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Sérgio Lopes

Ph.D. in Economics from the National University of Córdoba - UNC, Córdoba-AR, Adjunct Professor of the course of Economic Sciences-CCSA, of the Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná-UNIOESTE, campus of Cascavel, member of the Research Group on Applied Economics-GPEA.
E-mail: sergio.lopes@unioeste.br
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8901-3662>

Kaio Arlei Strelow

Graduated in Economics from the University State of Western Paraná-UNIOESTE, Cascavel campus. Registered Economist at Corecon-PR
E-mail: kaio.strelow@gmail.com

Arnold Rafael Nogueira de Souza

Bachelor of Science Economic, Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná-UNIOESTE, campus Rattlesnake.
E-mail: arnoldk6@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to analyze the professional profile and the characteristics of the

labor market of economists who graduated from the Economics course at Unioeste-Cascavel. It is the result of descriptive research, with data collection through an electronic questionnaire in a specific platform and subsequent compilation, critical analysis, and presentation of the collected data. The universe of the research is the graduates of the Economics course and was carried out through contacts by e-mails and social media, in approximately 35% of the total graduates. As a result of the research, it is observed that the employment relationship with a formal contract prevails in the private sector (50%), followed by public employees, self-employed and employers; they are occupied in the various types of companies, predominantly the national private ones (54%), followed by public service, public company, and multinationals; work in large companies (50%), followed by microenterprises and medium and small enterprises; As for the economic sector, the services sector stands out (81%), followed by the secondary and primary sectors. The graduates reported the importance of graduation to improve the income obtained and the achievement of skills necessary for entry and success in the labor market.

Keywords: Professional profile, Graduate, Economist, Labor market.

1 INTRODUCTION

The course of Economic Sciences of the State University of Western Paraná-UNIOESTE was created in 1980, in the then Faculty of Sciences and Letters of Cascavel-FECIVEL, which was transformed into the current UNIOESTE, in 1994. The first graduating class graduated in July 1984. Since then and until the end of the year 2020, 896 students have completed this course, becoming bachelors in Economic Sciences.

On the one hand, a bachelor's degree in Economic Sciences is the first condition for exercising the profession of Economist, as defined by law: "The professional designation of Economist (...) is private of bachelors in Economic Sciences, graduated in Brazil, by the Laws in force" (Art. 1, Law No. 1,411/1951).

On the other hand, considering that the field of professional activity and the activities inherent to the profession of Economist are vast, as defined by the current Professional Regulation

(COFECON); and, taking into account this relatively large number of professionals graduated in the course of Economic Sciences of Unioeste, the problematic of this work consists of the following questions: What is the origin and family characteristics of the students of Economics at Unioeste - Cascavel? What factors influenced you in choosing this course? What kind of studies have you done or were necessary to deepen your education, skills, and professional competence? What is the degree of insertion of the graduates of the course in the labor market? What types of bonds do they have in the exercise of their professional activities? What are the natures, types of companies, and sectors of economic activity in which they operate? What are the characteristics of the remuneration of these professionals who graduated from Unioeste? In summary, what are the professional profiles and characteristics of the labor market of economists who graduated from Unioeste – Cascavel?

To seek the answers to these questions, the main objective of the research was to identify the professional profile and the characteristics of the labor market of the economists of the Economics course of Unioeste, Cascavel campus. Secondly, it was also sought to establish a communication channel with the graduates of this course, to promote interaction and integration between the various classes, in future academic and/or festive and cultural events that will be promoted in due course.

This study updates and expands the data of the research conducted with the graduates in 2005, on the occasion of the 25th year of the creation of the course (LOPES; RAIZEL, 2006). Its importance lies mainly in providing subsidies for the permanent evaluation of the undergraduate course and obtaining *insights* for the realization of projects aimed at the improvement of teaching.

2 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

Considering the nature of the objectives listed for the development of the research, a descriptive approach was used, as it is a description of the profile of the graduates for the establishment of relations with the positioning of the bachelors in the labor market (LAKATOS; MARCONI, 2003), outlining general perspectives on the characteristics of the graduates.

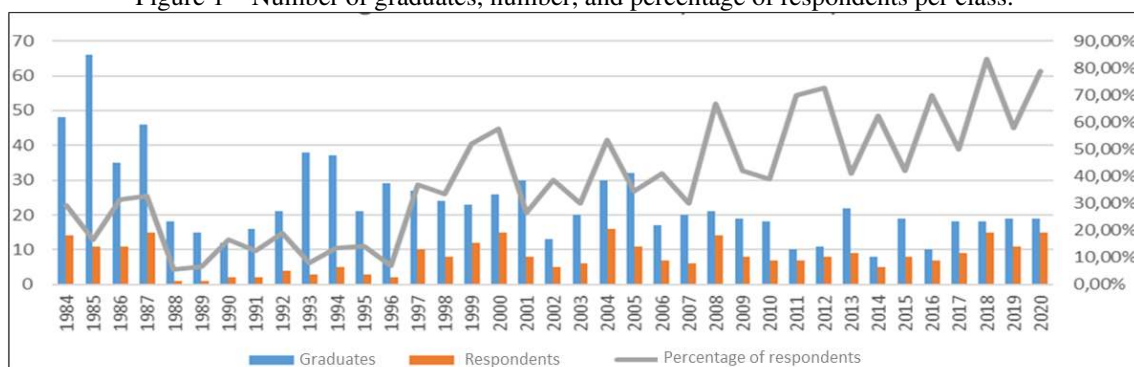
To identify the profile and characterize the process of insertion in the labor market of graduates of the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences of Unioeste, Cascavel campus, data were collected using an electronic questionnaire, in a specific platform for the creation and analysis of forms.

The first contact with the graduates of the course was made by electronic means, e-mail, and social media, to consult them about their willingness to participate in the research. Once the acceptance was obtained, a link to access the survey form was forwarded by e-mail or WhatsApp. The questionnaire was elaborated with 54 questions, in basically three axes: the characterization of the profile of the graduates, the insertion of the egress in the labor market, and, also, the relationship of the egress with the graduation. Before the definitive research, a pre-test was carried out, with nine

randomly chosen graduates from different classes, who contributed suggestions for improvements in the form.

The research universe comprises 876 graduates, from classes formed in the period from 1980 to 2020. Of the total number of graduates, it was possible to obtain a response from 301 bachelors, through *e-mail*, social networks, and messaging applications, corresponding to 34.36% of the total. This percentage is similar to other studies conducted with a similar objective, such as Lopes and Raizel (2006), who obtained 20.86% of responses, and Brandalise et al. (2013), who obtained 27.65% of responses. It is worth mentioning that the sample obtained has representatives of all classes of graduates, which attributes greater robustness and consistency to the inferences made. Figure 1 shows the distribution of graduates and respondents.

