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# The value of university internships\*

## *El valor de las prácticas laborales universitarias*

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**Abstract:** Universities place particular importance on their internship projects for university students. The purpose of this study is to identify if the internships have an impact on the students' entry to the labour market. The methodology used is based on the bivariate analysis and the multiple binary logistic regression technique, using data from the 2014 Survey on the Labour Insertion of University Graduates (EILU), carried

out by the INE. The sample used comprises 30,379 graduates and in the internships section, 21,622 university graduates. The results obtained confirm that internships are a tool for job placement.

**Keywords:** University internships, Degree of success, Job placement, Graduates.

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**Resumen:** Las universidades prestan especial importancia a sus proyectos de prácticas enfocados hacia los universitarios. Así, el propósito de este estudio es identificar si las prácticas impactan en la inserción laboral. La metodología utilizada se basa en el análisis bivariado y la técnica de regresión logística binaria múltiple, sobre la base de datos de la Encuesta de Inserción Laboral de los Titulados Universitarios (EILU)

del año 2014, llevada a cabo por el INE. La muestra utilizada es de 30.379 titulados y, en el apartado de prácticas, de 21.622 titulados universitarios. Los resultados obtenidos confirman que las prácticas son una herramienta de inserción laboral.

**Palabras clave:** Prácticas universitarias, Grado de éxito, Inserción laboral, Graduados.

## INTRODUCTION

In our country, young people are joining the labour market at an increasingly older age compared to previous generations. This is due to the duration of the education stage, changes in the labour context and the precariousness of the labour markets (Navarro, 2013). It is also true that having a university qualification increases the possibilities of joining the labour market (Peraita y Pastor, 2014).

Miret, Salvadó, Serracant and Soler (2008) observe that in the case of those university students who follow a continuous path of school and work, the finalisation of their studies coincides with their entry into the labour market. There are two different paths: one, when university students enter the labour market during their studies to cover the financial cost of these and, two, university students who start a job related to their studies when they have completed them. Casal, García, Merino and Quesada (2006) observe four potential paths between formal education and access to the labour market: “early success” which refers to the rapid incorporation into qualified positions; the “successive approach” alternating between work-study situations; “job insecurity” characterised by slow transitions with high job rotation and the lack of relation between qualifications acquired and work carried out and the “erratic paths” characterised by more unstable situations such as discontinuous work, work-related rejection or chronic unemployment.

Regarding the entry to the labour market of university students, we consider that doing an internship plays an essential role and is an opportunity to practise the skills learned in the university, gain work experience, reduce job-seeking time and, consequently, successfully join the labour market. In this vein, our intention is to determine whether internships are an efficient tool that will improve job opportunities and academic performance, as indicated by the findings of Fang, Lee, Huang and Lee (2011).

A bibliographic search on the success of internships linked to entry into the labour market reveals that it is a topic that has been barely explored. In this regard, our contribution seeks to fill this gap in the case of Spain. The references

found refer, especially, to the United States, where the results of certain internships have been researched in relation to their impact on students joining the labour market.

Therefore, it is interesting to research and analyse whether internships help entry to the labour market and if there are different profiles depending on the type of internship.

The majority of universities place particular importance on their internship projects for university students. However, they do not have the tools to assess or quantify the degree of success of these, since they do not perform a systematic follow-up of the students who have done internships.

Therefore, the research questions we seek to answer are: do internships help entry to the labour market? And what degree of success do university internships have among the students who do them?

In other words, the general aim considered in this work is to determine the scope of performing internships among university students, their effect on their entry to the labour market, and to assess the degree of success of the internships of those students who did them.

This article is structured in four sections. The first section introduces the theoretical foundations, exploring and reviewing the contributions made on the impact of internships, whether curricular or not, on university students' entry to the labour market. In the second section, the Analysis Models and the methodology used to meet the goals and work hypothesis are explained. The third part presents the results and is made up of two sub-sections: the first corresponds to the exploratory analysis of the first specific goal where the scope of the carrying out of internships among university students in Spain is explored. Subsequently, the second specific goal is addressed, where the explanatory analysis is presented, which analyses the effect of different variables when performing internships defined as successful. Lastly, the conclusions are presented, which corroborate or refute the starting hypothesis of this research.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Entry to the labour market is a long and gradual process that coincides with the period in which the individual manages to begin a certain professional career. This process coincides with the youthful period, prior to financial and family emancipation (Spilerman, 1977).

