

# A Humanities degree opens doors

From study to job market



**Universiteit  
Leiden**  
Humanities

# A strong start with Humanities

The job market survey of alumni who graduated from 2020 through 2024 shows that a Humanities degree gives your career an excellent start.

**62%** of the alumni found a job within two months.  
**85%** started work within six months.



Networking is reported to be the main route to finding work. **51%** of the Humanities alumni found a job through their network (e.g. via family and friends, staying at the internship organisation, through contacts built up during the internship or via a part-time job or social media)

*“Your career might not follow the clear path you expected, but it’s often the unexpected turns that lead to the most rewarding opportunities.”*  
 – Elena

**CURRENT JOB:** Business Developer at Circle Economy, Amsterdam  
**DEGREE:** MA International Relations: European Union Studies  
**INTERNSHIP:** Project Assistant for trade missions at PSPS Business Abroad



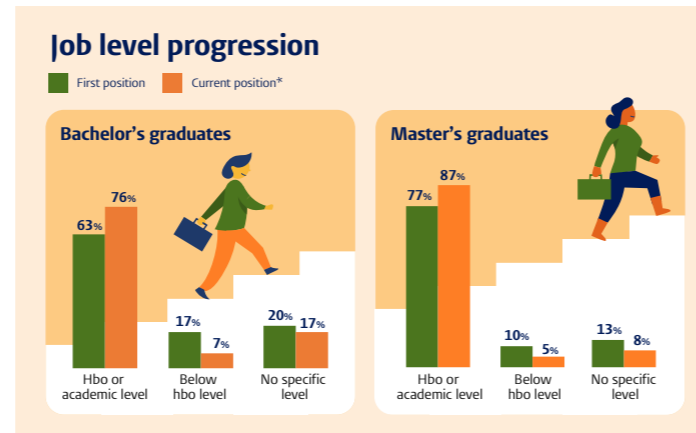
# From studies to a career that matches your degree

After completing their bachelor’s, **70%** of the alumni chose to take a master’s programme first, while **13%** found a job immediately and **5%** started actively applying for jobs. The rest of the graduates (**12%**) chose a work experience position or gap year, or started a master’s programme later. As you can read below, obtaining a master’s degree is clearly worthwhile.

## Kick-start your career with a master’s degree

It pays to continue your studies after your bachelor’s graduation! Alumni with a master’s degree find a higher-level job more often: **77%** start at higher professional (Dutch hbo) or academic level, compared with **63%** of the bachelor’s alumni.

After just over two years\* of work experience, **87%** of the master’s alumni have a job at higher professional (Dutch hbo) or academic level, but only **76%** of the bachelor’s alumni.



## How much do alumni earn?

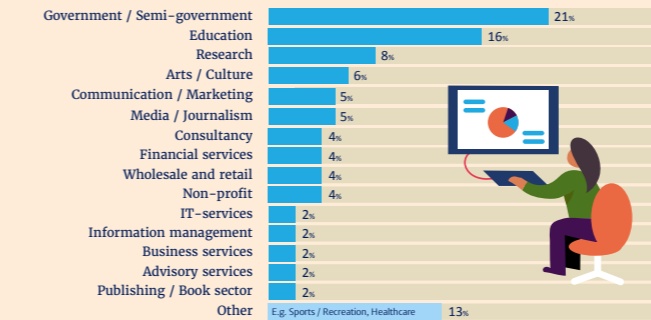
On average, Humanities alumni earn **€ 3,091** gross per month (on a full-time basis) in their first job. This increases to an average of **€ 3,616** after slightly over two years. The more education and experience a job requires, the higher the salary tends to be.

## International ambitions

Among Dutch alumni, **4%** aspired to work abroad and **30%** had no specific preference. In the end, **6%** actually found employment across the border. Among international alumni, **26%** aimed for a job in the Netherlands, **18%** in their home country, **20%** elsewhere abroad, and **36%** had no preference. Ultimately, **30%** found employment in the Netherlands.

\* Master’s graduates who took part in the labour market survey have, on average, 2 years and 5 months of work experience; bachelor’s graduates have, on average, 1 year and 7 months.

## Sector: first position

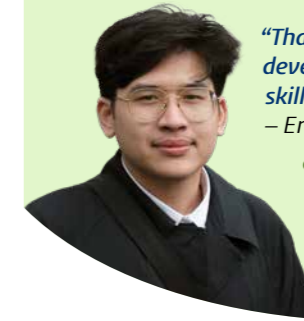


Alumni with a master’s degree mostly find their first job in (semi) government, education, research, arts and culture, media and journalism, and communication. (Semi) government and education are also the main sectors for alumni who started work immediately after their bachelor’s degree, followed by wholesale and retail, financial services and IT services.

