

## SPECIAL REPORT

### In the last 15-20 years state provision has been dramatically reduced, and cultural production is in a huge transition

figuring out new ways of assessing the value of cultural products, or determining new methods of increasing public appeal.

"Arts and cultural institutions are very complex, and this complexity is often underestimated," he says. "In the last 15-20 years, the state provision [that sustained these institutions] has been dramatically reduced, and cultural production is in a huge transition. This transition has to be supported by people who understand culture, but also understand management, and sustainability."

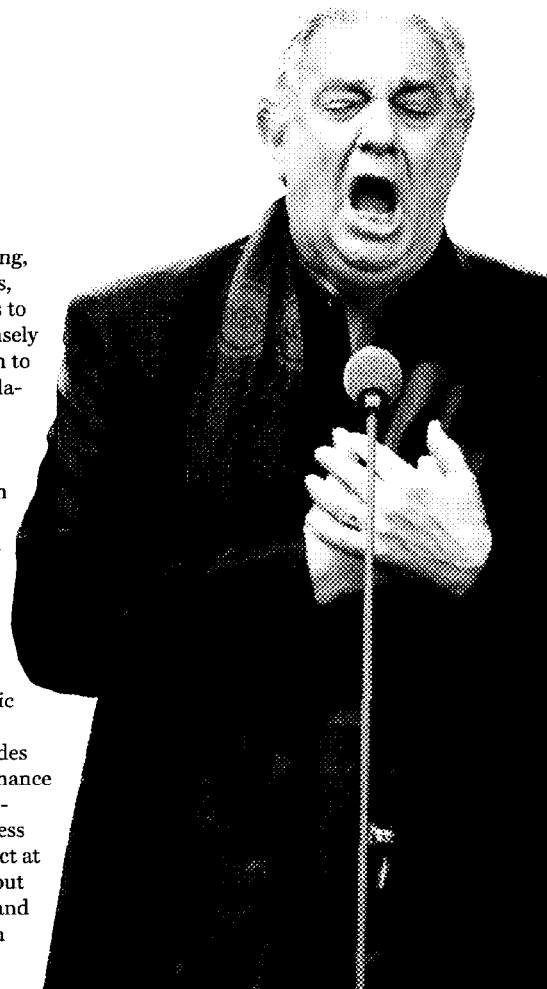
Bocconi's two-year graduate programme, which maintains partnerships and alliances with arts and humanities schools all over Europe, aims to prepare students for careers in entertainment, fashion and publishing, as well as leadership roles in cultural institutions and performance companies.

Prof Curioni says the school's management curriculum is often supplemented with arts training outside the university. "Of course managerial techniques can be transferred from one industry to another,

but you must know what you're doing, and what you're promoting," he says, adding that he encourages students to develop a "parallel life" that is intensely involved with the arts. "I want them to go outside the course and have a relationship with the discipline."

SDA Bocconi, meanwhile, offers a masters degree in stage and show management in a joint venture with the Teatro alla Scala Academy, the performing arts school of the opera house, La Scala, and the Piccolo Teatro of Milan. The programme is open to around 40 students a year who have either a degree in economics, social sciences or communications, or a diploma from a music conservatory or fine arts academy.

The year-long programme includes many specialised courses such as finance for the arts, the history of entertainment and live entertainment business planning. There is also a field project at the Piccolo Teatro where students put into practice project management and marketing tools they have learnt. In



### Profile

#### Bocconi University

Milan, Italy

[www.unibocconi.eu](http://www.unibocconi.eu)

When visitors consider the Italian city of Milan they often think of catwalk fashion, opera and Italian cooking – and more recently, perhaps, footballer David Beckham. It is a high-brow and stylish image that Milan has effectively promoted overseas, in spite of the greyiness of its streets, buildings sprayed with graffiti and roads choked with traffic. It is an image that Milan's Bocconi University – Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi, to give it its full title – is also striving to achieve.

As a private university specialising in economics, busi-

ness and law, Bocconi is Italy's equivalent of the London School of Economics and Political Science in the UK or Sciences Po in France. And like those two institutions, Bocconi is pre-eminent in its home market. The task now is to replicate that success overseas, says rector of the university, Guido Tabellini. "Bocconi's greatest strength has been to attract the best talent from all over Italy," he explains. "Now we need to draw talent from abroad. The next goal is to play the role we have in Italy on a larger stage."

Today, between 7 and 8 per cent of Bocconi faculty is international, although at the business school (SDA – Scuola di Direzione) the percentage is higher: 24 per cent. On the one-year MBA programme,

60 per cent of students are from outside Italy. Although the international faculty and student numbers are low compared with many top-notch European universities, and most of the programmes, especially at undergraduate level, are still taught in Italian, there is a marked improvement from a decade ago, when international student and faculty numbers were negligible.

To cement its role on the world stage, the school is echoing the city's strengths by teaching programmes in English in the management of luxury goods, heritage, fashion, media, culture and design. Building on its strong links with food and drink companies in Italy, the business school this year launched a 12-month masters

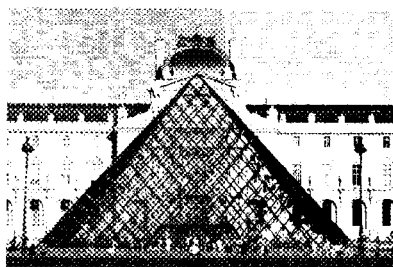
degree in fine food and beverage, arguably the only one of its kind in the world, and supported by Altagamma, Italy's association for luxury brands, and the University of Gastronomic Science, also based in northern Italy.

