



44<sup>th</sup> Technical Committee Meeting ILO/Cinterfor  
International Summit: Vocational Training  
for Sustainable Development

# Final report

Montevideo, Uruguay, August 2019



International Labour Office  
**CINTERFOR**

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The ILO/Cinterfor Technical Committee Meeting is the most significant event on vocational training in Latin America and the Caribbean. At this forum, representatives of national agencies specializing in training and developing the human resources of ILO member States, as well as representatives of employers' and workers' organizations appointed to the ILO Governing Body by both groups, carry out two main activities. First, they consider the report submitted by the ILO/Cinterfor director, including a report on the activities implemented during the past biennium, matters relating to the Centre's human and financial resources, and a Work Plan proposal for the forthcoming two-year period. Second, they address and debate current issues concerning training, they share experiences and they propose cooperative activities. The latter activities were designated as "International Summit: Vocational Training for Sustainable Development". These meetings take place twice a year.

From 6 to 8 August 2019, the representatives of governments and vocational training and education institutions, and of workers' and employers' sectors, and the ILO/Cinterfor technical team met in Montevideo in order to share ideas on the future of vocational training for sustainable development. The event was sponsored by Uruguay's Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, with the support of "Uruguay Natural".

It was attended by 265 persons and representatives of 41 member institutions of the ILO/Cinterfor Network, from 23 countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain, Portugal and Cape Verde.

Below, we provide a summary of the speeches and exchanges that took place during the discussions at the 44th ILO/Cinterfor Technical Committee Meeting.



# 44th Technical Committee Meeting

## Opening Session

At the start of the meeting, the authorities representing the Uruguayan government and ILO/Cinterfor gave their welcoming remarks. The Director General of Uruguay's National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (INEFOP for its acronym in Spanish) and National Director for Employment of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (DINAE-MTSS), Eduardo Pereyra, underscored the importance of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for his country, and stated that it was, therefore, "a great honour" to host its Technical Committee.

He highlighted Uruguay's features as a stable country, in political, social, legal and economic terms. A country with a long democratic tradition, committed to social dialogue. He also pointed out that in recent years, poverty and informality in Uruguay had decreased, although issues persisted with regard to unemployment and the loss of jobs. Employment and vocational training are always present on the country's agenda, stated Pereyra; training is "an indispensable tool for quality employment and social inclusion," as well as for sustainability, productivity, competitiveness and the development of society.

On behalf of the Uruguayan government, he pledged to "adopt each and every one of the recommendations arising from this meeting, and use those lessons to commit to a better future for our continent".

The director of ILO/Cinterfor, Enrique Deibe, recalled that the institution had been working on behalf of the region comprising Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Cape Verde for over fifty years. He stressed that such meetings brought together "this learning community that is Cinterfor".

## Election of authorities

The election of authorities for the meeting took place after the opening session. The following persons were proposed: The Director General of Uruguay's National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (INEFOP) and National Director for Employment of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (DINAE-MTSS), to act as Chair; Juan Mailhos, representing the employers' sector, to act as Vice-Chair; and Rosane Bertotti, representing the workers' sector, also to act as Vice-Chair. These proposals were adopted unanimously.

## Report of the ILO/Cinterfor Programme and Budget Committee

Moving on to the next item in the order of business, Fernando Casanova, ILO/Cinterfor's Programme Officer, proceeded to read the report of the Programme and Budget Committee (Appendix I), arising from the meeting held by that committee on 5 August 2019.

## Report of the ILO/Cinterfor Director

Next, the Director of ILO/Cinterfor, Enrique Deibe, proceeded to submit his management report. In it, in addition to analysing the current situation of vocational training in the region, he took stock of the fulfilment of the goals laid down in the work plan adopted at the 43rd Technical Committee Meeting (San José, Costa Rica, August 2017), reported on the financial situation and on that of the Centre's human resources and, finally, gave details of the work plan proposed for the period 2010-2021.

The Director's full report is available at: [http://www.oitcinterfor.org/sites/default/files/Informegestion\\_44RCT.pdf](http://www.oitcinterfor.org/sites/default/files/Informegestion_44RCT.pdf)

## Subregional and Sectoral Group Meetings

The following item on the agenda was the meetings of the subregional and sectoral groups, which adopted the documents included in Appendix II.

These groups were:

- Southern Cone
- Andean Countries
- Central America, Panama, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Cuba and Haiti
- English-speaking Caribbean
- Associate members
- Employers
- Workers



## Opening ceremony and tripartite panel: celebration of the centenary of the International Labour Organization

### Vocational training and tripartism in a changing world

#### Ernesto Murro, Minister of Labour and Social Security of the Uruguayan government

In order to meet the challenges of an increasingly fast-paced world, vocational training must be seen as both a right and an obligation, and develop within the framework of tripartism. Ernesto Murro, the Uruguayan government's minister of Labour and Social Security, addressed these concepts in his opening address at the 44th ILO/Cinterfor Technical Committee Meeting.

Murro began by saying that there used to be sharp divisions between the time devoted to study, the period devoted to work and, finally, a person's retirement or pension. Currently, these distinctions are more blurred, and capacity-building and vocational training are a "constant obligation". "Today the world has changed and we all need to be constantly learning, negotiating," he noted. While vocational training has become a requirement, it is also a right, stressed the minister: it should be accessible to everyone and everywhere. "And this is not only up to those of us who happen to be part of the government in one part of the world, but also up to all social parties, workers' organizations, employers' organizations," he maintained.

Murro referred to the situation in Uruguay and highlighted the progress that the country has made over recent years. "To continue the process of development in this country, which has experienced sixteen years of uninterrupted growth for the first time in its history, we need better quality and better work culture, to which end capacity-building and vocational training are essential," he stated. He underlined the fact that Uruguay is one of the ten or fifteen full democracies in the world, which is "a source of satisfaction and commitment". "We must cultivate and promote this every day. A full democracy is not the same as a more-or-less democracy, and definitely not the same as an authoritarian or dictatorial regime," he pointed out.

He went on to note that Uruguay is a "tripartite country"; that it has been throughout its history and that in recent years this feature has been "strengthened, promoted and multiplied". In this respect, he mentioned that the National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (INEFOP) receives tripartite funding, and its administration is also tripartite, or quadripartite, if we take into account the social economy sector, which the institute also includes.

Tripartism in Uruguay is also present in other sectors, such as in social security administration; "not only in the country's principal social security institution, the Social Security Bank (BPS), but also in several other smaller institutions, and in the health sector," said the minister. In this latter area, a National Comprehensive Health System (SNIS) has been operating for eleven years, with the participation of the business sector, workers and users in its administration.

Murro highlighted the scope of collective bargaining in Uruguay when establishing wages and working conditions. "In Uruguay, the decisions arrived at by whatever a majority of the thousand workers', employers' and government delegates determine have a legal effect in fixing wages

and, as a result, and according to the Constitution of the Republic, that wage determination also determines the increase in pensions,” he maintained.

With regard to training, social dialogue takes place within INEFOP. In the past four years, the amount of training carried out by the institute has increased six-fold. According to information provided by the minister, until 2014, some 17,000 or 18,000 persons were being trained per year, and in recent years, 120,000 or more persons are being trained. This figure represents about 8% of the number of workers in the private sector in Uruguay that are trained every year. In recent years, training aimed at the business sector has been bolstered, and training is also provided for unemployed workers, in coordination with unemployment benefits or unemployment insurance. “Uruguay is one of the few (unfortunately) countries in our Latin America which has an unemployment insurance or allowance, a significant benefit for workers and companies. Moreover, in Uruguay, this benefit does not only apply in the case of cessation of activity or dismissal, but also when activities cease, without dismissal, and in addition, as a result of a ten-year-old law, it is also possible to apply an unemployment allowance when activity declines,” noted the minister. In this respect, Murro mentioned, as an example, that in July 2019, one third of the beneficiaries of unemployment insurance were, in fact, working at reduced capacity.

The minister referred to the forthcoming installation of a pulp mill by the Finnish company UPM, on the banks of the Río Negro, in the centre of Uruguay, the largest private investment in the history of the country. “This investment would not have been possible if we had not made progress in vocational training, among many other issues,” he stated. He recalled that when UPM decided to install its first plant in Uruguay, fifteen years back, the country lacked both the professional capacity and the skills required to set up the plant, and that it had been necessary to bring in skilled workers from other countries in order to do the work. “Today we have greater capabilities, skills and training, which enables us to welcome this investment, the largest in our history and that of a Finnish company, in better conditions,” he noted. He then stated that INEFOP had already begun to organize the training required prior to the start of construction, and has estimated how many people it will be necessary to train in certain types of welding, assembly, construction, as well as in services such as food, transport, and community and recreation services.