The study conducted by Navarro (2013) highlights that at present, youths take longer to join the labour market. This is due to the greater amount of time

spent in the education stage, to changes in the labour context and to the precariousness of labour markets which has affected young people.

Recio (2007) maintains that the situation of the youth market in Spain can be summarised as a gradual incorporation into the labour market up to the age of thirty. Up to the age of twenty, access to work is very reduced and different situations prevail: youths who drop out of the education system early, seeking to join the labour market permanently, and young students who try to earn an income with a low incorporation in the labour market.

Kalenkoski and Pabilonia (2008) this paper analyzes the financial motivations for and the effects of employment on U.S. college students' academic performance. The data confirm the predictions of the theoretical model that lower parental transfers and greater costs of attending college increase the number of hours students work while in school, although students are not very responsive to these financial motivations. They also provide some evidence that greater hours of work lead to lower grade point averages (GPA) show that the socioeconomic conditions of the student and their family determine the first entry into the labour market, which would result in a negative effect on the academic development; while other authors draw the conclusion that this impact is neutral or even beneficial (Applegate and Daly, 2005). In turn, based on the results obtained in their study, Ruesga and Bichara (2014) show that the socioeconomic and personal characteristics of Spanish university students are essential to understand entry to the labour market during the period of academic training.

Peraita and Pastor (2014) observe that having a university qualification increases the possibilities of joining the labour market. This difference is based on the activity rate of university students which was higher than 80% in 2012, while among people with low levels of studies it is approximately 20%.

In this vein, Miret *et al.* (2008) observe that having higher studies is positively correlated with a higher presence in the labour market, but that these youths are exposed to unstable work conditions, temporary contracts, financial insecurity and a precarious labour market.

Previous studies have highlighted that the field of Humanities is most affected by unemployment (2014), followed by Experimental Science and Social Science. While those university students who are least affected by unemployment are those from Health Sciences and Social Science (Economics, Business Administration and Management, Business Studies and Law). They also highlight that, apart from Humanities, female unemployment is higher in Experimental and Technical Science, fields with a greater tradition of male students (Fachelli and Planas, 2016).

To determine the relationship between the level of studies of the graduates and their work requirements, an indicator from a report developed by AQU Catalunya classifies graduates as follows (Mañé Vernet and Miravet Arnau, 2007): graduates whose education level is suitable for their job, graduates who consider that their education level is not necessary for their job and graduates who needed to have a specific qualification to be hired, but they do not deem it necessary for the job they do.

When these criteria were applied, it was observed that 79.6% of graduates (working full-time) considered that the knowledge they received at university was suitable for the job they do at present; 13.6% responded that they had received a high level of education for the job they do and the remaining 6.8% considered that the job they do does not match the studies they followed (Fachelli and Planas, 2010).

In this vein, Fachelli and Montolio (2015) observe that graduates give a positive evaluation of their past efforts and the specific tools available in terms of knowledge and skills that they acquired at university. In relation to the evaluation of knowledge received at university, women give a higher evaluation (Montolio and Medir, 2015).

One of the essential objectives of any educational proposal is to facilitate the transfer of knowledge in the professional practice, thereby dismantling the gap existing between the academic world and the professional world (Correa, 2015; Salmerón, 2013).

Therefore, it can be assumed that internships are an effective tool to improve job opportunities. Fang *et al.* (2011) state that internships have been used to maintain a large presence of students in positions during times of financial crisis and in periods when new employees were not being hired.

The study conducted by Martínez Martín (2003) sought to determine what happened with university students after completing the internship. He observed that in 2000, 28.8% of university students maintained a professional link with the company after completing the internship.

