

«The Future of Work: Technologies, Competencies, Values and Knowledge for 2030»

Palau Macaya

Director General of Universities,
Director of Research and Strategy at "la Caixa" Foundation,
ladies and gentlemen,

In a recent book titled *The Wealth of Humans*, (which has an eye-opening subtitle: *Work and Its Absence in the Twenty-first Century*), Ryan Avent wrote: "We haven't seen anything yet on how the world is going to change; it'll be like the Industrial Revolution."

If I may, I'd correct this columnist for *The Economist* and say that the coming revolution, the so-called fourth industrial (or robot) revolution, will exceed anything we've seen to date, given that it will represent another step towards the informational society that Manuel Castells conceptualized in his *The Information Age trilogy* in 1996.

There is one clear example that speaks for itself: half of the leading companies from the year 2000 have disappeared, unable to adapt to the digital world. So, we're not heading towards a **more uncertain, complex and changing tomorrow, rather our today is already uncertain, complex and changing.**

In this new context, we need new training models, in the same way that we need to rethink the economic paradigms and traditional ways we organize work.

If we're talking about concepts like robotics, artificial intelligence, big data, globalization, circular economy, collaborative economy or sustainability, then how we talk about work and training cannot remain stuck in the past.

As the English economist John Maynard Keynes said, if things change, if the world evolves, then our response and opinions must change with them, must adapt.



«Without adaptation, there is no improvement, just stagnation. Let's not fool ourselves: we are because we evolve.»

And this brings me to the third element in this thread, the need to collaborate, to share, to understand the potential to multiply our efforts through networked management and working together.

Indeed, the Plataforma Coneixement, Territori i Innovació makes real and strengthens Catalonia's social progress and economic development through constant cooperation between the leading business associations and chambers of commerce, between companies and social bodies, public administrations and public universities in Catalonia.

22 organizations have made a strategic decision, aware that innovation and knowledge must represent key parts of the building of a progressive and competitive society.

In terms of work, this means analysing together the trends in the knowledge society, the professional profiles of the future, the training required, the competencies, values and skills of 21st-century professionals.

To do so together, aware that the time for simple and unequivocal answers has passed, that each on their own only wastes effort and (often scarce) resources.

To do so together, having understood that by joining forces better, more powerful and precise responses will be found for the new demands and future needs. Catalonia's future needs talent, knowledge, innovation, added value....

*«Let's lead by example, then, by agreeing to make our talent, knowledge, innovation and added value available via each of the nodes that form the network of the world of work;
a network that we form together. Let's be humble enough to help, and ambitious enough to imagine a*

future together.»

Because, from different starting points and following different paths, we have been able to put a willingness to find agreement above all else, a desire to make progress. We have, if I may say so, made necessity a virtue.

Meetings like today's need to be used to recognize the work that's been done, but, above all, they have to spur us on, to develop what we've done right and correct any possible errors, and to learn from what others can teach us.

This is why it is important to have speakers and experts who are willing to share their reflections on the future of work with us.

Unlike the star of *Groundhog Day*, we can't sort out today's mistakes tomorrow because they'll already be in the past.

So, we shouldn't hold out for loops in time, instead we need to start making progress, thinking, sharing and doing.

Thank you very much.

Josep A. Planell