In conclusion, Murro welcomed the conference and expressed his hope that such events should serve to promote reflection and to share experiences among different countries and between different ways of viewing the world: “we welcome the various approaches in order to continue to learn and to build a better world,” he stated. And concluded: “We hope that these three days will help us all to continue improving in the development of our countries with social justice, sustainable enterprises, and, above all, with increasing democracy, increasing collective bargaining and increasing social participation.”



## The future is not written and requires the commitment of all

Juan Felipe Hunt, Acting Regional Director, ILO

Juan Felipe Hunt, Regional Director (a.i.) of the ILO, referred to the 44th Technical Committee Meeting as one of the events marking the 100th anniversary of the International Labour Organization (ILO). He noted that the 108th International Labour Conference, which was held in June 2019 in Geneva, was the most well-attended in the organization's history, with close to 7,000 delegates and 34 heads of state and of government. That conference, Hunt recalled, not only gave rise to highly significant documents, such as the Convention and Recommendation to combat violence and harassment in the workplace, but also to the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, which will "go down in the history of our organization".

Hunt said he took pride in the affection and recognition with which governments referred to the ILO during the conference, and stated that at that time he had thought about each of the organization's and the Technical Committee's officials, "and the mammoth task they carried out over the course of one hundred years".

Discussions within the ILO have put the focus on the future of work. Hunt mentioned some milestones of the past year: the adoption of a series of regional targets in the Panama Declaration for the ILO Centenary, adopted in October 2018, and the Centenary Declaration of June 2019, which puts forward a vision "based on a people-centred work approach, a vision that aims to promote lifelong training, based on the fact that training is a shared responsibility between governments and social partners, who have an obligation to design effective training policies that aim to create free, full and productive employment". The Declaration, added Hunt, promotes effective education systems that respond to the needs of labour markets and seeks to ensure that workers improve their skills and take advantage of the opportunities offered by decent work. In addition, it favours productive policies that can increase integration capabilities, and ensure school-to-work transition and the effective incorporation of young people into the world of work.

"The Centenary Declaration, one of the most significant documents recently adopted by our organization, is part of a historic moment, which is full of challenges," Hunt observed. The digital revolution, migration, climate change, are challenges that affect all countries, including in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this respect, the ILO Regional Director mentioned the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and demonstrations throughout the world for the environment, most of them led by young people who "refuse to accept the legacy of a planet in these conditions that they are to receive".

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean must also tackle structural economic problems: low and volatile growth, insufficient productive development, low productivity, high levels of informality and inequality, increasing unemployment and poverty, shortfalls as regards core labour principles and standards, among others. In this context, noted Hunt, the region seeks to discern the outlines and strategies for the future it wants, "under the premise that the future is not written and that we can influence it with a view to mitigating its negative impacts and take advantage of the opportunities that the future may bring".

Hunt recalled that the etymology of the word training in Spanish (formación) refers to that which is “actively related to a shape (forma)”. “Thus, we must embark on this new phase: actively engaged, relating to everyone, including everyone, with a new way of doing things, in order to achieve that social justice, that lasting peace that the ILO’s Constitution spoke of back in 1919,” he urged.

## Tripartite Panel

### The importance of vocational training for attracting investment

Fernando Yllanes, Confederation of Industrial Chambers of the United Mexican States (CONCAMIN) and Employer member of the Governing Body of the ILO

Fernando Yllanes was the employers’ representative on the tripartite panel. He stressed the importance of social dialogue when working for vocational training. He warned that “effective dialogue” between governments and the most representative workers’ and employers’ organizations does not always take place, “unfortunately and despite the obligation of member countries of our beloved ILO and the reiterated expression of this condition”. He suggested that research, studies and references to case studies that are conducted, as well as acts of cooperation, should clarify explicitly and “with full transparency whether such dialogue is present in the country in question, and whether it is carried out effectively”. “We should not assume that it does. If this is a prerequisite for Cinterfor’s and the ILO’s operations, it should be reflected at the beginning of any activity, study, analysis or report made in relation to any member country. It seems to me that we shall find a few surprises,” he stated.

He welcomed the fact that the lines established by ILO/Cinterfor in 2017 had been addressed, but added that, as the director of ILO/Cinterfor, Enrique Deibe had mentioned, much remained to be done, and “at the speed that changes take place, we need to intensify action in order to understand the new demands of the labour market”. He considered that this required generating strong links between education and work; synergies between labour supply and demand. In this regard, he said that it was necessary to accelerate actions for workers to acquire the skills and capabilities needed in the labour market, attempting to forecast those that will be in demand in the future.

“We have already been broaching this need for many years, together with the workers. All of this work should be continued, through tripartite training institutions, which should be autonomously managed, with guarantees provided by appropriate and flexible regulatory frameworks,” Yllanes stressed.

He recalled that the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasized that vocational training contributes in a complementary but essential way to any targeted strategy to end poverty. Likewise, the Declaration of Panama of 2018 determined that without a better future for production there would not be a better future for work, and vice versa. Meanwhile, in the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work it was decided that the organization



should focus its efforts on promoting the acquisition of competence, skills and qualifications as a shared responsibility at a tripartite level, in order to fill existing and anticipated skills gaps.

“In order to attract investment and generate productive development, it is essential for people to be adequately trained to ensure that they participate appropriately in the formal labour market,” added Yllanes. As an example of good practices, he mentioned the operations of the automotive cluster in Mexico, which is “quite efficient and increasingly large”. Investments took into account the educational and training institutions based in the places where factories were established, for the purpose of ensuring the existence of skilled labour, or at least, labour that could be trained in the new tasks to be performed. The human factor, he maintained, was fundamental: “Without training, without capacity-building, there is no investment”.

Yllanes also proposed that Cinterfor should support strengthening the capacity of employers’ organizations “more intensively”, that “there should be closer links with them, strategic links from beginning to end”. “Who better than an enterprise knows what profiles are required today and will be required tomorrow? And unfortunately, there is, oddly enough, a lack of connection with the actions of governments and I think that Cinterfor can play a very important role in building this relationship,” he considered.

He concluded by stressing how useful Cinterfor had been as the focal point for an extensive network of training institutions and invited the agency to “continue working together with the productive sectors, even more closely and intensively”.

## Work in the future should benefit workers

Amanda Villatoro, Secretary for Trade Union Policy and Education, TUCA-ITUC

The Secretary for Trade Union Policy and Education of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas - International Trade Union Confederation (TUCA-ITUC), Amanda Villatoro, referred to some milestones of recent years, which had been “intense” in terms of reflecting upon the future of work. The meeting in Panama held in October 2018, the meeting of the Labour 20 Group in Mendoza, in September 2018, the Global Commission on the Future of Work prepared a paper on Work for a Brighter Future, and the ILO adopted its Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work. Villatoro remarked that in all these discussions, the issue of vocational training had a very important place, “recognizing that much of the future of work is played out in the chapter on education and training”. In this regard, she highlighted the role played by the ILO/Cinterfor Technical Committee in putting the issue “at the centre of debate”.

Villatoro referred particularly to the Centenary Declaration, which calls for the strengthening of the skills, abilities and qualifications of all workers throughout their working life, by means of an effective system of lifelong learning and quality education. “This will correct existing and anticipated skills deficiencies, ensuring that education and training systems answer to the needs of the labour market, taking into account the evolution of work and the capacity of workers to seize opportunities for decent work,” she indicated. At the same time, the Declaration

mentions that this programme should be a shared responsibility between governments and social partners.

Villatoro noted that the Global Commission on the Future of Work had raised three points that were “not addressed in such powerful terms” in the Centenary Declaration: the need for a people-centred approach, the mainstreaming of the gender perspective, and the centrality of education and vocational training. She considered that it would be a good idea to delve more deeply into these three aspects.

The TUCA-ITUC representative stressed the importance of social dialogue and tripartism in the Americas in particular, which is not only one of the most unequal regions in the world, but also one of those with the greatest deficit in social dialogue. “This venue provides the muscle for tripartism and social dialogue in our hemisphere, and that is no minor thing,” she stressed, referring to the ILO/Cinterfor Technical Committee Meeting. She maintained that this opportunity should be used to “put in place real strategies and public policies that will allow us to confront the future of work effectively”.

