

Atlantic Social Lab

Cooperation for the promotion of Social Innovation

Info Jeunes Toulouse is Promoting a series of Workshops on Self-Confidence

The Youth Info Points network offers workshops throughout the year to assist you with your various searches.

Whether it's a search for internships, work-study contracts, summer jobs, training, Parcoursup information, help writing a CV, cover letter or to prepare for an interview...

But before you embark on a search, the Youth Info Points can help you with approaches before any project. In order to improve many of your processes, you can develop your soft skills through play: Debate, Self-analysis, Emotion management, Self-image, Role-playing, Self-talk, Self-esteem, etc.

Registrations are open and can be made [here!](#)

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The elderly, in front of and behind the cameras in Gijón

The project "Los mayores, delante y detrás de las cámaras" brings users of La Camocha and El Natahoyo centers closer to the use of tablets to record others narrating their memories.

On december 19th, under the title of 'Nice Life Stories' a documentary was projected at the Antiguo Instituto in which five users of the day center for the elderly of La Camocha remembered their childhood and youth, their working years and other experiences of life. In addition to the prominence given to five anonymous elders, the uniqueness of the projection lay in the cameras themselves. Besides receiving training in new technologies, elderly users of the social centers of La Camocha and El Natahoyo were also in charge of editing the video and using tablets as cameras. This training was provided by the Center for Social Innovation at the Business School in Gijón in collaboration with the Social Services Foundation to five seniors, including Juan Manuel Robles, who said it was a blessing experience to learn how to work with video, editing, and sound, as well as do interviews with people whose stories have been spectacular. In collaboration with El Llano senior citizens' center, Gijón City Council is already planning a new experience.

SEVERE Internship Platform

Glasgow Caledonian University has been coordinating one of the EU-funded projects called SEVERE - Social Enterprise through Virtual Environments and Remote Entrepreneurship. It is a partnership with Universities from Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Ireland and Scotland which aims to create initiatives

for promoting social entrepreneurship and supporting social innovators.

Within this project, an internship platform has been developed to help students from all over Europe and beyond to lend their skills and knowledge to support social innovators. SEVERE is currently testing the platform and urgently needs volunteers to populate it to see how it works.

For the moment, they are asking institutions to Sign up at <https://vip.severe-eu.org/>

From there, it is possible to see ways to expand the networks, share internship/project opportunities, and work with like-minded groups and individuals from all over Europe and beyond!



Proyección del reportaje en el Antiguo Instituto, con Victoria Martínez recordando su juventud. J. C. ROMÁN

Column "Our Partners' Perspectives"

The Atlantic Social Lab partnership comprises a differentiated set of organisations that play different roles in the project. From governance bodies to social services, private non-profit associations, social enterprises and universities, the partnership has multiple perspectives articulated around a common goal - to promote social innovation in digitalisation in the Atlantic Area. This section seeks to gain a deeper understanding of these different perspectives.

The first interviewee was [Hugo Pinto](#), university Professor and ASL's principal researcher at CES - Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra. We talked with Hugo Pinto about the advantages and disadvantages of the digital transition and the role of universities in this process.

Interviewer: Covid-19 ended up underlining the importance of digitalisation in contemporary societies and being a catalyst for accelerating this process. In your opinion, what social advantages can the digital transition bring?

Hugo Pinto: The pandemic brought significant changes in the contemporary world. The first has been a fundamental change for workers regarding that people were confined. And organisations have had to live with people who were not working physically in their normal workspace. This changes how we see employment: as not localised and spread over many places. In these cases, ICTs play a fundamental role, which is the most significant change that has to do with the issue of digitalisation. A new way of looking at employment, a new way of perceiving employees and employers, and a new way of perceiving what territories have or do not have to offer. This issue of digital transformation ends up being the most significant advantage the pandemic has provided.

It is also fundamental to think that if the digital transition is not accompanied by solutions that can mitigate these problems, it will accelerate inequalities.

This issue has to do not only with employment but also with the acceleration of a set of dynamics already in progress, namely the use of ICTs in several processes of daily life. For example, when we think about e-governance or e-procurement, i.e., functions that the State had and that are now offered by digital means, they were greatly accelerated with the pandemic because many things had to be done digitally. Imagine, for example, taking sick leave or going to the tax office. Some services were already guaranteed, but not all, and today almost all are. Then, of course, there are the changes at the teaching level, with teaching becoming something where the hybrid formats and the online and face-to-face are combined in more creative ways and where online gains legitimacy. This is a critical issue because physical presence has always been essential in classes and assignments. It was realised during the pandemic that a set of functions could be suppressed virtually and, sometimes, even with important gains in terms of efficiency.

Interviewer: The digital divide also became very clear with the pandemic because people with less access to technology ended up having difficulties. From your experience, what other disadvantages

do you think the digital transition can bring and what strategies can help to overcome them?

