

Round Table “Education and training: preparing young people for work”

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

It is an honour and a privilege for me to introduce this Round Table dedicated to “*Education and training: preparing young people for work*”. As we begin our discussion, I would like to warmly thank and welcome the three distinguished guest speakers that will address the many issues surrounding our general topic. Following a strict alphabetical order, the first guest speaker is Monseigneur Professor Philippe Bordeyne, Recteur de l'Institut Catholique de Paris. He obtained in 2011 his doctorate, jointly awarded by the ICP for Theology and by the University Paris-Sorbonne for the History of Religion and Religious Anthropology. Between 2006 and 2011 he was Dean of Theologicum, the Faculty of Theology and Religious Sciences of ICP. His fields of research are Moral Theology, Theological Hermeneutics, and the Second Vatican Council. He has published extensively in these fields. Second guest speaker is Professor Fernando Felipe Sanchez Campos, Rector of the Universidad Católica de Costa Rica. He has worked in the public sector as a diplomat, representing the Republic of Costa Rica as Ambassador to the Holy See, to the Sovereign Order of Malta, and as Permanent Representative to the United

Nations Rome-based agencies (Food and Agricultural Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the World Food Program). Moreover, he was elected by popular vote as a Deputy to the Legislative Assembly, where he served as President to several central legislative commissions such as: the Permanent Commission for Social Affairs and the Special Permanent Commission on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Finally, the third guest speaker is Dr. Agostino Santoni, who is currently the CEO of Cisco Italy. He was previously at SAP where he was the managing director for Italy with full operational responsibilities. He is member of the general counsel of Assolombarda and of the Board of Director of Confindustria Digitale and of the Executive Committee and the General Counsel of Fondazione Fiera Milano. Thanks again to you all for being with us today.

Before leaving the floor to our guest speakers, let me briefly introduce the topic. As it is well known, education and training from one hand, and learning and skills from the other, are key contributing elements to the development of society and the economy. Moreover, as modern societies and economies are changing as a result of globalization and technological progress, a major transformation of education and training throughout the world is needed to provide society with the skills which are essential for employment, participation and true human development.

The fourth industrial revolution is profoundly changing jobs the way we know them, and digitalization is disrupting labour markets. Some jobs are being lost by automation whilst others see their nature change. New completely different jobs are emerging and therefore new skills are required to perform them. All this process is changing labour supply and demand, employment patterns and the demand of skills associated to jobs, both existing and new. Thus, it becomes now crucial to fully understand what type of skills workers need as the digital transformation unfolds.

New skills and competences are emerging and are acquiring increasing importance. Creativity, entrepreneurship, learning-to-learn, digital competences are becoming more and more important for innovation and participation in the digital society. What is today strongly required then is that supply and demand for these new skills and competences are matched. This is a key challenge for research and policy. The general question is then: How can or should these new skills and competences be defined, described, taught, acquired and recognized? I leave the floor, first in alphabetical order, to Monseigneur Professor Philippe Bordeyne.

Rector BORDEYNE:

Thank you very much. I will answer this question starting from the title of this conference: preparing young people for

work. What I would say is that I believe that today young people want to be protagonists of their own preparation. Let me mention this wonderful text from Saint Paul VI in the Basilica of Nazareth, 6th of January 1964. He says, *"The silence of Nazareth teaches us recollection, reflection and eagerness to heed the good inspirations and words of true teachers, it teaches us the need and the value of preparation, of study, of meditation, of a personal and interior life, of prayer which is seen by God alone in secret"*.

Your question, Professor Marseguerra, was how is it possible to take into account the new needs of what was presented in the afternoon as the new era of digitalization? I believe that, more than ever, young people are protagonists of their own preparation and they want, they demand to be protagonists. In terms of mutual recognition, I believe it is more important for us teachers, for us universities to acknowledge their taking part into their own preparation. In courses, in discussions they are really more and more part of teaching, but also in all the engagement activities they are taking part and that prepare them to acquire soft skills.

The same for associations. If I take the example of my own university, when I became the Rector in 2011, there was only one student association. Today there are thirty specialized in humanitarian actions, sports, arts, eloquence. They are keen on debating, and this is a soft skill we really need. I would say: Let us recognize in what measure they

are real protagonists of their own preparation for taking part in companies and in the needs of the economic world.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

Thank you Monseigneur Professor Philippe Bordeyne. I leave now the floor to Rector Campos.