Internships are designed to improve the training of university students, and consequently, lead to a higher number of students entering the labour market (Martínez Martín, 2003). In the research carried out by Gault, Redington and Schlager (2000), experience is highlighted as a key attribute that any professional can offer to a potential business owner. Moreover, through internships, students obtain more contacts for future jobs, a greater knowledge of the labour market and greater job satisfaction. Rodicio García and Iglesias Cortizas (2011) highlight the essential skills that are mainly learned in internships, since no skill is exclusively

obtained during the theoretical training in the degree. Internships are an important element of the training process of university students, aimed at enriching their training and complementing the theoretical learning (Zabalza, 2006).

In this vein, García Delgado (2009) mentions that internships enable the student to apply the academic knowledge acquired during the degree, in a real context, as well as enabling the student to be part of a context other than the university. According to Freire, Teijeiro and Montes (2011), some of the competences considered important by business owners are problem-solving and the ability to apply knowledge to practical work.

A very complete definition of competences is that of López-Ruiz (2011), who understands them as a system of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that are gradually acquired in diverse contexts and are applied in specific situations to solve complex problems.

Those university students who devote all their time to academic preparation at university have more problems when entering the labour market than those who sacrifice part of their grades to join the labour market through an internship (Figuera, 1996).

In the majority of the studies carried out, the specific effect of internships on the process of university students entering the labour market and their degree of success is unknown. Two exceptions are: the study carried out with business owners by AQU (2014) about the competences of recent graduates that find that having done an internship has a weight in hiring of 6.4 out of 10. Other exception is the study by Di Meglio, Barge-Gil, Camiña and Moreno (2019), about Economic Science students and Business Studies students from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, which shows that those internships that help to develop communication and problem-management skills improve, respectively, the probability of being employed and of being located in high salary tranches.

To conduct this research, we started with the definition of deeming an internship as successful if: a) the student continued in the company where they did their university internship at the time of the survey and b) those who took less than 6 months to find work.

## DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Starting with the general objective of determining the extent to which university students do internships, their effect on their entry to the labour market and to assess the degree of success of the internships among the students who did them, the following specific objectives are considered:

- To analyse the impact of doing internships on having a job or not.
- To identify the differences between an internship being successful or not based on developing an indicator that enables us to assess this degree of success.

The general hypothesis of this research is that university internships have a positive impact on graduates' entry to the labour market and that there are different profiles of students according to internships which could be defined as successful and others which are not.

This general hypothesis led to a set of specific hypotheses:

- Doing an internship positively influences entry to the labour market.
- University students with experience in other university studies abroad or complementary studies abroad do successful internships.
- Graduates with lower ICT skills have less success in internships than graduates with more advanced and expert skills.
- University students who do internships (curricular or extracurricular) for a longer period, have more success than university students who do them for a shorter period.
- A higher proportion of university students from public universities do successful internships.
- University students who speak more languages are more successful in internships than other students.
- Students in arts, humanities and social science do less successful internships than the rest.
- Older male university students have more success in their internships than others.

To answer the two research questions and corroborate the hypotheses set out, the methodology used is quantitative, combining bivariate analysis with contingency tables and the multiple binary logistic regression technique, which serves to identify which characteristics or factors differentiate the groups defined by the dependent variable (López-Roldán and Fachelli, 2015).

Likewise, in this study, two dependent variables are used:

1. Works/does not work (inactive or unemployed): to test the first research question, where the sample of university graduates (30,379 people) was taken as an analysis unit;

2. Did a successful/unsuccessful internship: to test the second research question, where only those graduates who did an internship (whether curricular or extracurricular) were taken as an analysis unit. 21,622 people were used for the analysis.

The first variable is a clear indicator of entry to the labour market, that is, whether the person works or not. The second is a dummy variable that seeks to be a first approach to what we call a “successful internship” and it is constructed taking into account the student continued in the company where they did their university internship at the time of the survey and those who took less than 6 months to find work, versus the rest of the working students.