Work in the future will have to be a job with social security, freedom to join trade unions, and with collective bargaining, Villatoro pointed out. “And I’m not speaking from a corporate trade union perspective, not at all. I’m talking about the rights that underpin most of the democracies that we have so far developed on this continent,” she added.

She argued that we should think about how the work of the future can benefit workers and how to avoid the “uberization of work”, which infringes the working conditions of workers and with them, our democracies.

On behalf of the trade union movement, Villatoro expressed concern about the regional situation. “We are deeply concerned that where there used to be strength for social dialogue, the doors have now closed. Where there used to be ministries of labour, they have been suspended. And where we had recognized rights, we learn that suddenly they are no more. So, it is owing to that concern that I am here, on behalf of my colleagues, talking about the opportunity we have on the basis of vocational training, to develop a new rationale,” she stated.

She asserted that workers, employers and governments have learned, in tripartite areas such as the Technical Committee, that it is not easy to come to an agreement, but that “an agreement between three is better than the imposition of one”. “And so we can, from this perspective, build the America we want; one which is not so unequal and with a perspective of ongoing social dialogue in order to overcome inequalities and exclusions,” she stressed.



## Vocational training as a fundamental human right

Nelson Loustaunau, Undersecretary for Labour and Social Security, MTSS, Uruguay

Loustaunau proposed that the panel audience should engage in an exercise of imagination. He invited them to position themselves at the time when the ILO was created, in 1919. World War I had ended and it was a time for work, a time for workers' rights, "to safeguard the rights of the peoples of those homelands that had been fighting for freedom". "Such was the origin of the organization, the centre of an organization which among many other things, was seeking no more and no less than a fairer, more equitable and socially peaceful world. That is the spirit of the organization, the blood coursing through its veins: social justice, equity, equality," he stressed.

We are today confronting an equally significant historical moment. In a digital world which is constantly changing. In a new world of work "that may challenge that old social pact which arose from World War I," Loustaunau indicated. "There has been a breakdown; that work rationale, the rationale of our parents, our grandparents, has cracked like glass; we are facing a new reality. And that reality is what we must sow together, that reality is what our children will reap," he stated.

The Uruguayan government official referred to two items contained in the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work to illustrate the current situation of labour. First, he pointed out that there were two billion people in the world working in the informal sector. "Just imagine this bulk of humanity working in what we in Latin America call the foraging economy. This foraging economy often or generally lacks sufficient protection. Maybe for some it is a paradigm, something possible, but for many it is not," Loustaunau maintained. And, secondly, he went on, there are 190 million unemployed persons in the world. "These figures should be exceedingly alarming for those of us who are in any way linked to the world of work," he warned.

Loustaunau considered that those problems were not easy to solve and that there were no magic solutions. He recalled that one of the suggestions made in the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work aimed at the requalification of the global workforce, and regretted in that regard that the Centenary Declaration had not picked up on the fact that vocational training was a fundamental human right. "It is true that this is, rather than a fundamental human right, something absolutely necessary for the performance of any worker today, because nowadays, falling behind means not even being in the race," he cautioned.

In addition to being a fundamental human right, vocational training is a right that accompanies people throughout their working lives. "It seems that this right is beginning to turn into a kind of DNA for work," Loustaunau graphically noted. And this right "must be visualized explicitly by employers, who must not only promote and facilitate it, but also perceive how companies can benefit from the vocational training of their workforce," he maintained.

Likewise, he considered that vocational training "should be directly linked to the needs of the market". "Why keep training in something that we are probably not going to need, when those same resources can be directed towards training a different kind of worker, providing another kind of knowledge needed by the community?" he asked. He also stated that we should abandon

“the old idea that our job and our knowledge are for life”. “We must consider that we are a kind of modelling clay being modelled again and again to face new and necessary realities, and that situations carved in stone no longer exist. The world is changing for everyone, and we must be malleable, adaptable. Of course, our knowledge should be acknowledged, and the ability to recognize it will be a strength: whoever is more able to recognize those skills acquired by workers will receive greater support from his or her own workforce,” he maintained.

Loustaunau argued that all training processes must be audited because the quality of training is key. “We belong to a region that, through ignorance, forgetfulness or any other reason, often forgets to check the procedures it undertakes. Let us change this attitude. We need to allow ourselves to review and correct, because through that exercise we can find better quality processes, and in them we can find greater profit for our societies,” he claimed.

The senior official also referred to the importance of social dialogue as the basis of knowledge and as a collective construction, which generates growth for all parties. While engaging in the defence of diverse interests from often antagonistic viewpoints is “in the DNA of the capital-labour relationship”, this “cannot constitute a barrier to building,” Loustaunau asserted. “The more distance there is, the more interesting are the process to shorten it and the meeting point,” he added.

Finally, he highlighted the role of Cinterfor, in its support of vocational training in the country, “pointing out paths, discovering possibilities, helping when the ways of social dialogue become obstructed,” as well as the role played by INEFOP in training workers. He noted that there are satisfaction surveys that show that workers are “entirely satisfied” with the training they received from the institute.



## Panel presenting Uruguay's experience and progress in vocational training

Progress and challenges of vocational training in Uruguay. Mateo Berri, INEFOP Evaluation Unit Coordinator

Magela Scutari, Advisor to the National Employment Bureau, MTSS

Mateo Berri, the coordinator of INEFOP's Evaluation Unit, explained that the vocational training policies being conducted by the Institute pursue a number of aims. On the one hand, they seek to improve the skills of workers and thus the opportunities for citizens to gain access to employment. But they also aim to generate new learning and applicable knowledge that transcend matters exclusively related to the world of work, while seeking to improve the competitiveness and productivity of the country. "That is why they are, in a way, straddling two worlds: education and work," he said.

Berri referred to four quadrants to be taken into account when thinking about vocational training: vocational training as such (training supply available); occupations and qualifications (demand for training); the evaluation and certification system; and the guidance and information system. At the centre of these four elements is a key tool, the development of a qualifications framework.

### EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING POLICIES



Source: INEFOP Evaluation and Monitoring Unit

## 1. Vocational training

In Uruguay there are a number of institutions that are involved in training in one way or another, Berri explained. These include INEFOP, the Technical Education and Training Council of the Vocational University (CETP-UTU), the Technological University (UTEC) and the University of the Republic (Udelar). “I could also mention the private institutions and actions devoted to vocational training at the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), but I will focus on these four institutions in order to provide an overview of the current situation in Uruguay,” Berri indicated.

The technical officer said that vocational training had grown significantly in Uruguay in recent years, and that there had, in particular, been a significant increase in enrolment in UTU and INEFOP. Students enrolled in CETP-UTU had increased from 70,110 in 2008 to 99,432 in 2018, according to data received from CETP-UTU’s Educational Planning Programme. Meanwhile, the number of places filled at INEFOP went from 26,976 in 2016 to 105,486 in 2018, according to INEFOP’s Monitoring and Evaluation Unit. Berri noted that the latter figure referred only to the number of slots for vocational training at INEFOP; “if we add to this the actions taken by the INEFOP in relation to grants and the youth employment law, we would be closer to 120 thousand slots for 2017 and for 2018”.

This growth in enrolment and vocational training quotas has been accompanied by training diversification and updating: highlights in this regard were the creation of UTEC, “which has a very contemporary training provision and is better established in other parts of the country, which is not a minor detail,” Berri pointed out. He also mentioned the efforts of Udelar to provide more technical-based courses, and in the case of INEFOP, a concern for providing training that, without forgetting the traditional crafts, aimed at cutting-edge technological training.

INEFOP has sought to diversify its target audience and not focus exclusively on unemployed workers. In this regard, entities that provide training also include active workers, people vulnerable to unemployment, middle managers of enterprises and entrepreneurs.

With regard to the challenges in the field of vocational training, Berri pointed to its systemic nature and its relationship with the world of work. Regarding the first point, he stressed that progress has been made in Uruguay; “we have a vocational training system that exists and is operational,” he noted, but “much remains to be done in terms of the governance of this system; defining roles and advancing in coordination”. As for the second point, he considered that there had also been progress during this period, but maintained it was an aspect in which more in-depth efforts should be made, so that vocational training offered to workers is directly linked to the needs of the world of work and production.

## 2. Occupations and qualifications

Magela Escutari, advisor to the National Bureau of Employment of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, referred to the second element of the quadrant: the demand for training. She stated that defining occupations and their associated qualifications was very important in determining the demand for training. “Knowing both what jobs will be required as well as what skills will be needed is very important,” she continued.

She then referred to two projects in this line: CETFOR and Employment and Vocational Training Foresight.