Rector CAMPOS:

The bishops in Aparecida say that we live now in a change of era, especially in cultural terms. Following this idea, the International Federation of Catholic Universities, IFCU, presented a report. I'm not going to go through the whole report because it is interesting but it's too long. It is called "Emerging technologies in higher education and the workplace: an assessment, by Dr. Corinne Mellul, IFCU's Head of Research.

She presented three main conclusions that had to do with your question. The first one: 50% of daily labour activities—not 50% of the jobs—that take place in a labour place are going to be undertaken soon by machines or algorithms. We have 50% of the time left to do something else: train better, think more or whatever. Second: soft integral global skills, however you want to call them, will be much valued by future employees.

In our case, in Costa Rica, the employers of our students say that a diploma is good for being hired and for your first promotion. But after that, soft skills are the ones that say whether you're going to be promoted or not. One thing they mentioned was, yes, leadership is very important, yes, solidarity, working in a group is very important, but there's one thing that we are really missing, and that is, as the psychologist said, resilience. The ability to go ahead, to undertake difficulty with patience and hope. By the way, Saint Ignatius talks a lot about this, about resiliency.

The third conclusion was that rapid changes generate a process where knowledge is constantly being questioned and eventually turns obsolete. This is happening very, very fast. She was saying that instead of undergoing a dimensional process of constantly updating curricula, the best thing to do is to teach our students to learn, and to learn fast. For that, there is one thing they need apart from many other ones, and it's also a virtue, and that's humbleness. You need to be ready to be constantly learning. Once you get a PhD, and that's not that easy, humbleness is still very important.

She concluded that in order to keep on being relevant— and that's exactly the word she used— Catholic universities need to further develop something we should have been doing for decades. That's a pedagogical method based on values or/and virtues. Then she carries on by saying that we find in

Pope Francis' teachings a way to undertake this pedagogical method based on values and virtues. He talks about the sense of transcendency, as it has been already said. Then education, understood in relation with God and with the others. Education as a vocation, as Mr. Massiah already said. Education based on three languages, the language of the mind, i.e. high quality reasoning, the language of the heart, the language of the hands, hence sense of pragmatism. Use education to change things for good, and heart, passion and sense of transcendency. Putting all this together, we should be able to do what you were asking in your question. Thank you.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

Thank you Rector Campos. After the academic perspective, even if from two different geographical areas, now we look at the management perspective. I leave the floor to Dr. Agostino Santoni.

Dr. SANTONI:

Thank you very much for the invitation. It's an honour for me to be here with you. Greetings from Mr. Carlo Bonomi, President of the Lombardy enterprises association. If I have to give a very short answer, I would say: Is further business training and education important? The answer is yes, yes, yes. And what is needed? It needs a great cooperation

among all participants, it requires the ability to act now and in a humble way. There is a strong view to ask to our ego to take a day off. The organizations, companies, cities, regions, countries that have developed the capability to do this, will succeed in the world we see.

Just a couple of reflections on why it's needed. I'm working in the technological industry. We give a name to the economy we are living: the data economy, the artificial intelligence economy. I really like the concept of software economy because everything is now software.

This is the reason why in your smartphone you have more than 40 or 50 applications. Time saving is the reason to develop applications, to develop software. If you compare to five years ago, the saving of time has been reduced by 80%. Everything becomes software. If you want to update a smartphone operating system, when you go to bed, you connect your smartphone to the power cord. You wake up in the morning and your operating system of your smartphone is updated with new capabilities.

We are joking on this concept and we say: How can we make sure, as an industry, that we update our operating system as a smartphone? We connect ourselves to the battery and we upgrade our operating system. The message here is that the speed of innovation is unprecedented. We have to make sure that the capability has to be best ever,

and this requires a great capability from our side, from the business side and from the education side.

I will give you a small example from a meeting I participated yesterday. The topic was autonomous driving, and at the table there was an insurance company, two technological companies, the ministry of innovation and the university. I'd never thought five years ago to have such a meeting for such a context.

What we are looking for in terms of education? We are looking for young people that have to be innovative, responsible and aware. When we are interviewing people, we are looking for empathy, we are looking for adaptability and we are looking for trust. Trust means students and workers that trust in others and trust in the future. It's time to act now. Thank you.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

There is a second question which naturally arises from the reading of the *Laudato Si'*, which as you know is the path followed in the last couple of years by the Foundation with its conferences, workshops and meetings. And the question refers to the opportunity, or the necessity, to provide the young generation with an education to the integral ecology, that is an education sensitive to the various aspects of both human ecology and environmental ecology. In other words, is it possible to educate our youth to the protection of

human and social life and against environmental degradation? Should the issue of ecology be added or extended to educational programs, including issues related to the global warming process, the development of ecological energy innovation based on renewable energy sources, recycling, the need to reduce the use of plastic, etc.? In short, is it possible to educate young generations to the integral ecology? Please, Rector Bordeyne take the floor.