Therefore, to answer the research questions and verify the hypotheses considered, a quantitative analysis will be conducted, where, in the first section, which corresponds to the exploratory analysis, a bivariate analysis will be performed based on contingency tables, since they serve to explore, study and present the potential relations between different categories of one same variable. In the second section, which corresponds to the explanatory analysis, the multiple binary logistic regression technique will be used, as it serves to identify which characteristics or factors differentiate the groups defined by the dependent variable.

To perform this study, data will be taken from the first Survey on the Labour Insertion of University Graduates (EILU), conducted by the INE in 2014 across Spain. This survey has a sample of 30,379 graduates and sets out to determine the different aspects of the transition process from university to the labour market. In relation to the first model, which responds to the first research question, it considers all the surveyed university graduates.

The second analysis model, which responds to the second research question, used the sub-sample made up of graduates who did internships during their degree, both curricular and extracurricular. In total, this model considered the responses of 21,622 university graduates.

## MODEL 1

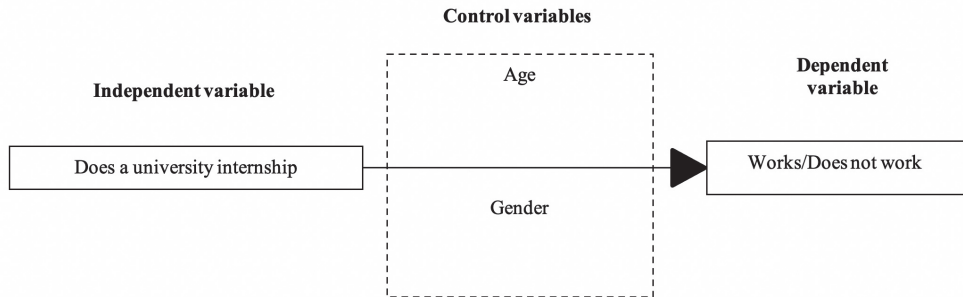
Below, the first analysis model related with the first research question is presented, with its corresponding principal hypothesis, designed to determine the impact of internships on graduates’ entry to the labour market.

Thus, the independent variable is doing university internships and the reference category is to have done both curricular and extracurricular internships compared to those who have not done them. The control variables introduced are: age,



where the reference category is students older than 30 years of age, and the second is gender, where the reference category is women.

### Model 1. Simple binary regression



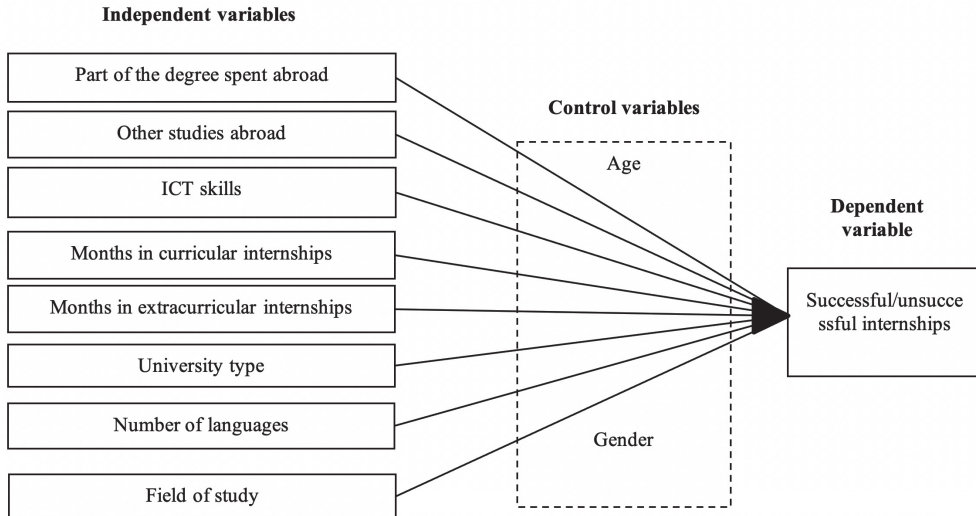
Source: compiled by authors.