The CETFOR project is an initiative aimed at strengthening the institutional framework of employment, vocational training and labour certification public policies, in keeping with what the Uruguayan government has called “a culture of work for development”. It is promoted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MTSS), funded by INEFOP and implemented by ILO/Cinterfor. Its main objective is to develop capacity building and methodological tools in order to update occupational profiles, describe jobs at the sectoral level and promote the implementation of the national occupational certification programme. The sectors that have so far been addressed by the project are urban transportation, forestry and timber, hotels, construction, supermarkets and dairy products. In its second phase, work is being carried out in relation to job descriptions for the communications, food and information technology sectors.

As for the Employment and Vocational Training Foresight project, Escutari emphasized that it was important because it promoted research and the identification of current and anticipated needs in the productive sector, “one of the main tasks facing the national vocational training system”. The National Bureau of Employment and INEFOP are working jointly to conduct two foresight studies in the departments of Durazno, Tacuarembó and San José.

Escutari considered that there was still “much to be done” in terms of demand for training. She added that the number of occupations described was “still marginal, low” and stressed that research activities on future training needed to be extended country-wide and updated more frequently. “However, the consolidation of a set of 12 active sectoral committees in INEFOP provides better institutional conditions to advance on these points, with the support of the actors who are directly involved in the tripartite framework,” Scutari maintained.

### **3. Evaluation and certification system**

Skills certification is a process in which the working capacity demonstrated by workers through the assessment of their skills is publicly and formally recognized. This recognition occurs in relation to a norm, a professional profile, a previously defined standard. In this respect, a National Commission for Occupational Certification was established in Uruguay by Decree 340/018. It operates under INEFOP, is chaired by a DINAE (MTSS) representative and includes representatives of that ministry, CETP-UTU, PIT-CNT and the business chambers. According to Escutari, there have already been specific certification experiences in tourism and forestry, and there are ongoing projects in the care sector.

“While there have been some certification actions, it is very necessary that this line of work should be consolidated, on the understanding that recognizing workers’ skills is a fundamental right. This line is associated with job descriptions,” said the technical expert.

### **4. Guidance and information system**

Berri maintained that a guidance policy is essential if other rights related to vocational training are to be fulfilled. “The point is that workers and anybody receiving vocational training and capacity-building should be able to make good decisions, to think about their educational and career path,” he explained. He stated that in Uruguay’s most recent period of government, “great efforts” were made by DINAE and INEFOP in this regard.

Berri referred particularly to the project on developing a curriculum in Educational and Labour Guidance, part of the project on “Supporting INEFOP in improving labour training skills UR-T1100” with the support of the IDB.

In terms of challenges, Berri pointed to the need to consolidate a systemic vision. “We know that guidance is not limited to DINAE and INEFOP, information about formal education is provided to citizens by INAU (Children’s Institute of Uruguay) and by INJU (National Youth Institute). The consolidation of a systemic vision is essential to ensure that citizens receive homogeneous information with a coherent vision,” insisted the expert.

## Reform is necessary in INEFOP: Business Insights

### Juan Mailhos, National Chamber of Commerce and Services; Director of INEFOP’s employers’ sector

The director of INEFOP’s employers’ sector, Juan Mailhos, said the institute represents a “successful experience” in Uruguay, as well as “institutionalized social dialogue”, although he mentioned some points which he considers should be corrected in the organization’s operations and in vocational training in Uruguay in general.

He recalled that the origins of INEFOP were rooted in the Board of Employment and Vocational Training, which was established in the 1990s “to respond to the unemployment phenomenon which it was certain was going to have an impact on us after the signature of the Mercosur treaty”. “It was expected that there would be companies that would suffer as a result of this opening up to the region and, therefore, it was necessary to convert, retrain affected workers and businesses in these sectors so that they could move forward; the workers in relation to their employability, and entrepreneurs, shifting, if possible, to another activity,” recalled Mailhos. He stressed that the Board “was tripartite in the classic sense of tripartism: workers, entrepreneurs and government” and that decisions were made by consensus. This shows that, in vocational training, “there is always the common interest of the three players in the world of work: the interest of the government is inevitable, as is the interest of workers in achieving employability, but there is also the interest of the business sector in its need of a trained workforce acting appropriately,” said Mailhos. This first Board was not an autonomous legal entity, it operated within the MTSS and administered the Labour Reconversion Fund, which included the contributions of workers and employers.

Later, the Board was modified and INEFOP was created as a non-State public entity, and the administration of the fund and the implementation of its resources began to be decided by majority decisions. At the same time, other target populations began to be included in addition to unemployed workers and workers receiving unemployment insurance: for example, active workers, provided there is agreement between company and workers. And more recently, four years ago, entrepreneurs were also included. “It did not make sense that if the corporate sector contributed to the creation of the fund, small businesses could not also do so, that middle managers could also have access to training provided by INEFOP. Because the situation of small enterprises is also often very precarious in some respects, and they need knowledge and tools to keep their businesses going and competitive in the world of work,” reflected Mailhos. He reported that there are currently 2,600 companies that have resorted to this training and technical assistance in order to be able to perform in the market.



“Today the challenges are different,” Mailhos maintained. He stated that the vocational training system in Uruguay “is at present a pipe dream, which has been announced, but has very little content”. In addition, he questioned the country’s current situation as regards education. “Unfortunately, levels of education have deteriorated significantly in recent years, which is very important when training someone who must then enter the labour market. The institute now allocates funds so that people who dropped out of the formal education system can finish their education cycles, an issue that should not be part of our role, but we have to take it on, because otherwise these people would fall through the cracks,” he regretted. He maintained that the current link between vocational training and education “is not effective; unfortunately, it has led to spreading the deficiencies of formal education to vocational training, making it very rigid and causing difficulties”.

Mailhos also considered that vocational training should analyse the needs of businesses “much more resolutely”. “The name of the institute is INEFOP, and we have done a great deal in connection with vocational training, but we have done very little, and should do much more, on employment issues. If we fail to analyse and understand the employment phenomenon, it will be very difficult for us to arrive at appropriate responses to meet the needs of the market,” he asserted. “If we do not ask workers and employers about this, we shall not be able to make strides in that direction. And it happens that we often spend on vocational training and then the person does not apply the studies and training which we provide in our courses,” he added. In this regard, he considered that there is a need for prospective studies, but also for a thorough understanding of the current reality of companies and workers. “We should not forget that private companies, sustainable businesses, those that meet the conditions of decent work and the whole of the framework established by the ILO’s sustainable enterprises declaration, constitute, in our view, the greatest reserves of decent work in our countries. It seems very important, therefore, to bear in mind what these companies can tell us about what their needs are and what training they need in order to bridge the famous skills gap that exists in all of our countries,” he stated.

He regretted that after 16 years of uninterrupted economic growth in Uruguay, it has not been possible to “radically and decisively” pare down the percentage of people working in the informal sector. “Even now, in Uruguay, more than a quarter of the economically active population works in the informal sector, which is a problem that should also be attacked much more decisively,” he noted. Likewise, the new jobs resulting from technology platforms are not capable of generating decent employment, he indicated. “We need to use our imagination to create conditions that respect rights, contribute to public burdens, develop activity within all of society’s parameters for this kind of business and this kind of worker,” he urged.

Mailhos also considered that “a new generation of changes in INEFOP” should be implemented. Firstly, to ensure “the institute’s management autonomy” from the State. In INEFOP, a majority in favour of an initiative cannot be reached if the MTSS representative does not vote in favour of it, and therefore “it is very difficult for funds to be allocated freely according to both workers’ and employers’ wishes,” when this is, in fact, “the purpose of these vocational training institutes”. He claimed that although workers, employers and the State should contribute to the fund, the latter is not doing so. “It is true we have a law that has tried to find a way to mitigate the situation, but the State is still owing more than 40 million USD to the Labour Reconversion Fund,” he revealed.

Secondly, Mailhos considered that the board of INEFOP, consisting of eight members, “seems too large” for the efficient administration of the Labour Reconversion Fund. In addition, he judged that the social economy sector should not be represented because “it is only another form of enterprise organization,” and therefore is already represented by the business sector.

Thirdly, he maintained that the institute should put an end to a phenomenon “that has developed exponentially” in recent years, which is to outsource its management of certain target populations to other institutions, most of them public, which “take advantage of agreements reached with INEFOP, circumventing budgetary rules and generating additional resources”. “Today, between 30% and 40% of INEFOP’s expenditure is absorbed by public bodies of the most diverse nature. This at some point will have to be adjusted and restricted decisively,” Mailhos emphasized.