Hugo Pinto: Like other social changes, the digital transition is often an accelerator of inequalities because the empowerment of actors and the financial and social capital resources that exist are poorly distributed worldwide. And in the digital transition, this also happens. Several issues are important, but we can divide them into large groups. We can think about the issue on firms, people and public administration.

Firms have different absorption capacities because their personnel, individual and collective capabilities to absorb knowledge are only sometimes aligned with digitalisation. Some do these processes quickly, integrating digital into their production processes, and others do not. So, if digital is so important, some firms will undoubtedly be excluded.

When thinking about people and citizens, the logic is the same before. There are certain people who, because of their age or socioeconomic resources, have no access to skills - that is, the know-how, they need to learn how to use digital - or to infrastructure because they need computers, smartphones or even the internet. What does this mean? Among many things, it means that if all access services, for example to social security, are digital, these people, who are often also the most deprived, will be excluded from this process. In other words, the digital transition might not speed up the solution but speed up the problem.

The same thing happens if we think from the point of view of public administration. Public administration has several levels, and if we think of the ministerial level, it is expected that people know how to use a computer and that they are digitally capable.



Hugo Pinto - ASL's principal researcher at CES

But let's think about other operational levels. Employees often need digital competence, for which a growing pressure is being built today. This means that there is a broad set of challenges for different groups.

And then, we can also think about territories and different countries. Internally, development is not homogeneous within countries, and there are territories where infrastructures exist differently. For example, at the level of digital infrastructures, something as simple as a wi-fi signal, there are places where the signal does not arrive with the same capacity and, therefore, saying that people will be digital nomads in places where there is no internet signal is a fallacy. But other types of infrastructures accelerate those digital capabilities. For example, a shared space in a city with a community computer access office. All these things are very important and are poorly distributed in the territory. Digital exclusion and the digital divide are frequent. Still, it is even more accelerated if we think about different types of countries. Let's think about the north-south dichotomies at a global level. This becomes very visible if we compare the more developed North with sub-Saharan Africa or other territories in Southeast Asia. Access to digital technology is not a major concern when the primary problem is finding drinkable water to survive the next day.

What I mean by this is that the university must itself be transformative.

So, there is an extensive set of challenges at the digital level. Of course, the pandemic showed that this could be important to solve many important social issues. Still, it is also fundamental to think that if the digital transition is not accompanied by solutions that can mitigate these problems, it will accelerate inequalities.

Interviewer: What role can universities play in increasing these advantages and reducing the disadvantages?

Hugo Pinto: I see universities from a double perspective. Mainly, and this is the most common view, as a trainer of people, of citizens. In that role, the university has to be able to pass on those values: equality, access to technology and providing people with the necessary digital skills to take advantage of the digital transformation. This is a crucial dimension. But in this case, the focus is not only on hard skills, i.e., technical skills, but also on the level of soft skills, interaction skills, social skills

and human capital. But it must also be about understanding reality, that is, values. The university must refrain from abstaining from the commitment to understanding what values it passes on to its students. There should not be an uncritical vision about which development models are appropriate or inappropriate. And also, be a way to understand that there is no strictly positive or negative technology. It is good or bad, depending on how it is used.

All these challenges that seemed so important during the pandemic that we were forced to reflect on were quickly forgotten. But they are worth remembering.

The second perspective is that of the university as an organisation promoting social innovation. The university has a very important role that should be a demonstration role. For example, it should promote the correct values from the point of view of human resources and hiring. This means that the university should be a place where precariousness should not exist. The university should be a place where technologies and knowledge are anchored in good values and principles. For example, the construction of buildings should be based on scientific knowledge about energy sustainability and wastewater management. All these principles should be incorporated. This means that the university is not only an organisation where we teach, but it should also be a demonstrator of these practices to the society.

The other dimension has to do with public procurement. The university is an organisation with substantial financial resources. In the case of less developed or more peripheral regions, it is one of

the primary agents of change or economic actors. Contraction services should also follow this logic of transformation. What I mean by this is that the university must itself be transformative.

Hugo Pinto further adds that:

Hugo Pinto: I want to underline that digitalisation and digital transformation accompany a broader trend of the need to transform society. Of a model that nowadays is often called the "twin transition", which is the digital transition also accompanied by the environmental transition. And in this sense, there is also a set of opportunities, namely through social enterprises and social entrepreneurs who are ways of responding to needs that the pandemic has highlighted as necessary. Today, in the university, we also talk about this: the exponential increase in electricity bills, water costs, and resources that were turned into waste.

During the pandemic, there was some positive expectation, almost a dream, that some of society's most negative behaviours could and should be mitigated and reduced. Now that we are coming out of the pandemic, we have already surpassed all those indicators that everybody agreed were negative... we never used so much water, we never used so much electricity, and we never made so much waste. And in terms of other social needs, like family proximity, the importance of the elderly and children, the importance of employment with security, and the importance of the health-work-employment relationship, which was a set of fundamental vertices, everything has also been forgotten. All these challenges that seemed so important during the pandemic that we were forced to reflect on were quickly forgotten. But they are worth remembering.

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Partners