### MODEL 2

Next, we tried to establish which differences appear between university students with successful internships and unsuccessful internships. The dependent variable of the second model, as has already been mentioned, was constructed based on two survey questions. These questions are the time university students took to find work after finishing their degree and if they continued in the company in which they did the internship. An indicator of a successful internship are those students who continued in the company where they performed the internship and those who took less than 6 months to find work. The reference category of the dependent variable is to have done a successful internship compared to the rest.

The second analysis model considered is related to the different hypotheses specified above, with a view to determining the elements favouring the successful internships. The analysis model is as follows:

## Model 2. Simple logistic regression



Source: compiled by authors.

The independent variables which were taken into account in this model are the following: if part of the degree was spent abroad and if other complementary studies were taken abroad (reference category).

ICT skills were also taken into account in the model, since at present they are a very important resource for the development of the majority of jobs. Here the reference category is being a basic user compared to being an advanced or expert user.

Next, the number of months spent in internships was considered, separating curricular and extracurricular internships, where the reference category is internships that last from 1 to 6 months.

Another variable that was considered in the model is the type of university where the degree was studied; if it is private (reference category) or public.

The next independent variable is the number of languages the students speaks, other than their native language. Therefore, the reference category chosen is being monolingual (only their native language), compared to those who speak more than one language. It is important to note that in those autonomous regions where two languages are spoken, this variable will be overestimated. It was decided not to perform a special treatment due to the variety in the origin and situation of the

graduates, since these, while mainly born in an autonomous region, may come from other regions and nationalities.

The field of study the university students chose was also taken into account, and the reference category was university students who had studied arts and humanities, compared to other fields of study. In this variable, social science was separated into two, following the criteria used in previous works (Fachelli and Planas, 2014, p. 79).

Moreover, in the analysis model two control variables were introduced. The first is age, where the reference category is students older than 30 years of age. The second control variable is gender, where the reference category is women.

## RESULTS

### *Descriptive analysis*

The first contingency table serves to analyse, first of all, the general characteristics of the categorical variables included in the first analysis model. The first columns in Table 1 refer to the percentage of university students according to their professional situation, detailing the relative total and characterising them according to each of the variables detected in the first analysis model. It is important to note that those who work make up 74.3% of the total and those who do not work make up 25.7%, in other words, they are inactive (6.7%) or unemployed (19.0%).

Below we present the Chi<sup>2</sup> significance which informs whether there is a relation between the different variables and whether or not the internship was successful. In addition, we also present the index showing how strong this association is (Cramer's V). This index varies between 0 and 1 with 1 showing a maximum degree of association, which is difficult to find in social variables (López-Roldán and Fachelli, 2015).

In a first analysis we find that having done an internship influences whether the individual works or not, with the percentage of those who did internships being slightly higher.

When analysing the strength of the association between the other variables, we observe that gender has an influence, with males working more. Age also has a relation with the dependent variable, indicating that older adults work more than younger adults.

**Table 1. Professional situation according to internships, sex and age**

	PROFESSIONAL SITUATION		TOTAL	CHI <sup>2</sup> SIG.	CRAMER'S V
	WORKS	DOES NOT WORK			
<b>University internship</b>				**	0,006
Did not do an internship	73.90%	26.10%	100%		
Did an internship	74.50%	25.50%	100%		
<b>Sex</b>				*	0,036
Woman	73.00%	27.00%	100%		
Man	76.20%	23.80%	100%		
<b>Age</b>				*	0,024
Older than 30	75.50%	24.50%	100%		
Younger than 30	73.40%	26.60%	100%		
<b>Total</b>	74.30%	25.70%			

\*\* Coefficient significant up to 0.01. \* Coefficient significant at less than 0.05.

Source: compiled by authors based on the EILU-2014.

The second contingency table serves to analyse the general characteristics of the categorical variables included in the second analysis model. The columns in Table 2 refer to the percentage of university students who had what we call successful internships, detailing the relative total and characterising them according to each of the variables selected in the analysis model.