Fourthly, the business representative reiterated that the institute has done “very little regarding the issue of employment”. “We are funding training activities without full knowledge of what the job is, and this often leads to our failing in the training we provide. The mandate of the institute itself determines that we should carry out a much more extensive study of the issue of employment, otherwise it is very difficult to focus our actions and make them succeed,” he asserted. He added that provision of assistance in vocational training for businesses should increase considerably.

Mailhos concluded by saying that while the business sector is committed to institutionalized and tripartite social dialogue in INEFOP, and shares many of its developments, they are now “at a crossroads that will require some reformulations in order to make it wider and more effective, in order to fulfil the real objectives for which it was created”.

## The vision of workers: tripartism, collective bargaining and productive diversification

### Milton Castellanos, representative of PIT-CNT, Uruguay

The workers’ representative framed the existence of INEFOP within the long history of tripartism in Uruguay, initiated in the 1940s. Tripartism in Uruguay transcends the strictly labour-related area and covers other areas such as social security, health and education. But today in Uruguay and the world, “tripartism and collective bargaining are being affected, attacked, and increasingly devalued,” warned Castellanos.

As an example of this, he related a personal anecdote. He said that the first time he visited the ILO headquarters in Geneva, in the 1980s, he saw some posters at the entrance, saying: “We shall advocate for the fundamental conventions”. Within a few years, the posters no longer referred to collective bargaining, but to social dialogue. And these are distinct concepts, Castellanos pointed out, because “in a society with competing interests, the issue is not dialogue, but negotiation, because it is about interests, and interests are often opposed to each other”. Some years later, when he went again to the ILO, the posters read: “corporate social responsibility”. “Not even social dialogue; I was arriving at a scenario in which it seemed that it was employers who were now responsible,” he remarked. And finally, in the PIT-CNT’s last visit



to the ILO's headquarters in June 2019, for the International Conference, union representatives found that Uruguay was on the blacklist of countries to which observations had been made, Castellanos revealed.

In short, he considered that there had been a decline in tripartism and bargaining, which are “the tools that INEFOP enables”. Labour reforms in Brazil, Argentina and Chile, are cause for concern in the trade union movement, warned Castellanos.

“Tripartism and collective bargaining are also fundamental because they are in line with the kind of society I want. If bargaining or dialogue systems did not exist in labour relations and the world of work; who would resolve the issues? The market would, and we all know that when the market allocates its resources, it usually fails to resolve the problems of equity and social justice. The well-known fissures that appear in our societies are produced by market-related issues. Without the State, without tripartite participation, without bargaining opportunities, it is very difficult to resolve the problems of equity and social justice,” maintained Castellanos.

He then stated that social justice and equity have a great deal to do with bargaining, “and if we fail to water that premise every day, we lose ground day by day, and increasingly, the ILO, the agencies and the countries are giving in to the market and inequities become commonplace”. “We should fight strenuously in defence of tripartism and collective bargaining as fundamental premises for any area of social dialogue,” he insisted.

Castellanos considered that one of the main problems in Uruguay and in most of the countries in the region when designing public employment policies is related to the country's production matrix. “In Uruguay we have a production matrix dating back more than 100 years, based primarily on commodities. These are sectors with little labour, and a great deal of technology. That does not mean that we are against commodities. But if you draw up a chart and look at the five major export producers a hundred years ago and the five current ones, one hundred years later, they are the same, perhaps with some few changes in oleaginous crops and forestry,” he remarked.

He argued that vocational training must be part of a virtuous circuit incorporating productive capacities, production diversification, investment and the role of the State. He considered that there must be a combination of efforts to make employment and vocational training part of the diversification of the production matrix.

## Employment and vocational training challenges in Uruguay

Eduardo Pereyra, INEFOP Director General

Uruguay's comprehensive strategy for productive, economic and social development was the focus of the intervention by Eduardo Pereyra, director general of INEFOP. The senior official said that a strategy should be defined in order to promote development and employment, and that this cannot be limited only to labour market, vocational training or employment policies.

As the Minister of Labour and Social Security, Ernesto Murro, noted in his opening address, Pereyra also highlighted the exceptional economic growth experienced by Uruguay recently

and said that despite the fact that today's economy is growing "at very low rates" and it is sought to reactivate it, "the economic cycle was utilized to extraordinary effect" in recent years.

The keys to this economic growth were, according to Pereyra:

1. The existence of a strategy to promote public works, generating assets and emblematic investment in the country: the Central Railway project, the harbour works, the new airport, roadworks with 150 points throughout the country. "An unprecedented investment in educational infrastructure: nearly 200 new buildings including schools, high schools, UTU and UTEC," Pereyra pointed out.
2. He referred to the development of new activities involving technology in Uruguay: renewable energy, new communications activities, film, mechatronics, automation.
3. Encouragement of private endeavours. "There is no precedent" in Uruguay for fiscal renunciation of the magnitude that occurred in the last ten years with the purpose of stimulating new ventures, highlighted Pereyra. This includes promoting the activity of pulp and paper companies. The director general of INEFOP reported that private investment has created 60 thousand new companies and more than 300 thousand jobs in recent years.
4. Social coverage was strengthened with new benefits for the population; for maternity care, disability, unemployment insurance. "We now have unemployment insurance models tailored to the relevant sectors, which are very flexible," noted the senior official.
5. In the past 15 years, investment in education has tripled, reaching almost universal coverage in education for children aged 3 to 6 years, with record levels of attendance for UTU and secondary and tertiary education enrolment. "And education is the foundation for resolving the human resources issues affecting the production sector, industry and the State," Pereyra stated.
6. Uruguay is characterized by its political and legal stability, and social participation.
7. Wages increased steadily in the last fifteen years, as did pensions, and this is key if one considers that the domestic market allocates 75% of employment in the country, noted Pereyra.
8. New agencies were created: INEFOP, Uruguay XXI (to promote market access and diversification), the National Agency for Research and Innovation (ANII) and the National Development Agency (ANDE), which promotes policies supporting small and medium enterprises.

The director general also mentioned some progress achieved by employment and vocational training policies, and particularly by the institute, in recent years:

- Lifelong training. Progress has been made in this area and we must continue along the same lines, he underscored.
- The recognition that knowledge is generated not only in academic fields or in the classroom, but also in the workplace. "This has been consolidated in Uruguay, and we consider it a very significant conceptual breakthrough. We must continue to move forward in recognizing this knowledge and we need to validate it; the business sector should have an open mind to recognize that this is a worker in possession of certain knowledge, acquired differently," Pereyra indicated.



- Development of youth policies. The senior official stressed that, in recent years, 3,000 socially vulnerable young people had entered the labour market as a result of economic incentives that the business sector used very well. In addition, the State offers 18,000 grants of between 3,000 to 18,000 pesos (about 80 to 500 US dollars) – half of them financed by INEFOP – aimed at young women who are heads of households, to enable them to continue their studies.
- Consolidation of a system to monitor traffic between primary and secondary education; it is necessary to keep records and follow-up on young people who drop out of the education system and attempt their return.
- Consolidation of public employment services that incorporate technical advances. “We have to move forward on these systems. Our challenge is what to do with this information: we often have information, but do not know how to apply it, or we find it difficult to bring this information into everyday practice. We must try to generate devices and invest, so that information can enable the adjustment of policies. Policies need to be flexible, adjustable, we must not remain in one place and believe that everything goes according to a protocol, because that is going against the nature of the tools we have to handle,” Pereyra considered.
- The importance of decentralization and local development. Pereyra referred to investment made in other parts of the country. “There are also development strategies at local levels, with a view to attracting investment; we must recognize this so that we can also adapt policies to local needs,” he stated.

Finally, he listed the main challenges for future employment policies and vocational training:

**1. Training civil servants.** “It is not possible to become a top-rated State without a strategic plan for training human resources in the public sector,” maintained the senior official. He added that legal and regulatory changes should be implemented to enable INEFOP participation in training civil servants.

**2. Productivity and competitiveness as part of collective bargaining.** This is a key tool “to avoid having the burden always shifted onto the final cost or to avoid making whoever has not sat at the bargaining table pay the cost,” warned Pereyra. He added that it is necessary to discuss productivity agreements with the minimum transfer of bargaining costs to the final product or third parties.