## What tasks do they perform?

In their first job, master’s alumni mainly work in policy development, education, research and development, administration and accountancy, or communication. For graduates with only a bachelor’s degree, their main tasks in their first job are most likely to be sales, administration and accountancy or teaching.

## Main task: first position

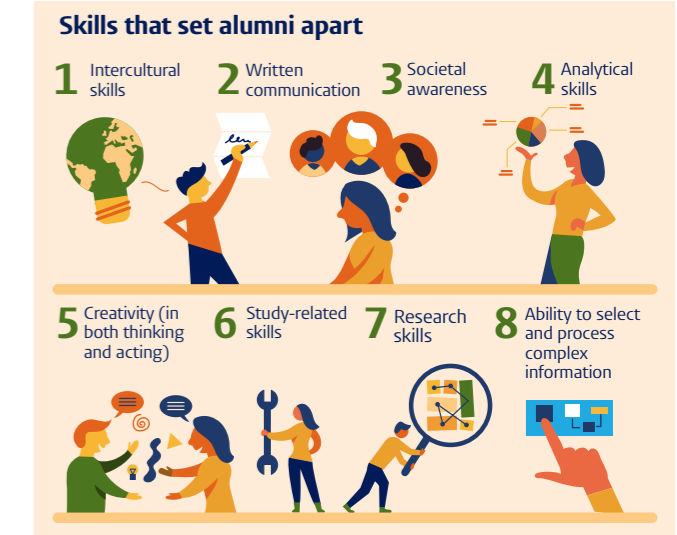


*“Thanks to my Leiden master’s degree, I developed precisely the analytical and linguistic skills that I now use every day in my AI work.”*  
 – Eres

**CURRENT JOB:** Conversational AI Engineer at Ayana Hospitality, Bali  
**DEGREE:** MA Linguistics  
**PART-TIME JOB:** English teacher at the Indonesian School of The Hague

## The unique strengths of Humanities graduates

Humanities graduates have talents that are in demand in the job market. They find in practice that their most outstanding strengths are their intercultural skills, written communication and societal awareness. They also excel in analytical skills and creativity.



The skills they use most in their work are the academic skills of working independently and written and oral communication, the ability to select and process complex information and analytical skills.

## Would you like to know more?

Go to [jobperspectives.nl](https://jobperspectives.nl), where you will find further information about the job market survey and several alumni testimonials!



# More experience = more opportunities

Alumni who gained experience through internships, relevant work, time abroad, or participation in boards and committees enjoy an advantage: they land jobs faster and at a higher level than those without such experience. This difference can still be seen in their current job, after an average of slightly over two years' work experience. An internship creates a better understanding of what your qualities are and a better insight in what you like to do. In total **21%** found their first job directly after their internship: **16%** of the alumni were able to stay at their internship organisation, and **5%** found their job directly via the network they built during their internship.

## What contributes most to your career?

Internship(s) during master's in the Netherlands

1

Academic degree

2

Internship(s) abroad during master's

3

Academic skills

4

Relevant work experience during study programme

5

Internship(s) during bachelor's in the Netherlands

6

Internship(s) abroad during bachelor's

7

Board and committee activities

8



## Would you like to know more?

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*"While doing my internship, I learned how theoretical knowledge from my study programme could be put into practice – and that was a tremendous help in finding my current job." – Viktor*

**CURRENT JOB:** Partnerships and Business Development Officer at SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation), The Hague

**DEGREE:** BA Chinese Studies, MA International Relations – Global Political Economy

**INTERNSHIP:** At the Economic and Political Cluster of the Dutch Embassy in Hungary



# Career Service helps you get started

The Career Service Humanities offers assistance while you're a student and for a year after you graduate! We can help you with:

## Finding and organising your internship

- Information on internships
- Individual internship advice
- Internship vacancies
- Support with the faculty's internship procedure
- Preparation for an internship interview

## Career advice

- Personal career advice
- Discussing results of a career test
- Practice with job interviews
- Network contacts
- Checking your CV, cover letter and/or LinkedIn profile
- Advice on choosing or changing your study programme

## Job application workshops, activities and career events

- Free workshops on topics including the job interview, how to find a job, CV and cover letter
- Company visits
- Career events, such as Humanities Career Event and Campus The Hague Career Event. Or, if you'd like to organise a career event yourself, we're happy to help.

## Contact:

- ✉ [careerservice@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:careerservice@hum.leidenuniv.nl)
- 🌐 [universiteitleiden.nl/humanitiescareerservice](https://universiteitleiden.nl/humanitiescareerservice)
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