**Table 2. Result of the intersections between dependent and independent variables**

	UNIVERSITY INTERNSHIP		TOTAL	CHI <sup>2</sup> SIG.	CRAMER'S V
	SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP	UNSUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP			
<b>Part of studies abroad</b>				*	0.017
Yes	59.1%	40.9%	100%		
No	61.4%	38.6%	100%		
<b>Other studies abroad</b>				**	0.032
Yes	62.4%	37.6%	100%		
No	59.2%	40.8%	100%		
<b>ICT skills</b>				**	0.086
Basic level user	59.1%	40.9%	100%		
Advanced level user	59.4%	40.6%	100%		
Expert level user	71.7%	28.3%	100%		

[CONTINÚA EN LA PÁGINA SIGUIENTE]

**Table 2. Result of the intersections between dependent and independent variables**

	UNIVERSITY INTERNSHIP		TOTAL	CHI <sup>2</sup> SIG.	CRAMER'S V
	SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP	UNSUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP			
<b>Number of months in curricular internship</b>			100%	**	0.073
From 1 to 6 months	59.5%	40.5%	100%		
From 7 to 12 months	68.1%	31.9%	100%		
More than one year	66.7%	33.3%	100%		
NS/NC	58.3%	41.7%	100%		
<b>Number of months in extracurricular internship</b>				**	0.066
From 1 to 6 months	55.9%	44.1%	100%		
From 7 to 12 months	61.1%	38.9%	100%		
More than one year	65.4%	34.6%	100%		
NS/NC	63.1%	36.9%	100%		
<b>University type</b>				**	0.073
Private university	69.8%	30.2%	100%		
Public university	59.6%	40.4%	100%		
<b>Number of languages</b>				**	0.024
Monolingual	64.6%	35.4%	100%		
Speaks more than 1 language	60.6%	39.4%	100%		
<b>Field of study</b>				**	0.110
Arts and humanities	50.4%	49.6%	100%		
Science	53.2%	46.8%	100%		
Social science	58.9%	41.1%	100%		
Economic and legal science	60.1%	39.9%	100%		
Engineering and architecture	68.2%	31.8%	100%		
Health science	66.9%	33.1%	100%		
<b>Age</b>				**	0.148
Older than 30	70.6%	29.4%	100%		
Younger than 30	55.6%	44.4%	100%		
<b>Gender</b>				**	0.048
Woman	59.3%	40.7%	100%		
Man	64.1%	35.9%	100%		
<b>Total</b>	61%	39%	100%		

\*\* Coefficient significant up to 0.01. \* Coefficient significant at lower than 0.05.  
ns not significant.

Source: compiled by authors based on EILU-2014.

As can be observed in Table 2, the independent variables have a significant association with the dependent variable. All the variables that present association, except that of doing part of the studies abroad, reach the highest levels of statistical significance (up to 0.01).

Furthermore, when analysing the strength of the association between the variables, we observe that age and field of study are strongly related to university students having done successful internships when each of these aspects is analysed individually. ICT skills, the number of months in curricular and extracurricular internships and the university type maintain a relation with having done a successful internship, but this relation is quite weak. Lastly, doing part of the degree abroad, the gender, the number of languages and having done other studies abroad, present a very weak relation with having done a successful internship.

### *Explanatory analysis*

Below, we present the logistic regressions which will serve to assess the incidence or effect of each of the variables, taking into account the rest of the characteristics of university students. Therefore, two dependency analyses are presented in relation to the hypotheses and models set out above. First, we analyse the differences in the professional situation of university students in relation to whether they do or do not participate in university internships (Table 3). Next, we analyse the differences between university students who did successful internships and those who did not, in relation to the different previously explained independent variables (Table 4).

The model presented in Table 3 has a low but significant explanatory capacity to observe the relations that exist between the dependent variable and the different variables making up the model.

