in enrollment for online classes: the number of freshmen has grown by 7%.

The past two years have radically changed our habits and our way of life: many habits have been lost, but there is one area in which the **pandemic** has generated a real tsunami, breaking down false beliefs and creating new awareness.

E-learning has been for years - in the world of education - one of the most underestimated "techniques"; today, thanks to the state of emergency, this prejudice has been cleared through customs: studying at a distance is possible and it is also advantageous.

Travel costs are lowered, there is a direct but not destabilizing channel with teachers, **teaching materials** are available 24/7, but above all you can study and work at the same time, combining theoretical training with practical training; an aspect, this one, very much requested by companies, especially foreign ones.
In this way students have more freedom to maneuver and above all more chances to find a job after their studies. The numbers provided by official statistics, in this sense, speak clearly.
See also the latest Almalaurea report.

Data on universities in Covid time

The **Ministry of Universities** has published updated data and it seems that since last year, the number of freshmen has increased by 7%, despite or especially since teaching has moved online. The increase concerns the whole Peninsula with peaks in Southern Italy. There are more than 324 thousand three-year matriculated students compared to 305 thousand (up 4.8%) last year.

For master's degrees, however, the difference exceeds 2000 students. Therefore, e-learning has boosted education, but that's not all, because the data also speak of other positive effects: higher regularity of studies, **lower age at graduation** and more internships.

The employment rate is also growing: **+8.4** percentage points for first level graduates and **+6.5** percentage points for second level graduates. According to studies, graduating online is worthwhile and also creates more opportunities.

An important signal also comes from private universities that have excelled in resisting the crisis: Luiss +6.4%, Bocconi +3.1%, Cattolica + 2.5%. A case in point is represented by the universities that have focused on medicine, such as **Humanitas or San Raffaele**, which have even registered 1500 more places.

For further information, see also this contribution published by Il Sole 24 Ore.

E-learning and the role of telematic universities

Distance learning already existed well before Covid-19: telematic universities proliferated but there was still a lot of mistrust.

See more on online universities recognized by Miur

Today, thanks to a forced adjustment on the part of **traditional universities**, the picture has changed.

There is more awareness and, combined with the fact that the titles are valid to support public competitions and to be hired in companies, even large ones, the data today show that the **e-learning mode** is certified and appreciated among students and HR.

Now we need to look ahead and take an extra step: **online and offline modes** must work synergistically to train increasingly well-prepared students. They don't need to be an alternative to each other, but they need to point together to a greater goal that is European recognition.