Rector BORDEYNE:

Yes, I believe it is possible. It is all the more possible because they are aware. You need young people who are aware. In that domain of sustainable responsibility, young people are aware. They know that they are part of the problem for our planet but not only our planet, for integral ecology. They know that they are part of the difficulty of changing the way of life but they are committed. Not all of them but many of them are very committed in changing their way of life. We all know young people, and we have them in the universities, who ask for concrete changes that will effectively change their life and the collective life.

As I mentioned, young people choose a university today for the excellence of curriculum but also for the amount of associative activities that are launched by students. That is the same for companies. They choose a company that will

show concrete commitment into integral ecology. That is really a sign.

You may ask: How are we going to answer to this problem? I would say we have to listen to their longing for new leverage to counter the dangers of Anthropocene. They want concrete commitment and concrete choices because they are more and more convinced that everything is connected, as Laudato Si' says. They see their work in the future as connected with the cause of sustainable development.

Young people have direct access to scientific data about climate and environmental change. They see the effects of those changes in their lives on fragile communities. They want to be part of the solution and they increasingly refuse to contribute to worsening the situation. I'm a professor of ethics. I have seen things changing in the last years. When a person responsible in the company for ethical questions comes, he or she can develop a wonderful talk but students at once will check and get information to contradict the ethical rationale that is put in front of them. As teachers we are confronted to the contest by the students on what we are teaching, companies are to be contested on their real commitment in sustainable development. It is a common challenge.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

Thank you Monseigneur Professor Philippe Bordeyne. Same question now to Rector Campos.

Rector CAMPOS:

I'll answer with an example, with an anecdote, I should say. In 2017 we organized the Ratzinger Foundation international symposium in Costa Rica. The title was "Laudato Si', A Necessary Conversion to Human Ecology." It was a big, big event; first time in that part of the world. We ended up with a big index, a Laudato Si' index where 127 countries were evaluated on whether they were doing things close in terms of public policy; how far or how near they were to what the Pope is saying should be done in Laudato Si'. We have this index. Actually, now last year's new index has already been published. We can evaluate how more or less 93% of the population is doing in terms of Laudato Si'.

One very interesting conclusion is that according to our index, 55% of the population lives in conditions that can be considered unacceptable according to Laudato Si'. We were doing all this and at the same time all our students back in our campus were asking, "All right, you can go around and save the world with that huge index but what about our campus? Are we having a Laudato Si' campus? Are we living Laudato Si' here at home? Are we actually behaving as the

Pope is asking us to behave? How much are we living what the Pope says, making hope concrete?

We are constantly asked by our own students to live whatever we're saying, and especially when it comes to the ecology. I do believe that as honesty, responsibility, solidarity for our new generation, ecological responsibility is a value and it's taken like that. Absolutely, if you want to do something with Laudato Si' and with ecological development, you need to be coherent. The word here is coherency. Thank you.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

Thank you Rector Campos Same question now to Dr. Santoni.

Dr. SANTONI:

I'm a strong believer that the moments we are living requires a different leadership style. My view on this is that the leadership requires the capability to put people at the centre of the innovation we are living. Social impact becomes a great tool to create energy in the organization. Two short examples. We are training students and in our industry we were used to training students since a while. Also in my company we were training students at school. Then we started training people in prisons.

There are now several prisons here in Italy where we give a second chance to people through education. The results: we have now more than 1,000 students in prisons. The results is not because of the company, it's because of them. It's incredible. We give a little piece of future to their life.

The second project is with Comunità Sant'Egidio. Homeless are important in the world we live. Of course, they do not need only educational training on technology. They need a house first. When they have a house, then you may invest time on training them. Yesterday one of my colleagues called me to say she was extremely happy because were 35 students, and most of them were homeless. I don't know where we'll end with this project. Maybe we will not succeed. But just the beauty to have 35 homeless at Comunità Sant'Egidio seated there, listening the evolution of technology, I believe it's a great example on the concept "it's time to act."