**3. Dual training.** On this point, Pereyra considered that progress had been made. An agreement was signed in late 2018 between the Ministries of Labour and of Education, INEFOP, the Chamber of Industries of Uruguay, the National Chamber of Commerce and Services and PIT-CNT, which enables apprentices undergoing training to join a company, collecting 75% of the daily wage for that category. However, the official added that we must “be self-critical and acknowledge that we are delayed in this”. “We should already have had several experiences this year of putting dual training into practice,” he considered. He stressed that dual training has several advantages: it incorporates practice “more intensively”, creates incentives for students, enhances convenient aspects for the business sector and the education system, and enables the inclusion of groups in vulnerable situations.

**4. Assessment of social dialogue in Uruguay.** Pereyra maintained that Uruguay, “beyond our issues and our disputes,” is a country with a long democratic tradition, and political, legal and

social stability. “It does not mean that we have no differences, of course we do, and we have found a way to handle them wisely,” he concluded.

## Conference: Vocational Training for Sustainable Development

### Focusing on persons

#### Srinivas Reddy, Department of Skills, Knowledge and Employability (EMP/ SKILLS)

Reddy began by pointing out that a changing world of work requires us to change our practices: “it implies that we should do things differently and ask ourselves how we can empower people to acquire skills that will enable them to get decent jobs.”

One of the main concerns of employers, workers and governments is the skills gap. On this issue there is a “kind of disparity”: people are training, but employers complain that there is a shortage of the type of skills they require. “So, how do we reduce this gap? How can we make skills training programmes meet the needs of the market?” asked Reddy. Firstly, through social dialogue, he answered. In that regard, he felt that the experience of Latin America and the Caribbean was inspiring and “a model in terms of skills development through the process of social dialogue”. “I think this is key. Skills for the labour market will continue to change and the best way to provide them is through social dialogue,” he indicated. He then stated that in his role as head of skills and employability in Geneva, he would like to promote ways of sharing best practices developed in the region.

Reddy was optimistic about the future of work. He said that new technologies “would, of course, force some people out” of their jobs, but that new jobs would be created. The challenge is, then, how to prepare people for these changes in market demand. He mentioned, for example, that ILO reports indicate that the fight against climate change and the green economy could generate 24 million new jobs, offsetting somewhat the loss of 6 million jobs as a result of environmental degradation. Other ILO reports estimate that the care economy could generate 470 million jobs by 2030. “The report suggests that the professionalization of the care economy can be a good vehicle to create decent work,” Reddy noted. The care economy includes areas from health care to domestic work. “As you know, in various parts of the world there are forms of exploitation in the care economy. Therefore, professionalizing it and bringing in elements of dignity and decent work, by providing skills that take into account the interests of workers and protect their rights and responsibilities, is an opportunity,” he considered.

Regarding the migratory movement taking place globally, he recalled that the year before, the ILO and UNESCO had launched a Global Skills Partnership, focusing on promoting opportunities for skills development for migrants in their country of origin, before emigrating to the destination economy. Thus, migrants would have an opportunity to explore jobs in their own economy before considering migrating. If they decided to migrate, their decision would be based on the skills required in the target markets, and there would be fewer opportunities for exploitation, Reddy indicated. The expert said that the recognition of skills in migration processes is key, both to perform in the destination economy and when migrants return to their country of origin.



“We can promote opportunities for recognition, evaluation and certification in order to encourage those people to join their local economies and benefit their own countries,” he stressed.

On the other hand, he considered that globalization should be seen as an opportunity to “incorporate the skills that global supply offers”.

Finally, he wondered how workers could quickly be provided with the skills they needed to make the transition into a changing world of work. “The school-to-work transition is important, but so is the transition from job to job. When labour is facing disruptions, how can we prepare people to make this transition smoothly? This is an element that we are promoting,” Reddy reported. In this regard, he added that two main considerations should be taken into account. One is to continue to promote employability for people, as stated in the ILO’s Recommendation No. 195: the development of skills and lifelong learning is the anchor that provides the framework for people to acquire skills and get a decent job. A second dimension is to increase skills and thereby help enterprises achieve prosperity.

Finally, the expert mentioned some of the ILO’s main instruments in this field: tools for trade, economic development and diversification; special tools to promote jobs in the green area. He revealed that in its international conferences of 2021 and 2022, the ILO would discuss new apprenticeship standards, and that the agency would also promote the inclusion of gender equity as a major issue. “There is a study that shows that in many countries the participation of women in technical and vocational training is low. Therefore, more proactive measures are required in order to promote the access of women to skills development,” Reddy considered. Likewise, he indicated that access to training should be provided to groups living in rural areas and people with disabilities.

Reddy recalled that the ILO’s Centenary Declaration calls for a people-centred approach, and therefore, we should also think about how to develop skills with an approach that puts people first in the field of vocational training. To this end, it is essential to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue. “Personally, I think this region is offering a very good example as a model to promote social dialogue and skills development,” he noted.

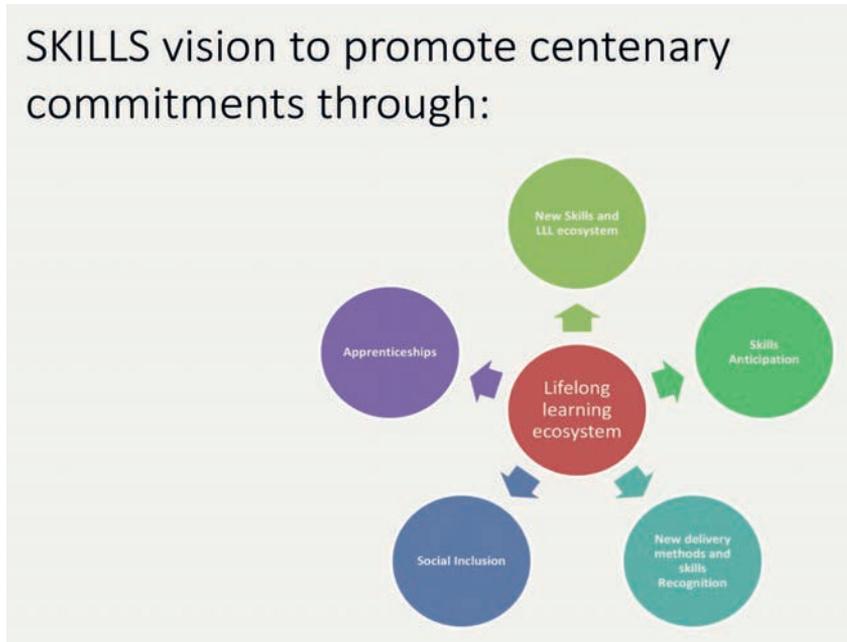
A people-centred approach should aim to enshrine lifelong learning as a universal right, as stated in the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work. “This means that people worldwide have the right to have access to skills development and lifelong learning. Not many countries have this approach at present. Therefore, (the Commission’s report) provides a framework and a dimension,” noted Reddy. He also advised that the key questions are how to finance this learning, how to implement it and what responsibilities do the State, companies and individuals have in the process. In this regard, Reddy reported that the ILO was exploring the concept of “paid free time”, which suggests that people must have the opportunity of taking paid time off, as well as the “right to training” that people can use when they feel they need to acquire new skills.

Reddy mentioned that another challenge was to organize skills development in the informal economy, and considered it desirable for mechanisms to exist in each country, adapted to workers in the informal economy.

He also considered it necessary to rethink how to prepare young people in a world in which “read bulky manuals and books is not fashionable”. He proposed in this regard that training and

skills programmes could be uploaded onto mobile phones. Thus, “people can train while at the train station, on a plane or at the airport, as they prefer”. “We need to allow people to acquire skills without attending an institution, without them needing to join a programme. This is a new dimension that we should like to explore, and set up apprenticeship-based enterprises, and work-based apprenticeships,” he stated. He reported that the ILO would be developing these skills-development strategies the following year, through a tripartite consultation process.

## SKILLS vision to promote centenary commitments through:



### ILO/Cinterfor actions in vocational training

ILO/Cinterfor team: Enrique Deibe, Anaclara Matosas, Fernando Vargas, Gonzalo Graña, Michael Axmann, Rodrigo Filgueira, Ximena Iannino

Enrique Deibe, director of ILO/Cinterfor, emphasized that vocational training plays an increasingly important role on the agendas of countries and actors in the world of work. He recalled that in the Declaration of Panama, all of the countries in the region, as well as the social partners agreed on the central role of education and training in career development policies, and they stressed the importance of lifelong learning. Deibe also mentioned the Centenary Declaration, which includes the need to invest in people’s capabilities and to create conditions for people at different transition stages to have access to training and education.