**Table 3. Result of the simple binary regression: Analysis Model 1**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: PROFESSIONAL SITUATION REFERENCE CATEGORY: WORKS	B	STANDARD ERROR	SIG.	SIG.	EXP(B)
<b>Does a university internship</b>					
Did an internship (*)					
Did not do an internship	-0.071	0.029	0.017	*	0.932
<b>Age</b>					
(Older than 30*)					
Younger than 30	-0.098	0.027	0.000	**	0.907

[CONTINÚA EN LA PÁGINA SIGUIENTE]

**Table 3. Result of the simple binary regression: Analysis Model 1**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: PROFESSIONAL SITUATION REFERENCE CATEGORY: WORKS	B	STANDARD ERROR	SIG.	SIG.	EXP(B)
<b>Gender</b>					
(Woman*)					
Man	0.165	0.026	0.000	**	1.180
<b>Constant</b>	1.061	0.013	0.000	**	2.889
Number of cases			30379		
Nagelkerke's R2 squared			0.003		
Initial forecast value			74.3%		
Final forecast value			74.3%		

(\*) Reference category of the independent variables

\*\* Coefficient significant up to 0.01

\* Coefficient significant at less than 0.05

Source: compiled by authors based on EILU-2014.

The binary logistic regression analysis reveals that university students who do not do an internship are 7% less likely to be working.

In relation to age, it is observed that university graduates who are less than 30 are 10% less likely to have a placement.

Lastly, in relation to gender, it is observed that male university students are more likely to be working than female university students.

Below, in Table 4, the variables that impact on having done a successful internship or not are analysed.

**Table 4. Results of the binary logistic regression: Analysis model 2**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP (REF.) VS UNSUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP	B	STANDARD ERROR	SIG.	SIG.	EXP(B)
<b>Part of university studies abroad</b>					
Yes (*)					
No	-0.021	0.041	0.600	ns	0.979
<b>Other complementary university studies abroad</b>					
Yes (*)					
No	-0.088	0.029	0.003	**	0.916
<b>ICT skills</b>					
Basic user level (*)					
Advanced user level	0.107	0.037	0.004	**	1.113
Expert user level	0.553	0.059	0.000	**	1.739

[CONTINÚA EN LA PÁGINA SIGUIENTE]

**Table 4. Results of the binary logistic regression: Analysis model 2**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP (REF.) VS UNSUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP	B	STANDARD ERROR	SIG.	SIG.	EXP(B)
<b>Number of months in curricular internships</b> (From 1 to 6 months*)				**	
From 7 to 12 months	0.233	0.044	0.000	**	1.262
More than one year	0.092	0.064	0.154	ns	1.096
NS/NC	-0.051	0.042	0.225	ns	0.950
<b>Number of months in extracurricular internships</b> (From 1 to 6 months*)				**	
From 7 to 12 months	0.104	0.055	0.060	ns	1.109
More than one year	0.276	0.077	0.000	**	1.318
NS/NC	0.217	0.035	0.000	**	1.242
<b>University type</b> (Private*)					
Public	-0.446	0.043	0.000	**	0.640
<b>Number of languages</b> (Monolingual*)					
Speaks more than 1 language	-0.088	0.049	0.072	ns	0.916
<b>Field of study</b> (Arts and Humanities*)				**	
Science	0.012	0.074	0.867	ns	1.013
Social science	0.281	0.063	0.000	**	1.324
Economic and legal science	0.317	0.070	0.000	**	1.373
Engineering and architecture	0.390	0.070	0.000	**	1.477
Health science	0.602	0.072	0.000	**	1.826
<b>Age</b> (Older than 30 *)					
Younger than 30	-0.654	0.031	0.000	**	0.520
<b>Gender</b> (Woman*)					
Man	0.036	0.032	0.267	ns	1.037
<b>Constant</b>	0.753	0.101	0.000	**	2.124
Number of cases	21622				
Nagelkerke's R2 squared	0.065				
Initial forecast value	61%				
Final forecast value	62.30%				

(\*) Reference category of the independent variables / \*\* Significant coefficient up to 0.01. / \* Significant coefficient at less than 0.05. / ns Non-significant coefficient

Source: compiled by authors based on EILU-2014.