Figure 1 – Number of graduates, number, and percentage of respondents per class.



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

Therefore, given the limitations concerning this type of case study, it is an adequate sample to meet the proposed objectives, highlighting that the results discussed are restricted to the available sample. Data collection took place between May and August 2022, in the 42nd year of the course's creation. After that, the data were tabulated and analyzed, through descriptive statistics and joint evaluation between the variables. For presentation purposes, tables and graphs were used, which show the results obtained.

3 THE CREATION AND INSTITUTIONAL TRAJECTORY OF THE ECONOMIC SCIENCES COURSE

FECIVEL – Faculty of Sciences and Letters of Cascavel was created as a result of a long debate between political authorities and representatives of the local society in general. Initially, the Fundação Universidade Oeste do Paraná-FUOP was established, through Municipal Law No. 885/71 and Municipal Decree No. 356/71, which authorized the creation and statute of the Foundation to install a School of Higher Education in Cascavel. The first authorized courses were: Degree in Letters, Degree

in Pedagogy, Degree in Science of the First Degree, and Degree in Mathematics. The inaugural lecture was delivered on August 16, 1972. Therefore, the Institution already has exactly 50 years of history.

The course Economic Sciences, then FECIVEL, was the ninth course of the Institution. It was created on September 15, 1980 (Opinion 059-EEC) and authorized to operate through Federal Decree No. 85,141/82. The recognition was given through Opinion No. 191/82-EEC and Ministerial Ordinance No. 479, of December 1982.

Through an exclusive extemporaneous entrance exam, the course began classes immediately, still in September 1980. Initially, the then-new FECIVEL course had a duration of 4 years, with the offer of 75 annual vacancies, and classes held at night, given the following justification: "based on a study designed to support the creation of the course and considering the regional socioeconomic characteristics and the profile of potential students, mostly from families that needed to work for the sustenance of their studies, the operating shift chosen for the course was the night period" (LOPES, 2009).

In 1984, through Opinion No. 375/84 and Resolution No. 11/84 of the Federal Council of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture (CFE/MEC), a new minimum curriculum of the Economics course was introduced in the country. This new regulation of the courses of Economic Sciences was the result of studies within the scope of the Secretariat of Higher Education, of the Ministry of Education (SESu / MEC), with the participation of the representative entities of the economists, coordinated by the Federal Council of Economics - COFECON, with the due participation of the courses of Economics of the country, and FECIVEL also participated in the discussions of this curricular reform.

Due to the new regulation, FECIVEL implemented a new full curriculum, in 1986, with the introduction of new disciplines and rearrangement of others. Mainly, it is worth mentioning, the introduction of the mandatory Monograph for the conclusion of the course. From then on, the course also began to be offered in two periods, morning and night, with the same total number of vacancies, but being allocated 45 vacancies for the night and 30 for the day, with a minimum duration of 10 semesters, 5 years, which was also one of the requirements of Resolution No. 11/84. For a detailed overview of all the curricular reforms and changes in the curriculum of the Economics course at Fecivel/Unioeste, up to 2009, see Lopes (2009).

In 1990, there was a new curricular reformulation, in which the main change made was the transformation of the course into an annual serial regime, authorized by Opinion No. 268/89, of the Federal Council of Education, in addition to the introduction of some new disciplines and rearrangement of others, aiming to improve the curriculum of the course.

At the end of 1994, FECIVEL merged with other colleges in the western region: FACITOL (Toledo), FACIMAR (Marechal Cândido Rondon), and FACISA (Foz do Iguaçu), which was the result of a process of struggle that began in 1986, and culminated in the formation of the State University of Western Paraná – UNIOESTE.

At that time, considering that the campuses of Cascavel and Toledo offered the course of Economic Sciences, a single curriculum was implemented in 1995 and, for administrative and pedagogical purposes, the courses were incorporated into a single Department of Economics, a situation in which it remained during the period from 1996 to 1999. Another important change was that, from the recognition of UNIOESTE, in 1995, the course was again offered only at night and with only 50 vacancies, on each *campus*. The justification for the elimination of the course in the daytime and the reduction of vacancies was that UNIOESTE "needed to release the workload for the implementation of new courses demanded by the regional community" (PPC 1997).

However, in addition to the above changes, important changes were also made in the political-pedagogical project and curriculum to adapt them to the determinations of the new LDB-Law of National Base Guidelines, implemented in 1996 that allowed some flexibility in the composition of the curricula. Thus, new disciplines were incorporated, changes were made to the workload for less in some, for more in others, reordering of the sequence in the grid, and, mainly, the introduction of Complementary Academic Activities that would be an important instrument of insertion of the students, through extracurricular activities.

The next reformulation of the Full Curriculum of the Economics course came to occur in 1999, due to the new Statute and Regiment of UNIOESTE, implemented in 1998, which established that the courses repeated in the Institution, as was the case of the courses of Economic Sciences, could have different grades and emphases. In this way, each campus elaborated its political-pedagogical project of the course and specific curriculum.

It is important to point out that in the Pedagogical Project of the 1999 Course, the principles and guidelines of Resolution No. 11/84 were still maintained, that is, the course should: be committed to the study of the Brazilian reality, without prejudice to a solid theoretical-historical and instrumental formation; to be characterized by methodological pluralism, in coherence with the plural character of Economic Science, formed by diverse currents of thought and paradigms; In the teaching of the various units of study, the fundamental importance of interrelations linking economic phenomena to the social whole in which they are inserted should be emphasized; finally, in the course of learning; It should be transmitted to the student, throughout the course, the ethical sense of social responsibility that will guide the exercise of his profession (PPC 1999). This was the desired profile of the course and of the professional economist who wanted to be formed, from that curricular instrument.

The next reformulation of the Pedagogical Project and the curriculum of the course occurred in 2007, to meet the requirements of the new National Curricular Guidelines of the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences, discussed and forwarded by the representative entities of the academic community and the professional economists that were approved by CNE/CES Opinion No. 95/207 and instituted by Resolution No. 04/2007, of the National Council of Education.

The new curriculum, gradually implemented in 2008, contemplated the exclusion of some disciplines and inclusion of others, adequacy of the workload, reorganization of the programmatic contents of some disciplines, and reordering of disciplines throughout the course, among others, all taking into account the development of economic science itself and the needs to improve the training of the professional economist. There was an increase in the total workload, the duration of 5 years, and the 50 annual vacancies were maintained. However, in general terms, the guiding principles and foundations of the old Opinion No. 375/84 and Resolution No. 11/84 were maintained, therefore not changing the profile of the course and the economist it sought to train.

