Presentation of ACUP's 2018 report: “Education and Teaching Indicators in Catalan Public Universities”

University of Barcelona, Barcelona

Rector,
Director General,
Vice-Rector,
colleagues,

A few days ago a professor from the University of Girona, Quim Brugué, published an article that underscored the central importance of education, but – above any ranking or efficiency index –, of intelligence even more so: "knowledge is generated by intelligence, which is not competitive or independent but rather collaborative and shared".

«The Catalan university system's future depends on its ability to act as a hub of knowledge, on our readiness to open up to the public so as to create an impact on society»

If we were to adapt this to our particular case, we could say that the Catalan university system's future depends on its ability to act not just as a generator but as a hub of knowledge;

it depends on our readiness to open up to the public so as to create an impact on society. In a nutshell, it's all about education; educating those who are starting out, those taking their skills in a new direction, those adapting to new requirements; providing lifelong learning and, of utmost importance, teaching those who teach.

Such leverage is hard to find elsewhere.

The United Nations’ 2030 Agenda takes the same view, as stated by its fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), Quality Education, the aim of which is to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

I’ll admit that of late I have been talking a great deal about the SDGs’ importance, about how they should serve as a compass for the future of our Catalan university system.

It's not simply because I don't like the alternative, but because I believe strongly in their potential, their merit and the need for them.

In some areas we can reap the rewards of our endeavours towards education very quickly, as shown by the report we present today.

In other areas we are making a longer term investment, but we do so with firm confidence.

This conviction is expressed with greater eloquence in the recent biography of former First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama: “Life was teaching me that progress and change happen slowly. [...] We were planting the seeds of change, the fruits of which we might never see. We had to be patient.”

«I like to think that we too –as universities, members of government and members of society– will manage to be patient; also that we will persevere with our commitment to knowledge, education and teaching»

I like to think that we too – as universities, members of government and members of society – will manage to be patient; also that we will persevere with our commitment to knowledge, education and teaching.

The OECD has recently published its Trends Shaping Education 2019 report. While we may choose to see these trends as less than certain, as any future prediction is a question of the unknown, in the midst of the uncertainties a clear view is held:

---

"Education plays a crucial role in equipping people with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to thrive in their modern personal and professional lives."[^3].

I can think of no better scope for ACUP's work, no better means by which we can serve our country. And we shall work in collaboration and through sharing, with intelligence and with patience.

I am pleased to hand over now to Dr Amèlia Díaz, the University of Barcelona's Vice-Rector for Teaching and Academic Planning, so she can tell us about conclusions and key data from the Education and Teaching Indicators in Catalan Public Universities report.

Thank you very much.