Technology has to behave like this. It has to be considered a platform to drive and to help to reduce the gap on inequality not only in my country but in the world. I'm strongly committed that to do that requires a different level or different kind of a leadership in our economy.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

Now a final question which requires a very short answer from each of you. A recent study conducted in 15 countries worldwide found that globally young people are more optimistic about the

future than older generations. Despite facing much higher unemployment rates, more instability, lower wage than their predecessors, today's youth are entering adulthood confident that they can build a better future for themselves and for those that follow. The question is then: Do you share this optimism? First I leave the floor to Rector Bordeyne.

Rector BORDEYNE:

Obviously, there is a contradiction, but I understand their optimism. First of all because this generation is longing for connecting with other people. Technology, in a sense, is not sufficient but also offers an opportunity to connect. Not only to connect on the web but also to meet concretely because you can organize.

This is a reason, certainly, for hope for themselves. In fact, this young generation experiences new forms of social life, partly possible because of digital connection but also relying on alterity and togetherness. This generation is longing for some experience of connection with very, very different people: the poor, those on the margins, those from different countries and different cultures.

The second reason for their hope is that they really train for open discourse and new means for democratic life. I was amazed, maybe you followed that President Macron in France launched a grand debate. In my university, young people

organized the grand debate themselves. I once entered. It was on tax reform. I knew very little about these questions.

They had convened a professor to be the witness of their exchange and debate. He did not intervene. Sometimes he would be asked to question, "Is that correct?" I was amazed of the energy they put into organizing the debate and the way they were really successful. Even the professor said, "Well, congratulations."

If I finish very quickly, I think there is a longing for intergenerational relations in this generation. They're very open compared to my generation in 1970s. We were very critical of the older generation. They know today that there are many things they can do that we couldn't. They also perceive that there is some kind of human experience that is in the older generation, and that they really need.

The challenge is before us. Are we going to respond to this openness to intergenerational dialogue? If yes, there will be dialogue and we can construct the society together. If not, they will do by themselves. For me, it's really as a crossroads. Any way universities or companies can respond to the desire for meaningful transformation is in a good direction. If we refuse to do so, it can be a very severe split in a period where populist leaders do as if there was no differences, no pluralism in our societies. If we do not produce positive experiences of pluralism

in terms of capacity of discussing, of arguing then we prepare the spreading of populist governments. Thank you.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

Same question now to Rector Campos.

Rector CAMPOS:

I agree with what has just been said by Rector Bordeyne. But I would like to put something else on the table. Yes, young people tend to be more optimistic and probably have a better or deeper developed conscience, especially when it comes to ecological conscience, as I said, taking it as a great responsibility, as a value.

In this respect, let me just say something from the point of view of a political scientist. It's very interesting the service that Pope Francis has done with his language, the way he writes his documents and presents his documents. I could even say that he has somehow democratized Vatican language and put it there for everybody to understand. Maybe you don't agree, maybe you do but you cannot say you cannot understand.

Just a quick anecdote. When I served as ambassador to the Holy seat, I remember listening closely to Pope Benedict's homilies. It took me a couple of days to finally understand everything. I'm not a theologian myself. I'm a political scientist. However, when Pope Francis speaks, you understand right away. You can agree or not, but right away you get the idea very easily. Sometimes

he speaks even with what methodologists calls soundbites that are very catchy with strong ideas.

I believe that in terms of intergenerational relationship, this is fantastic because you can work on this Vatican document very deep. It doesn't matter age or even the background you come from. You can do that. Having said that, maybe because of rapid changes during this era, I do believe and I agree with the employers in Costa Rica that one of the abilities, skills that maybe the new generation lacks, at least what we've seen, is resilience; getting used to getting things very fast or the ability to transform the joy and happiness that comes during good times or moments of success to patience when hard times arrive. I do believe that we have the duty, the responsibility of training or educating a more resilient, optimistic generation with the vocation to work for the common good. We have to do it, as Pope Francis says, as a big act of love. That is what education is all about.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

Thank you Rector Campos. Same question finally to Dr. Santoni.

Dr. SANTONI:

I like very much the statement "trust is the ultimate currency." If I look at Z the generation and the millennials, I believe that the difference with my generation is probably trust. Their capability to trust others. That gives me confidence that they will create a better world than the one that I contributed. They are

much more aware of the future of our planet. They are more generous. This is the reason why my answer to your question is yes.

Professor MARSEGUERRA:

In concluding this roundtable, I would like to thank all our very distinguished speakers for their productive input and engagement throughout this Consultation and for being so open in sharing their expertise and experience. I leave the floor to Professor Quadrio Curzio for his final remarks.

[END OF SESSION]