Finally, in the year 2022, the Pedagogical Project of the Course-PPC and Curriculum were reformulated, for gradual implementation from 2023. This reformulation aims to adapt the PPC to the new normative requirements established nationally, such as guidelines for extension in higher education, accessibility, regulatory standards of research, human rights, and education of ethnic-racial relations, with the introduction of the discipline Contemporary Themes I and II to meet these themes, standards for environmental education and creation of the discipline of Environmental Economics, standards on virtual academic information, etc.

However, it should be noted that the main change implemented this year was the reduction of the minimum period of completion of the course, which since its creation had always remained with a minimum time of 5 years, now it has been reduced to 4 years, maintaining the night shift.

Among other arguments, the main one is that the other campuses of Unioeste, Toledo, and Francisco Beltrão, which offer the same course, had already promoted the reduction of the minimum period of payment to 4 years. Therefore, the reduction in the Cascavel campus aims to standardize the procedure between the campuses to facilitate the transfers of internal students to Unioeste and alleviate the difficulties of adaptation of the curricular grids and equivalence of the disciplines.

From what has been exposed, it is observed that throughout these four decades of existence, the course of Economic Sciences of FECIVEL/UNIOESTE, through its rectors, directors, teachers, and other education professionals involved, has always sought to adapt to the requirements of the national curricular guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Culture - MEC and other national and state regulations. It is known that these, in turn, reflect the economic, social, and educational demands, which are captured by the representative entities of the professional category, such as the National

Association of Undergraduate Courses in Economics - ANGE, the National Association of Graduate Centers in Economics - ANPEC, the Federal Council of Economics - COFECON and the National Federation of Economists - FENECON and, mainly, by the Higher Education Institutions themselves – HEIs that, in the teaching-learning process, capture the economic and social mutations and trigger processes of educational changes adaptive to the new social and economic reality perceived.

Thus, it can be stated that the constant qualitative changes of the Pedagogical Project and the Curriculum of the course have always had as their main objective to accompany these transformations and have contributed to ensuring a better theoretical and instrumental preparation for its students, according to the profile of economist expected to face the challenges of the labor market at the same time that must also be prepared and committed to the needs of the country's society.

One of the necessary conditions to raise the quality of teaching and develop the production of knowledge is to have a good cadre of teachers and adequate facilities to develop teaching-learning. In this regard, there is a great transformation from the origins of the course to the present moment.

The teaching staff of the then FECIVEL, initially counted on valiant teachers, obstinate people, who, regardless of their formal qualification, in the vast majority only with graduation, were willing not to measure efforts, and, through hard and competent work, carried out the project of implementation and development of higher education in Cascavel. With the unfolding of time, these same professors, imbued to verticalize their training and teaching, were looking for alternatives to attend graduate studies in other educational centers and, subsequently, especially after the transformation into a university in fact, implanting in Unioeste itself, specialization, master's and doctoral courses and, in this way, gradually increased the qualification of the teaching staff.

Certainly, the successful trajectory of FECIVEL/UNIOESTE and the course of Economic Sciences can be attributed to the tireless work of these pioneers, teachers, directors, employees, and students who, in their time, overcame difficulties and limitations of all kinds, facing challenges to build an institution that has national renown and is proud of the western region and the state of Paraná.

Table 1 shows the teaching staff of the first four years of the course and their respective qualifications and area of training. It is verified that all the pioneer professors had only the graduation in their respective areas of training, which covered not only Economics, but also Accounting, Law, Mathematics, Administration, Letters, Informatics, Sociology, and History. In addition, all these professionals worked professionally in other non-educational activities, however, they were willing to collaborate with the institution and the course offering their knowledge as a teacher, in their respective fields of activity. This was the profile of the pioneering professors of higher education in the newborn FECIVEL.

Table 1 - Professors of the Economics Course – FECIVEL 1980-1984

Ari Carlos Cantelle	Jaime Fabro	Rogério Coelho
Carlos Alberi Lorenzatto	Janete Maria Ghiggi	Rui Lino Marcolin
Edgar Prado Lopes Filho	José Maria Manso Vieira	Sebastião Afonso de Mattos
Edison Pietrobelli	Luiz Fernando Linero	Takao Koike
Énio Carlos Fenner	Luiz Gonzaga de Andrade	Terezinho Lino de Oliveira
Erasto Castilhos de Mellos	Neicyr de Almeida	Ubiraci de Araújo
Henrique Carrer	Paulo Hiroyuki Beppu	Wilson Carlos Kuhn
Ilka Biankin Viana	Paulo Roberto C. Nogueira	

Source: Research data.

Currently, as can be seen in Chart 2, the teaching staff linked to the Collegiate Course of Economic Sciences is composed of 13 economists, 3 with master's degrees and 10 with master's and doctoral degrees. In addition, it has professors from other collegiates, masters, and doctors, who teach disciplines in the area of Mathematics, Accounting, Administration, Law, and Statistics. It is worth mentioning that, almost entirely, the current staff of professors has an exclusive dedication to the Institution. Thus, in addition to teaching, they can also dedicate themselves to research and extension, a distinct characteristic of that pioneering teaching staff, dedicated only to teaching, for extended hours after their working day in the main activity. Therefore, there is a great transformation in the profile of the teaching staff, reflecting the changes that the course and the educational institution Fecivel/Unioeste went through over the period and the economic transformation of the region covered by Unioeste, the state of Paraná and Brazil.

Table 2 - Professors of the Economics Course - CCSA/Unioeste-Cvel – 2022

Andréia Polizeli Sambatti	Maria da Piedade Araújo	Rosângela Maria Pontili
Carla Cristiane N. Antunes	Mariângela Alice Pieruccini	Sérgio Lopes
Edineia Lopes da Cruz Souza	Pierre Joseph Nelcide	Vander Piaia
Kátia Fabiane Rodrigues	Ronaldo Bulhões	
Luciano de Souza Costa	Rosana Kátia Nazzari	

Source: Research data

As for the number of students, since its creation in 1980 until the end of 2020, 876 students completed the course of Economic Sciences at Fecivel/Unioeste. In this year 2022, there are 17 new graduates, totaling, therefore, 893 bachelors graduates in this course, throughout existence.

The objective of rescuing the institutional trajectory of the course of Economic Sciences of Unioeste-Cascavel, in this section, through the analysis of the pedagogical project and the curriculum, is to demonstrate how the Institution has always been attentive to the changes and new demands of society to offer a course compatible with the new professional requirements, through the continuous improvement of the political-pedagogical project and the Curriculum, subjects and syllabus, and better teaching conditions. The objective is to provide professional economists with extensive knowledge of economic science and the economic and social reality of the country and the world, as observed in the professional profile defined in the pedagogical project of the course. This, in turn, is embodied in three

basic pillars: theoretical, historical and instrumental, which reflect the national curricular guidelines and the laws and other norms that regulate the economist profession at the national level.

