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**Abstract**

This article aims to analyse Italian universities' official websites discursive practices to assess their involvement in the university third mission: the contribution by universities to the social and economic development of the environment in which they act. To achieve it, textual data were extracted from the official websites of the 91 Italian universities and, using linguistic resources specifically built for this purpose, these data were processed with the natural language processing environment NooJ. Lexical information was extracted and a semantic analysis was conducted. The main results of which suggest that the third mission topic does not emerge very prominently on universities' official websites. Actually, it is mostly associated with an economic valorisation of research rather than to a social commitment. As a matter of fact, universities that pay attention to discursive practices design the interaction processes with communities, improving quality performances in the third mission. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)