Meanwhile, in the United Nations agenda for sustainable development, “each of the 17 goals” express the countries’ decision “to build a fairer society, to do away with many of the deficiencies and inequalities that are present today,” Deibe indicated. He mentioned in particular two of the 17 goals: number four, which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” and number eight, which aims to “promote



sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. “In both of these goals, the issue of job training, capacity building and lifelong education are strongly present,” Deibe stressed.

He stated that ILO/Cinterfor is “actively committed” to these goals and said he felt “proud of and honoured by” the work performed by the institution’s team in support of vocational training in each country. Each of the team members then referred to some aspects of the work being carried out in vocational training, guided by Deibe’s questions.

Fernando Vargas, Senior Specialist in Vocational Training, referred to the main lines that should be encouraged in order to respond to technological, environmental, demographic and global trade changes that are challenging institutions and qualifications systems. “We all agree that there are a number of drivers, elements that are changing the landscape,” he noted. And he added that if everything is changing so rapidly outside, in the market, the question we should ask is how much are we are changing within our institutions. “How long have we been using the same methodologies to define profiles? How are we talking to employers in order translate their training needs? How are we involving workers in defining programmes? How are these new technologies somehow challenging the traditional way we develop our programmes over time?” he asked.

Vargas stated that training environments are changing with the new digital technologies and new ways of learning. He considered that training institutions should be aware of these changes and of emerging innovations, and generate lines of work which address these new demands.

Vargas also stressed the importance of language, and, in particular, of translating and “simplifying” concepts such as occupational profile, curriculum design, training programme. “We need to make that translation and that methodology much simpler and we are working with several institutions to that end. It took us six, seven or eight months to develop a programme and we shall probably have to do it in much less time; we must change the way in which we discuss these issues with the sectors in order to determine these demands,” he considered.

He mentioned that there are many private training providers, and even some people who argue that YouTube “is the most important channel providing access to knowledge; there is a video there for almost anything you need”. “And obviously this lacks didactic content, lacks a structure, lacks being part of a programme format, but we should not ignore such signs of change.

There are already institutions that develop programmes through the Internet with the remote participation of students; how well or how poorly have we fared in that regard?” asked Vargas.

Finally, he considered that new forms of funding should be sought. “Traditional financing systems based on payroll percentages are being increasingly brought into question, if not removed,” he alerted. “We must find ways of partnering with the private sector, how to finance programmes jointly, how to partner with local authorities, members of special interest groups at the level of production chains or of local sectoral bodies, find ways of working together,” he added. It no longer involves a solid and monolithic training institution working alone, but an institution that needs to mingle and blend. In addition, he stressed that the form of funding determines the degree of innovation: “The more such financing depends on a single source, the more likely it is that our level of innovation will be reduced”.

Gonzalo Graña, National Officer of Social Dialogue and Vocational Training, referred to the state of social dialogue in vocational training. He noted that, within the ILO, social dialogue includes many things: information sharing, consultation, participation; but also, collective bargaining. “It is related to systems governance and, ultimately, to the answers as to who, how, where and when decisions that affect us all in the world of work are made,” he summarized.

With regard to the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work, he considered the section on “Revitalizing collective representation” in the chapter on “Increasing investment in the institutions of work” to be “excellent”, particularly where it states: “We call for public policies that promote collective representation and social dialogue” and adds: “Governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations are parties to the social contract, responsible for its design and delivery through social dialogue. Collective representation of workers and employers through social dialogue is a public good that lies at the heart of democracy. It should be encouraged and promoted through public policies.” Graña stressed that this defines a matter of principle that is very important for the ILO, “very well and synthetically”. “In the field of vocational training, social dialogue is essential; it is key to achieving many goals. It is key to achieving the goal of training relevance in relation to the needs of the production system. It is key to achieving the involvement of social partners and the ownership of programmes and policies that they themselves help to design, implement and evaluate. It is key to ensuring effective access to vocational training by all social groups and collectives and is also key to monitoring compliance with regulations in some training contracts,” stressed the specialist.

Like Reddy, Graña also emphasized the importance of the ILO’s Recommendation 195 on human resources development, and lifelong training and education, which refers “very clearly” to the need for tripartism and social dialogue. This does not mean “that all actors have the same responsibilities and the same roles within the system,” noted Graña. “Depending on what kind of training and capacity-building we are talking about, stakeholders, governments, workers’ and employers’ representatives will have to intervene in a variety of ways. Therefore, tripartism implies the participation of all, but tripartism does not imply exactly the same responsibilities for all,” he explained.

He then mentioned some of the signs of continuity and change in social dialogue on training. Among the first, he referred to tripartism in the management and administration of national vocational training institutions, particularly those following the model of Central America and some countries in the Caribbean; tripartism in institutions responsible for managing countries’ skills systems; and tripartism in institutions responsible for designing and implementing active employment and training policies. Some of the elements of innovation or change he mentioned included the issue of incorporating vocational training and capacity-building in collective bargaining and collective agreement processes by industry or business sector; incorporating training and retraining in the process of organizational restructuring, process re-engineering and the incorporation of technology; as well as the development of new forms of social dialogue and bargaining on issues that are not the conventional ones.

In conclusion, Graña maintained that social dialogue is an element to be promoted and defended, and that we need to prioritize the issue of vocational training in the agendas of some employers’ and workers’ organizations. “In a way, here we are talking and preaching to the converted, all of us here know that social dialogue, bargaining and participation are important, but that is not necessarily the case everywhere, and I think that this is something we



should strengthen, in addition to promoting it in public policy on bargaining involving vocational training,” he maintained. In this respect, he considered it essential to build capacity among social partners and governments, in order to achieve effective participation in the field of social dialogue on this matter.

Ximena Iannino, Chief Technical Coordinator for the CETFOR Project, referred to this initiative of the MTSS of Uruguay and INEFOP, which has already been in place for three years. The project aims to develop a toolbox that will attempt to update the incorporation of technology in role descriptions and assessments. “We face the challenge of incorporating the technological changes, the new skills of the world of work into these descriptions. This toolbox seeks to work together with stakeholders very actively, from the beginning of the process, in order to generate dialogue opportunities and develop those inputs that are necessary to enable the update and incorporation of these new technologies and skills in job descriptions,” she explained.

The project works in connection with a framework of sectoral skills that makes it possible to pinpoint new labour market needs, think about healthy, safe and green jobs, and work on lifelong learning, Iannino noted. The skills that are necessary for the sectors are identified and then portrayed in observable behaviours that make it possible to identify and work on aspects of certification, training and career development. “The framework contains this strategic perspective, which enables us to work towards the future in relation to these skills; job descriptions can be updated and can continue to be updated to the extent that these skills continue to be incorporated,” said the specialist.

Work is also carried out on evaluating job roles; that is, those features which are necessary for the job are identified and then a matrix is obtained on which they are arranged in an orderly manner; this makes it possible to work on occupational paths and career development. “In addition, we will be able to identify training needs for those workers and at the same time, think about training strategies at a more central and more political level in relation to developing skills sectorally,” Iannino noted.

For his part, Michael Axmann, Senior Specialist in Business, Productivity and Vocational Training, referred to the work of ILO/Cinterfor in relation to pre-apprenticeship and quality apprenticeship. He noted that there are many challenges in this area, owing to the employment situation. In particular, he mentioned that the youth unemployment rate in Latin America is 18%, that the region’s productivity remains constant while in Asia, for example, it increases 200 or 300%; and that there has been no significant improvement in working conditions over the last 20 years. “So here we have three problems: employability, productivity and competitiveness, and working conditions. How can quality apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship react in all three cases?” he asked.

He explained that, in terms of quality apprenticeship, the ILO/Cinterfor operates on the basis of four main pillars. The first is the concept of social dialogue. The second is the division of roles in vocational training between governments, training providers and trade unions. The third is funding, and the fourth, quality apprenticeship legislation. Axmann mentioned the apprenticeship guide produced by ILO/Cinterfor, containing best practices in Latin America and other countries in the world. He reported that the methodology had been used in four countries in Central America and the Caribbean – Panama, Costa Rica, Belize and the Dominican Republic – and in Uruguay, and that it would also be used in Paraguay and Brazil.