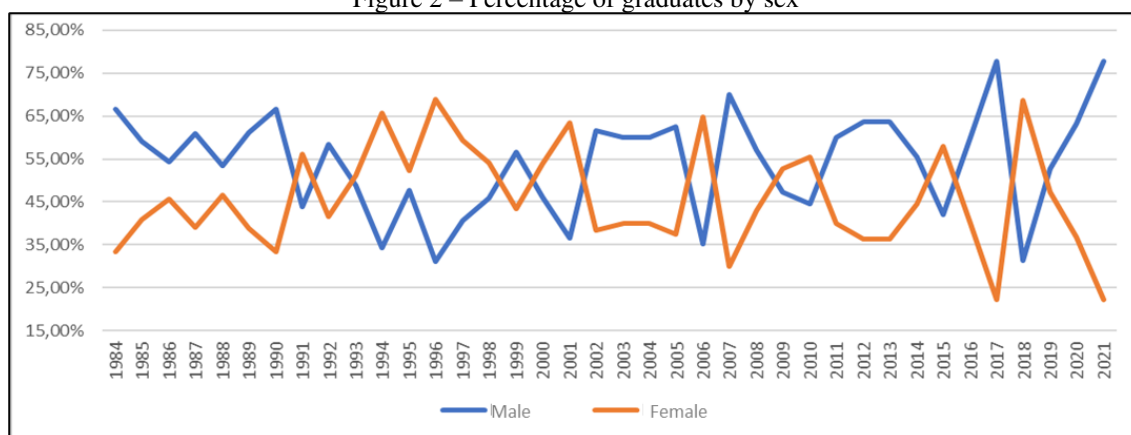
The result of this work and professional training is, in large part, what can be deduced from the analysis of the research data that sought to evaluate the profile and insertion of economists who graduated from Unioeste Cascavel in the labor market, in the following section.

4 THE PROFILE OF THE GRADUATES OF THE UNDERGRADUATE COURSE IN ECONOMIC SCIENCES OF UNIOESTE - CASCAVEL

4.1 IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROFILE OF GRADUATES OF THE ECONOMICS COURSE

Since the beginning of the course activities in 1980, 876 Bachelors in Economic Sciences have been graduated until the 2020 Academic Year. It should be noted that of this total, there were 466 male bachelors (53.2%) and 410 female bachelors (46.8%). In 2017, there was the highest number of graduates (77.78% graduates and 22.22% graduates), while in 1996, there was the highest number of graduates (68.97% graduates and 31.03% graduates). As shown in Figure 2, there is no way to identify a trend over the years; Although, on average, there is a greater number of male graduates (54.15%), this measure of central tendency is close to the equality framework.

Figure 2 – Percentage of graduates by sex



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

In the sample obtained, 164 male respondents (54.49%) and 137 female respondents (45.51%) were obtained, maintaining a proportion similar to the universe of the research and ensuring representativeness for data analysis. In addition, the age of the respondents varies between 24 and 79 years, with an average age of 45 years. Considering the respondents, it was observed that most (56.81%) enter the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences with up to 20 years; Another quarter of the graduates entered between 21 and 25 years of age.

The graduates were asked about their respective states of origin. Approximately three-quarters of the respondents came from the state of Paraná, while the others came from the other states of the Brazilian South and, to a lesser extent, from the Southeast and Midwest regions; only one respondent comes from abroad, as summarized in Table 1.

It is also noteworthy that 82.33% and 86.05% of the fathers and mothers of the graduates, respectively, come from the states of the Brazilian South, especially Rio Grande do Sul (105 respondents - 34.88%), in the case of fathers, and Paraná, in the case of mothers (109 respondents, 36.21%). The other parents of the graduates come mainly from the Southeast (13.29% of the fathers and 10.30% of the mothers).

Regarding the current state of residence of the graduates, almost 90% of the respondents continue to live in the state of Paraná. As summarized in Table 1, the others are distributed in states such as Santa Catarina (10), São Paulo (5), Mato Grosso (3), Rio Grande do Sul (3), Distrito Federal (2), Pará (2), Rondônia (2), Bahia (1), Goiás (1), Mato Grosso do Sul (1) and Rio de Janeiro (1), in addition to abroad (2).

Table 1 – Origin and current residence of graduates of the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences

State of origin/current residence	Origin		Current residence	
	Respondents	Percentage	Respondents	Percentage
Parana	229	76,08%	268	89,04%
Santa Catarina	28	9,30%	10	3,32%
Rio Grande do Sul	27	8,97%	3	1,00%
Other states (Southeast)	14	4,65%	6	1,99%
Other states (Midwest)	2	0,66%	7	2,33%
Bahia	0	0,00%	1	0,33%
Other states (North)	0	0,00%	4	1,33%
Outside	1	0,33%	2	0,66%
Total	301	100,00%	301	100,00%

Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

In this aspect, the previous analyses indicate that the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences exerts influence factors for other states, parallel to the fact that many graduates remain in Paraná, and the graduation and the relations established from then on are a factor of fixation in the state.

Regarding the family life of the graduates, 207 are married (68.77%), 66 are single (21.93%), 23 are divorced or divorced (7.64%), and 5 are widowed (1.66%). In addition, 104 respondents do not have children (34.55%), 66 have one child (21.93%), 95 have two children (31.56%) and 36 (11.96%) have three or more descendants.

Regarding the education of the parents of the graduates, it was observed that only 14.62% of the parents of graduates have completed higher education, a result similar to the number of mothers of

graduates with the same education, which is 10.63%. Most fathers and mothers of graduates have, at most, incomplete elementary school, 40.20% in the case of fathers and 36.21% in the case of mothers. Still, there are 1.66% and 2.99% of fathers and mothers of graduates, respectively, who are not literate.

It is noteworthy that the professions of the parents of the graduates were very diverse. Among the professions exercised by parents, there is an emphasis on workers in agriculture, also as drivers/truckers, merchants, entrepreneurs, carpenters, mechanics and bricklayers, and only two respondents reported that their parents were economists. About the professions exercised by mothers, agricultural workers, teachers, seamstresses, household caregivers/housewives, businesswomen and janitors; No information was found on mothers of graduates who worked as economists.

In general, it is observed that the economists who graduated from Unioeste - Cascavel make up the first generation with Higher Education in their respective families. In this sense, although the direct encouragement of parents for the choice of the course may not be a reality in the course, the impetus for the alteration of the family reality may be a factor that explains the insertion in the course.