The model presented in Table 4, although it does not have a large explanatory capacity (6.5% according to Nagelkerke's R<sup>2</sup> squared), is relevant to observe the relations that exist between the dependent variable and the different variables making up the model. The binary logistic regression analysis serves to refute the hypothesis that considers that those university students who have spent a period of their degree abroad have successful internships. There are no significant differences between university students who study part of their degree abroad and those who do not. But, in relation to having done other studies abroad, in addition to their degree, it is observed that university students who did other studies abroad are more likely to do successful internships than the rest.

Next, in relation to ICT skills, it is observed that advanced level users have a slightly higher probability of doing successful internships than basic level users. Expert level users have even more probabilities of doing a successful internship. Regarding the months in curricular and extracurricular internships, it is observed that they behave differently regarding the dependent variable. The curricular internships of between 7 months and 1 year have a positive effect, while said effect is neutralised when the internship lasts 1 year or more. However, the duration of extracurricular internships must be prolonged in order for it to have a positive effect. Therefore, the duration of the internships is an important element, with curricular ones having a greater effect in less than time than extracurricular ones. The type of university attended by the graduates is also important. University students who studied in a public university are 36% less likely to do successful internships, compared to those who studied in a private university.

The number of languages spoken by the university students is another factor that was analysed since, generally, many companies demand a minimum number of languages and therefore, it may influence internships. However, the result is not significant.

According to the model proposed, there is a relation between the field of study of the university students and having more or less success in the internships. Those university students who study in the fields of social science, economic and legal science, engineering and architecture and health science, have a greater probability of doing a successful internship than students from arts or humanities. In particular, the fields of health science, engineering and architecture demonstrate the greatest probability of success in the internships.

Lastly, regarding gender and age, the results show that the first variable does not influence, and the second one does. Younger students have less probability of doing successful internships.

## CONCLUSIONS

The majority of universities place particular emphasis on their internship projects for university students to facilitate their entry to the labour market upon completing their studies. Most university students are aware of the relevance of this institutional effort. Nevertheless, few universities have generated tools to evaluate or quantify the degree of success in the implementation of internships. There is no follow-up of their graduates' integration into the labour market or mechanism to analyse the results of the internships. For this reason, an indicator has been created, based on two variables, to identify the differences existing between those university students who did internships that we deem successful and those who did not. These variables are the time the university students took to find work after completing the degree, and if they continued in the company where they did the internship. Those students who continued in the company where they did the internship and those who took less than 6 months to find work (having done curricular or extracurricular internships), were deemed to have successful internships.

The authors Fang *et al.* (2011) mention that internships are an effective tool to improve employment opportunities. Moreover, Martínez Martín (2003) refers to internships as a tool to improve training and consequently a better integration into the labour market. The results obtained are consistent with this, as they reveal how graduates who do internships have a more favourable entry into the labour market than those university students who do not do them.

Another important aspect mentioned by Navarro (2013) is that at present, young people join the labour market later. In turn, Ruesga and Bichara (2014) show that age is essential to understand the entry to the labour market during academic training. The results obtained in this study show that university students less than 30 years of age have greater difficulties finding work and doing successful internships.

Another of the results is the difference between men and women. Men have a greater probability of finding a job compared to women. This is consistent with the research by Calmand and Epiphane, 2012; García-Aracil and Navarro, 2005; Kalmijn and van der Lippe, 1997; however, no significant differences are observed with regard to doing successful internships.

Lastly, to summarise, the impact of doing internships on working or not was also analysed. Internships have a positive impact for those university students who do them, as they increase the probability of the university students finding work. However, there are other important elements, such as having studied abroad, having better ICT skills, the duration of the internship, the type of internship and the

type of university. The sociodemographic variables analysed do not show a gender bias and the internships are more successful in individuals aged over 30.

Future studies can further explore if there are social differences between the graduates with regard to the internships. Likewise, we seek to progress both in the analysis of intra-generational mobility, by comparing the first job with the job the graduates hold at the time of the interview, and also –insofar as the data allow– study the inter-generational mobility of graduates to analyse their occupational status compared to that of their family when they were between 14 and 16 years old.

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