Massimiliano Bruni, director of the programme, says it has attracted students from as far away as California and India with its mix of management practice and food industry knowledge, including the week at an Italian cooking school, corporate visits to local regions – Veneto, Toscana, Lombardia, all with their local food and drink specialities – and a series of dinners prepared by international chefs.

Prof Bruni believes Italy's artisan approach combined with big business appeals to the

PHOTOS: CORBIS; ALAMY; AP

*Spanish tenor Plácido Domingo performs in Germany, left; the glass pyramid at the Louvre, Paris*



addition, the programme makes available internships in institutions including London's Globe Theatre, the New York Chamber Orchestra and Rome's Opera Theatre.

ESCP Europe also offers a specialised masters in management of cultural and artistic activities in partnership with the University of Ca' Foscari, in Venice, which is open to 20-25 students per year. "Globally, management in the cultural and arts industries is not at the level it should be," says Pascal Morand, an economist who has been the dean of ESCP Europe for the past three years. "This programme combines the classical teaching of management with the human and emotional factor of [what it takes to lead] creative people such as designers and architects."

But Prof Morand is careful to add that the overarching message of the programme does not advocate the notion "that the management of other sectors is better". "There are lessons that the creative industries can teach the tradi-

tional business world," he says. This is why the school's London branch is this year launching a new masters in marketing, called "managing the value of creativity". The 15-month programme, which includes a 12-week internship, will "look at both what marketing can learn from creative industries, as well as how to manage creative organisations more effectively and bring a more analytical view to their business operations," says Marie Taillard, professor of marketing at the school and the director of the new masters programme.

The programme involves modules taught by professors from each of the school's five campuses - in addition to London and Paris, the school has branches in Madrid, Turin and Berlin. The programme also includes specialised seminars with ESCP's "creative partners", such as drama schools and museums. Demand for the programme, which begins in January with 20 students, has been "very high", says Prof Taillard. "We've had a lot of applicants from North America who can't find what they're

## Solène Maquel

Case Study

ESCP Europe. Masters in the Management of Cultural and Artistic Activities "I studied history and history of art and in addition I wanted to acquire management tools. My first job was in an art gallery and then the Louvre museum offered me a position in management control. From Paris I came to Reims because I wanted to create a private art gallery to bring new artists to the public. The programme was very important because it gave me confidence in my entrepreneurial ability."

looking for in the US and Canada. This points to a need in the market."

Even schools without dedicated arts management programmes are introducing humanities and other cultural studies. At IE Business School, for instance, students now take a mandatory "world awareness seminar" and do a "launch" module at the start of their coursework, which includes an introduction to moral philosophy, eastern and western civilisations and modern art. ■

22 students, mainly women, on the inaugural programme. "The Italian way is not the only way, but it is an interesting way," he says. "The real Italian tradition is not in fashion but in food and beverages."

SDA Bocconi also has strengths in more traditional business school areas, most

notably finance, where it has already secured an international reputation. One-third of graduates from SDA's masters in finance degree programme, for example, get jobs in the City of London. "The investment banks in London are not so interested in knowledge, they are interested in talent," says finance

professor Andrea Sironi. The strength of the programme, he says, is in quantitative skills, such as advanced statistics, mathematical finance and derivatives: "Recruiters like this."

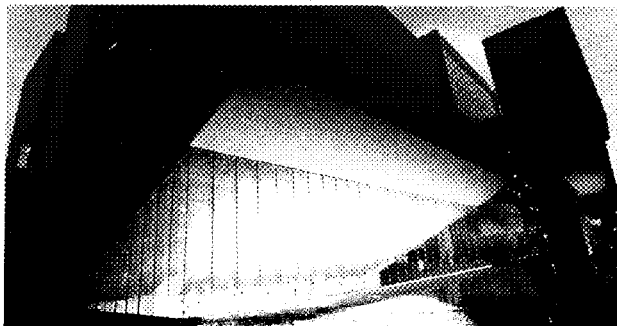
But as with all European business schools, Bocconi has faced its fair share of recruitment cuts this year. MBA director Valter Lazari says that last year 18 of the 22 MBA students who completed an internship with consultancy firms were offered a job at the end of the summer; this year the number was just eight.

The biggest effect of the recession, though, has been on SDA Bocconi's short open enrolment programmes. Alberto Grando, dean of SDA, says the school decided three years ago to reduce its dependence on open enrolment programmes, those in

which managers from different companies learn together. "We are redesigning open enrolment completely," he says, including the introduction of courses specialising in Bocconi's strengths - fashion and luxury goods management. However, the business school as a whole is "stable", he says, with an increase in masters applications and corporate programmes holding steady.

Located 20 minutes' walk from the centre of Milan, Bocconi now occupies a range of buildings, including its latest award-winning faculty building, by Ireland's Grafton Architects. Prof Teballini plans to link all the buildings together. "The goal is to make Bocconi a city campus, as in the US or the UK," he says.

**Della Bradshaw**



Bocconi's new building on via Röntgen, created by Grafton Architects