In this sense, when asked about the reasons that led to the choice of graduation in Economics, only 8.6% point to the influence of the family as a preponderant factor. Meanwhile, the expectation for a good job motivated 13% of graduates to enter the undergraduate program in Economic Sciences. In any case, the greatest motivation for choosing the course is the intellectual affinity with the theme, which encouraged 29.9% of the graduates, and intellectual motivation, such as curiosity for the course, encouraged another 10.6%.

According to Table 2, the relationship "candidate x vacancy" in the course is also shown as an attraction, as it is a night course, which allows students to work during the course, and only two graduates reported not having worked throughout the graduation. Another highlight is the notoriety of economists on social media, which encouraged almost 6% of graduates to enter training in Economic Sciences.

Table 2 – Motivation for the choice by the graduates of the Undergraduate Course

Motivation for choosing the course	Respondents	Percentage
Influence of friends	15	4,98%
Influence of family/relatives	26	8,64%
Indication of the company in which he worked	11	3,65%
Indication of vocational test	3	1,00%
I wanted to take the course out of intellectual affinity	90	29,90%
Candidate x vacancy ratio: easier access	31	10,30%
Curiosity about the course	32	10,63%
By seeing and listening to Interviews of Economists on TV, Newspaper, among others	18	5,98%
Dissemination of the course by Cofecon/CoreconPR or IES	2	0,66%
The expectation of a good job	39	12,96%
Other	34	11,30%
Total:	301	100,00%

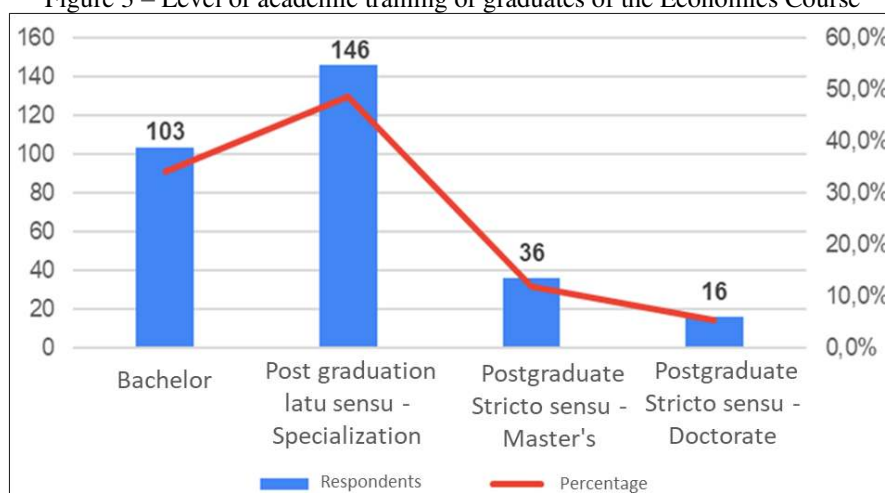
Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

As a point of attention, it is observed that only two students report having joined motivated by the disclosure by the Federal and Regional Councils of Economics, as well as by the course. In this sense, it is imperative that, simultaneously, Cofecon and Corecons intensify the dissemination of professionals to society and that the course repeatedly promotes actions such as trade fairs and visits to schools, showing the possibilities of training in this field of knowledge, as a professional and labor market opportunity.

It is also important to evaluate how the trainees continued after completing the course. Most of the graduates continued to study, pursuing academic life in various specializations. Of the total respondents, 146 (48.5%) completed *lato sensu* post-graduation, such as specializations and MBA; another 17.28% continued studies in *stricto sensu post-graduation*, 36 of which have a master's degree and another 16, a doctor's degree.

As shown in Figure 3, 103 graduates, which corresponds to 34.22% of the respondents, maintained a bachelor's degree. However, it should be noted that most of them reported having other degrees (Bachelor of Law and Psychology, Degree in Mathematics), or even specific certifications of performance.

Figure 3 – Level of academic training of graduates of the Economics Course



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

We highlight the certifications of Anbima - Brazilian Association of Financial and Capital Markets Entities, such as CPA-10 (Anbima Professional Certification – Series 10), CPA-20 (ditto, Series 20) and CEA (Anbima Certification of Investment Specialists). 18, 20 and 6 graduates reported having such certifications, respectively.

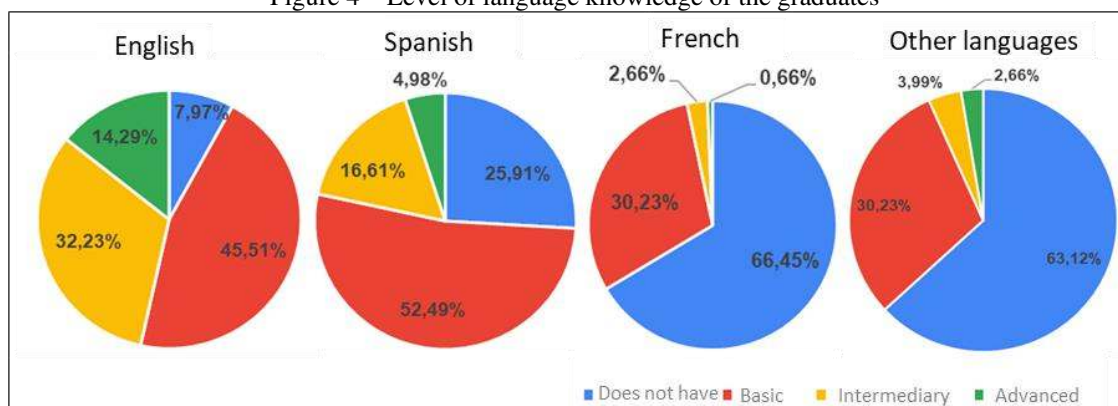
Two other graduates claimed to hold the CFP® (*Certified Financial Planner*), which is an international certification for financial planners. Other graduates reported having certifications in Ancord - National Association of Brokers and Susep - Superintendence of Private Insurance, all of which are certifications for acting in the financial market. Others indicated certifications in the area of expertise, customs and tax training.

In general, such information reveals the constant demand of the labor market for training and the need for continuing education. The course allows an overview of the various possibilities, and it is up to the graduates to decide which area to follow and then seek postgraduate courses or obtain certification to enter each niche.

The graduates were also asked about the skills developed over the years and what are important differentials in the labor market. About languages, we asked about the level of knowledge of English, Spanish and French. Only 24 respondents, which corresponds to 7.97%, do not know the English language, while 45.51% have basic knowledge, 32.23% claim to have intermediate knowledge and 14.29% have fluency in the language.

