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**Author**

AGASISTI, Tommaso

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**Abstract**

In this article, we analyse the effects of teaching reforms in Italy. These were introduced in 1999, and changed the entire organization of university courses, where the Bachelor?Master (BA?MA) structure was adopted. The first step is to define the production process of higher education (HE). This process consists of several inputs (professors, facilities and students) which combine to produce outputs (graduates). We define efficiency in this context. Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) is used for the empirical analysis. This method allows us to build a frontier of efficient units, comparing universities with each other. The changes introduced by the reforms are modelled within this framework: the effects of teaching reforms are investigated as determinants of efficiency improvements. Our results, also supported by a Malmquist index analysis, suggest that efficiency of the HE sector as a whole improved in the period 1998/1999 to 2003/2004. Despite the fact that teaching reforms led to worse performance in the first year, in the following years productivity improved more rapidly than before.

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Our analyses will require further advancements, both for (1) analysing quality issues (improving the production process modelling) and for (2) testing our findings on longer periods. In fact, even if the results clearly evidenced an improvement in performances, better analyses on unobservable factors (e.g. quality) and on longer periods will give stability to our preliminary results. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Agasisti, Tommaso, E-Mail: [tommaso.agasisti@polimi.it](mailto:tommaso.agasisti@polimi.it)