Regarding the other Latin languages, 74.09% of the respondents reported having at least basic knowledge in Spanish, which corresponds to 223 graduates. In French, approximately one-third - 101 graduates - reported mastering at least the basic level of the language, as shown in Figure 4. It is also noteworthy that 111 graduates, which corresponds to 36.88% of the respondents, reported that they know other languages.

Figure 4 – Level of language knowledge of the graduates



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

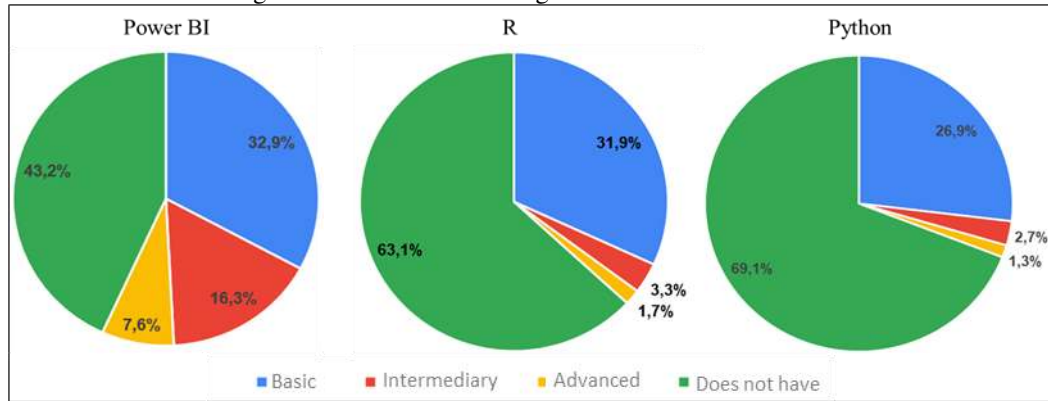
Note that there is a concern of graduates to master other languages, which reflects the reality of the globalized world in which we live. In addition, this knowledge is imperative so that one can often have access to news, articles and other sources of information essential for analysis and decision-making by economists in their most diverse areas of activity.

Regarding computer knowledge, which includes text editors (such as Microsoft Office Word), spreadsheet editors (Microsoft Office Excel) and Internet browsing, almost all graduates reported knowing, even if basic, in its use (except for five, seven and two respondents, respectively).

It was also asked about the knowledge related to the manipulation of statistical *software* and linked to programming languages, such as Power BI, R and Python, a requirement increasingly present in the labor market. According to Figure 5, the most widespread software, that is, with the largest number of graduates who have some kind of knowledge about it, Power BI; In addition, it is the software with the largest number of people with basic, intermediate and advanced knowledge about the others.

R and Python software are less well known, and the vast majority of those who have some knowledge about it, master only basic functions. It is also noteworthy that it is the most recent graduates who have mastery of such *software*.

Figure 5 – Level of knowledge about statistical software



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

In this aspect, even if there is no specific discipline for manipulation of such software, it is possible that gradually its use is incorporated into the course disciplines; More than that, the collegiate bodies can promote more and more continuing education activities and learning tools that can be used for economic analysis.

4.2 CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PROCESS OF INSERTION OF GRADUATES IN THE LABOR MARKET

In the second axis of the research, the graduates were asked about their insertion in the labor market, in aspects such as sector, size of the company and work bond, income obtained and relationship with the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences.

It should be noted that of the 301 surveyed, 299 worked during the course. Of the total, 52.16% reported that they worked only in employment with an employment relationship; Another 7.64% reported that they worked in a paid internship. Approximately 35%, in turn, interspersed their occupations during the course between volunteer work, adolescent/young apprentice, paid internship, research/extension/monitoring scholarship, entrepreneurs, public servants and/or self-employed.

When asked about the relationship between the company and graduation, 71.76% reported that there was no interference from the company. On the other hand, 14.29% reported that the company helped during the course. Of the 301 graduates, 6 reported that they entered the course at the suggestion of the company, while another 6 reported that they suffer a negative interference from the company. Still, 4 others reported that the company did not know about the graduation.

Of all graduates, only 5.3% reported not being currently employed, while 84.1% indicate professional activity and another 10.6% are already retired. In the case of those who were voluntarily or involuntarily unemployed and of retirees, information was requested based on their last job.

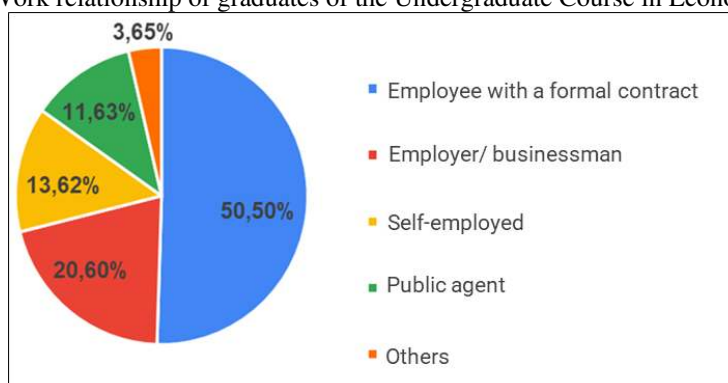
The majority (57.8%) perform different professional activities in functions and types of activities from those they had when they completed the course, while 20.3% reported that their

professional activity is the same as when they completed the course, being mostly graduates who completed the course in the last ten years. Another 21.9% indicate that their professional activities are different from those they performed when they completed the course but with similar functions and types of activities.

Most professionals work with a weekly workload of 40 hours (118 graduates - 39.2%) or 44 hours (63 graduates - 20.9%). A little more than a quarter work flexible hours (79 graduates - 26.2%), while the remaining 13.6% (41 graduates) work in different regimes (remote work, 20, 30 or 35 hours).

Regarding the established work contract, approximately half of the graduates perform their professional activities as salaried employees with a formal contract and another 11.63% are civil servants. Already one-third of the graduates are self-employed, entrepreneurs and / or employers. Thus, in a certain way, it is inferred that the bachelors can exercise the profession in the most varied areas, as shown in Figure 6.

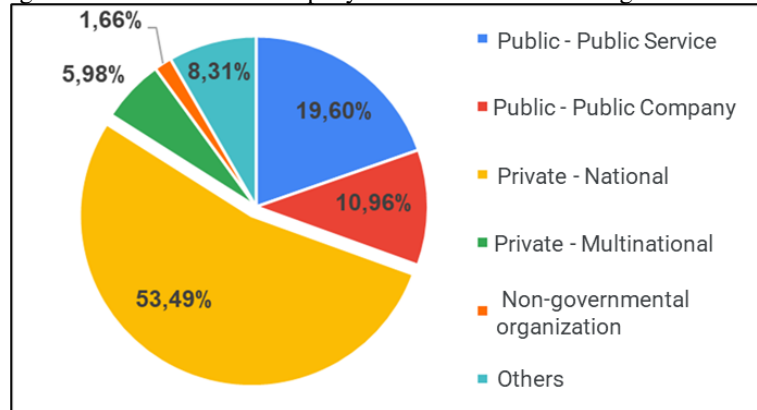
Figure 6 – Work relationship of graduates of the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

This understanding is corroborated by the fact that graduates work in companies of various natures, especially national private companies (53.49%), companies and public institutions, whether they are linked to the public service (19.60%) or public companies (10.96%), multinationals (5.98%) and Non-Governmental Organizations - NGOs (1.66%) (Figure 7). Part of the graduates responded to other organizational natures, such as mixed economy companies, credit unions, autonomous social services and private companies abroad.

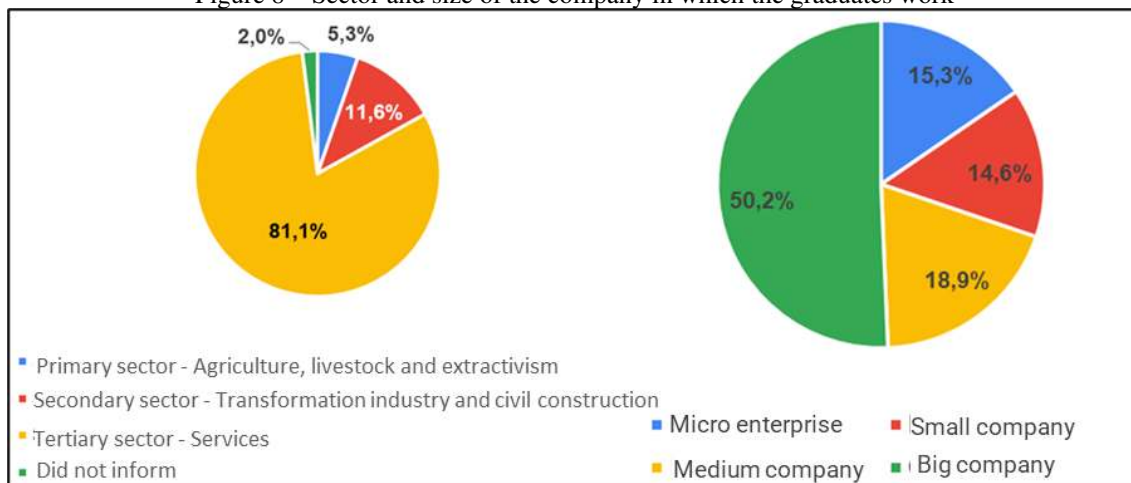
Figure 7 – Nature of the company/institution in which the graduates work



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

Concerning the sector of economic activity in which the graduates perform their functions, 5.3% are in the Primary Sector - agriculture, livestock and extractivist, 11.6% are in the Secondary Sector - manufacturing industry and civil construction and the vast majority (81.1%) work in the Tertiary Sector - trade and services. It should be noted that 6 graduates (2%) did not answer this question.

Figure 8 – Sector and size of the company in which the graduates work



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

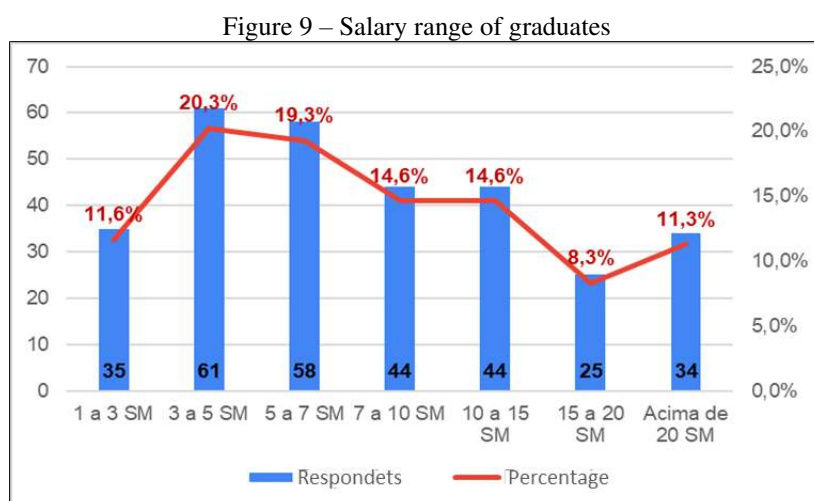
As for the size of the companies, it is noteworthy that they are large companies (50.2%), followed by medium-sized companies (18.9%), microenterprises (15.3%) and small companies (14.6%).

Because it is a heterogeneous sample in terms of age and time of completion of the course, the time in which graduates are working in companies and institutions showed remarkable variability. Almost a quarter of graduates have been in its institutions for more than two decades. In the case of

the other ranges of activity, the percentage of respondents ranged from 8.3% (up to one year in the company) to 17.3% (between 10 years, exclusive, and 15 years, inclusive, in the company).

As well as the time of operation, the salary range of the graduates tends to present great variability. In the case of the data under analysis, it is observed that the salary range does not depend only on the time, but also on the functions performed. Figure 9 shows the distribution of graduates by salary range.

Based on IBGE data (2019), it is possible to establish the reference that approximately 90% of the Brazilian population receives less than three minimum wages. In this case, it is observed that, in the case of economics graduates, 11.6% receive less than three minimum wages, which is the same as saying that 87.4% of respondents are among the 10% of the Brazilian population with higher incomes. It should also be noted that of the 35 respondents who receive less than three minimum wages, 12 are graduated less than a year ago and another 16 are graduated between one and five years.



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

The salary range in which most graduates fit is between three and five minimum wages, encompassing approximately one fifth of bachelors. It is a range that encompasses several functions and positions, but more than half (33 of 61 graduates) of graduates with this salary range have graduated in the last five years.

In the following salary ranges, of those who receive between 5 and 10 minimum wages, there are another 102 bachelors (61 receive between 5 and 7 reference wages and another 58 receive up to 10 minimum wages). Of this total, 60 work in their companies, between 6 and 20 years old, exercising positions such as administrative agents, analysts, advisors, bankers, consultants, directors and coordinators, managers, teachers and executive secretaries. Four-fifths of these professionals have specializations of various natures or professional certifications.

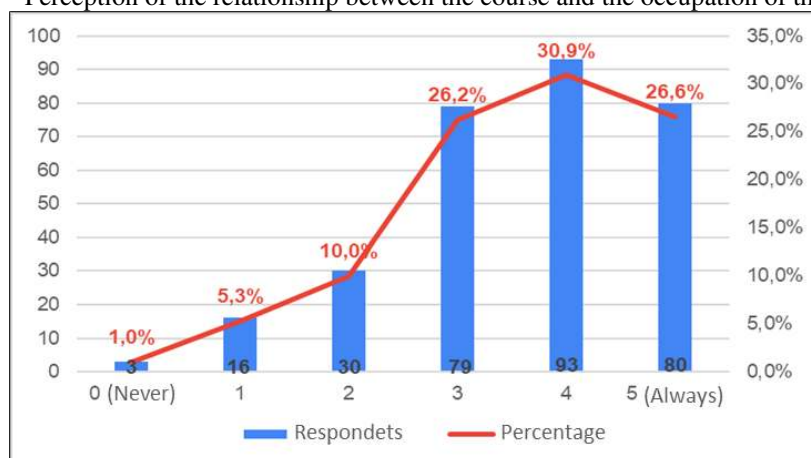
Also according to IBGE data (2019), those who receive more than ten minimum wages are among the 5% share of the population with the highest income. This is the case for approximately one-third of respondents. Of the 103 bachelors in this salary range, 45 have worked in their respective companies for more than 20 years, while another 31 are between 10 and 20 years in their organizations. It also includes banking professionals, consultants, experts, directors and coordinators, entrepreneurs, managers and teachers.

In general, it is observed that the Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences has enabled access, directly or indirectly, to the labor market and important employment opportunities for its graduates. To evaluate this statement, the third axis of questions will be evaluated, which deals with the relationship between the graduate, inserted in their professional context and their Undergraduate Course in Economic Sciences.

In this aspect, the graduates were asked: "On a scale from 0 (never) to 5 (always), how often do you perceive relationships between the learning provided by the course of Economic Sciences and your occupation?". As shown in Figure 10, 57.5% of the respondents assigned the value 4 (often) or 5 (always), and only 1.00% said they had never noticed the relationships between the course and their occupation.

When asked about the graduates' perception of the course contribution, 31.2% indicated that it contributed to achieving a better job, 19.3% indicated that the course made it possible to obtain a functional or salary promotion, another 17.9% reported the contribution of the course to become an entrepreneur and 15.0% reported that the course made it possible to remain in the job with better prospects, demonstrating the importance of training for their current occupations.

Figure 10 – Perception of the relationship between the course and the occupation of the graduates



Source: Prepared by the authors (2022), from the research data.

In terms of salary, 73% of the graduates (220 respondents) reported an improvement in salary after completing the course, and 92 respondents indicated that this salary change was not significant,

while 128 reported that the increase was significant in their perception. About the time in which this change occurred, 231 graduates chose to respond. Of these, 181 (78.35% of the respondents) reported that the salary increase occurred in the first five years of graduation, and of these, 34 graduates (14.72% of the respondents) indicated that the change occurred in the first year.

In more specific terms, 74.1% of the graduates agree or agree with the statement that the course contributed to acquiring more specific knowledge in their respective areas of work; 73.4% indicated agreement with the statement that the course enabled the improvement of attitudes and behaviors, as well as the achievement of greater leadership in the workplace; 74.4% agree that the course enabled the improvement of performance to achieve the expected results at work; and 67.8% indicate that the course made it possible to innovate in processes or products at work.

Overall, 57% of respondents rated that the course had an "excellent" contribution to stimulating critical thinking, while 40% rated such a contribution as "good". Regarding the contribution on ethical principles, 50% indicated it as "excellent" and 44% as "good". Finally, concerning the contribution to the reflection on citizenship, 88% indicated the contribution of the course as excellent or good.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article aimed to present the professional profile and the characteristics of the labor market of the Bacharéis graduates of the Economics course of Unioeste, Cascavel campus. Its importance is revealed not only as a record of the history of the course, but also as a way to provide subsidies for its permanent evaluation and generate observations that guide the improvement of teaching

To achieve this objective, we initially report the institutional trajectory of the Economics course at Unioeste, Cascavel campus, since its creation in 1980. In this period, there were several changes in the curriculum and the political-pedagogical projects of the course, aiming not only to comply with legal regulations, but mainly to improve the course, considering the inevitable changes in the economic, regional and global reality, as well as changes in the labor market.

Still, it was highlighted that the trajectory of the course is also a reflection of the qualification and improvement of the teaching staff that, as it has become specialized, has become increasingly capable of promoting a broad social formation, allowing academics to train with a solid base and with theoretical and instrumental foundations, allowing the occupation of various social spaces.

Under this aspect, it was found that, over the period under analysis, 876 bachelors in Economic Sciences were graduated from Unioeste-Cascavel, from several states of Brazil, especially Paraná and the states of the South region.

It was identified that the main influence for the choice of the course is the intellectual affinity with the topics addressed, and a good part of the graduates until then are part of the first generation

with Higher Education, in their respective families, so that the family influence was not a preponderant role for the entry into the course. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the interest in improving living conditions, obtaining a job or obtaining an occupational or salary promotion also motivated the choice for the course.

In general, graduates have also sought to carry out postgraduate studies, at *the lato sensu or scrito sensu level, and certifications to work in specific branches, notably in the financial market; in addition, they master languages and computer functions, both basic and more sophisticated, such as data analysis software and programming languages.*

The result of the research presents the degree of insertion in the labor market of the graduates: there are bachelors in several sectors, especially in the service sector and in large companies, acting as salaried workers, employers, self-employed and public servants, earning an income that varies according to the length of service and the position. The graduates report the importance of graduation in Economics to improve the income obtained and to obtain the skills necessary for entry into the labor market, notably to acquire more specific knowledge in their respective areas of work, also for better attitudes and professional behaviors, as well as the achievement of greater leadership in the work environment, and better performance and innovation in processes or products at work.

Thus, the importance of the Graduation in Economic Sciences of Unioeste for society is highlighted, not only for the local reality and for the Western region of Paraná, but for all the places where today the graduates reside and work professionally. Nevertheless, the study further reinforces the need to value the profession, so that job opportunities are maintained and intensified in the most diverse places that economists can act.

On the other hand, it is emphasized that, given the dynamism of the labor market, educational institutions and collegiate bodies responsible for the course and student representations need to be attentive to the needs of the organizations in which economists operate. Thus, it will be possible to promote more and more activities such as courses, research and extension projects, new disciplines and the insertion of activities, themes and software during the disciplines, aligned with the desires of society and the economists themselves in training, never giving up, above all, the fundamentals – historical, mathematical and instrumental, which justify the profession.

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