Rodrigo Filgueira, National Officer for pedagogical and technological innovation, spoke about the challenges in this area for vocational training. He recalled that the Technical Committee of 2015 had included the issue of methodologies and technologies as a focal point for the work of ILO/Cinterfor, “because we determined that there was room for and a need to change what was being done in the classroom, which was having a negative impact on skills development”. “There were a number of things we wanted to happen that were not actually happening because we were still working with more traditional models in terms of training. Often, even anchored in a theory/practice duality, for example,” he admitted. He explained that they had taken advantage of the future of work initiative, which put the focus on cross-cutting soft skills in order to introduce discussion on the need to develop these skills, which was where the greatest deficiencies had been identified in terms of skills development.

In any case, Filgueira remarked that in the curricula of some European countries or Canada, the idea of developing soft skills – communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving – had already appeared 30 years ago. “What we are discussing now as an innovation is not what we should do, we just have to do it,” he emphasized. He added that ILO/Cinterfor had resolved to focus on a specific type of training methodology based on projects. “We understood that by promoting its use and mainstreaming project-based training, we would create an umbrella for the various methodological improvements that are necessary in the current scenario,” Filgueira maintained.

He indicated that the proposal is to develop skills through projects, because when one works on projects in teams, solving real problems, one needs to develop the skills of collaboration, communication, problem solving, creativity. “Project-based work is working on labour skills comprehensively,” said the specialist.

In terms of challenges, he noted that teachers must often handle a great many expectations: it is expected that a well-trained teacher should be capable of putting these innovations into practice, “and in this field we encounter several problems”. In the first place, sometimes teachers “are not at all flexible in terms of moving from one type of training to another.” Secondly, sometimes there is investment in teachers who then, for one reason or another, leave the institution. Therefore, Filgueira stressed that it is important to support changes not only through teachers, but also through supervision, and curriculum design and development, so that the rest of the institution can accompany the change.

Finally, he pointed out that innovation in this case is not about creating tools that do not exist, but about working in projects, with active methodologies and experiential training.

Closing the panel, Anaclara Matosas, Head of ILO/Cinterfor’s Knowledge and Information Management, underscored the agency’s commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, under the pledge to “leave no one behind”, and to revaluing vocational training as an instrument for the inclusion of the most vulnerable populations. She noted that they were working on a set of focal points that should cross-cut training, for example, mainstreaming the gender perspective. In any case, although the gender perspective had been incorporated as a cross-cutting focal point, work in this field should be strengthened, Matosas maintained. We should not only think about how to add more women in areas where they are not present, but also about mainstreaming methodologies to incorporate the gender perspective in the design of policies and training tools. Other perspectives must also be included – the diversity



approach, the cross-generational perspective – so that training can be a tool for labour and social inclusion. She added that a line of work on health and safety at work had recently been developed, which needs to begin to be mainstreamed in training.

Vocational training can also make a contribution to the environment, noted Matosas: “The world is crying out for help and we must also see how we can contribute through training to changing lifestyles, production methods and ways of providing services to respect the planet and safeguard our future.”

In short, she stressed that the idea was to “leave no one behind and enhance training as a tool for the inclusion of the most vulnerable sectors and groups”.

## Discussion panel 1: The future of work: social dialogue and bargaining for change at work and the role of vocational training

### Participants

Ricardo Mewes / Trade sector, business leader, Vice President of ChileValora

Juan Moreno / Trade sector, trade union leader, President of ChileValora

Álvaro Mandressi / Hotels and Restaurants Association of Uruguay (ARHU)

Fernanda Aguirre / Single Catering and Hotel Trade Union of Uruguay (SUGHU)

Silvia García / INEFOP, Uruguay

Gonzalo Graña / ILO/Cinterfor (moderator)

The objective of this discussion was to share three social dialogue experiences on issues linked directly or indirectly to vocational training.

Firstly, the collective bargaining experience at the Walmart company in Chile was addressed. Following a period of conflict that led to a one-week strike at the company, technological change and a reorganization process were incorporated as the object of collective bargaining. Walmart accounts for 42% of the market in Chile and is one of the largest companies in the world. Walmart’s trade union is one of the most representative in the country, with 52% of the workforce belonging to the union.

As explained in the discussion group by Walmart’s union leader, Juan Moreno, the driving factor behind the strike was not wages but the transformation of jobs. “When we talk about the transformation of jobs, we refer to people who were performing a particular function, their job,

and they were going to stop carrying out that function and would have to take on three other functions. This is called multifunctionality, and we could not accept that workers had to pay for that nominal saving; there had to be a transition, so that workers could benefit too. That's where training could come into play, how these people could be retrained for new tasks," Moreno indicated.

A bargaining panel on Productivity and Transformation was set up, where workers and employers came to agreements on installing machines and automated services in supermarkets. It was agreed that 10,000 jobs would become multifunctional, and decisions were made on the type of training that the company would deliver to those who were taking on new tasks and those who were leaving the company. "The training issue is very important for us, but for the people who were leaving more than for the people who would be staying in the company. Workers have to be certified in their skills so that gives them an edge when returning to the labour market with increased skills," argued Moreno. "The way a person moves in the world of work is no longer so structured, so rigid, but there must be training to enable such mobility," he added.

Moreno questioned the idea of multifunctionality: he argued that it is simply a question of a person taking on multiple tasks at a lower wage cost. "All they are looking for is to lower the cost associated with having a specialist," he complained. In the case of the Walmart trade union, it was possible to include the limits and roles of multifunctionality in the collective agreement, and the corresponding wages to be paid. This was the first collective agreement in Chile where it was agreed to pay for a change in role, highlighted Moreno, but he wondered what room for manoeuvre would other, smaller, unions have for these achievements in a country like Chile, where bargaining by industry area does not exist. "Today, if we do not take care, if we do not make things clear, multifunctionality can become a form of low-cost labour, creating job insecurity, and that is what we worry about," he stated.

The second experience described was the case of Chile's Bureau of Commerce. As entrepreneur Ricardo Mewes reported, employers and workers joined forces to present an alternative to a parliamentary motion determining that businesses were to close on Sundays. "Obviously, we entrepreneurs were going to be tremendously affected, but so would the workers," stated Mewes.

The employers and unions held meetings with the then Minister of Labour, and after three months, an agreement was reached that was presented to the National Congress as an alternative to the motion and it was approved. It meant that businesses did not need to close on Sundays, and that the hourly pay of workers would increase. "It was a tremendously important experience for our future relationship," added Mewes. He considered that by engaging in this kind of dialogue entrepreneurs become familiar with "the struggles that people, workers, go through in the light of technological change," while workers also got to know about "the struggles of the business world". "In this we are all affected, no one escapes," he emphasized, and considered that "to the extent that we managed to make the unions and union leaders see what our struggles consist of, it is clear that it is possible to move forward together to solve problems". He summarized the positive impacts of social dialogue, in one word: trust. "The trust factor is critical to achieving the goals we have set," he maintained.



The third case addressed in the discussion group was the sectoral job evaluation experience for the catering and hotel sector in Uruguay.

Silvia García, of Uruguay's INEFOP, explained that this experience emerged under the sectoral committee for employment and vocational training in the tourism sector. In it, workers and employers raised the need to come up with job descriptions to update the categories used in the Wage Councils, which dated mostly from 1971 and 1972. They worked for a year and a half, held 38 bipartite meetings, 215 field surveys and finally achieved descriptions for 98 jobs. The Human Resources areas of companies provided information on various jobs, the experts consulted provided information on descriptions and the sectoral bipartite committee gradually sorted out the job descriptions.

“This skills framework and occupations structure is for all companies in the sector, and marks a base, a starting point for each company to then generate its own structure,” explained García. She stressed that the sector “has a level of maturity that allows it to sit around this table with a significant level of confidence that it will achieve these results” and was actively involved in the process.

Union leader Fernanda Aguirre reported that, as in the case of Chile, the bargaining table had been set up after a high level of conflict had arisen. The sector had achieved no collective agreement in the Wage Councils of 2010. “The need for job descriptions began to develop on the basis of discussions on the multifunctionality that occurs in the world of work when there is no clarity on demands regarding the tasks that workers are required to perform,” she noted.

Álvaro Mandressi, representing the employers in the process, recalled “the fears and uncertainties” that existed at the beginning, and said that convincing the business community of the need to participate took time. But finally, this was accepted because “it was a new bipartite scenario”; employers and workers, as well as the CETFOR team: “without them, this probably would not have ended as it did,” considered Mandressi. “One of the things that gave us safeguards was that this would only be resolved if both parties agreed. For the business sector that was like saying: ‘Well, let’s take a gamble’, because we were not conditioned to having to accept no matter what,” he reported.

As a strategy for the process to come to fruition, they decided to gamble on trust and to define the scope of negotiation as a technical venue: “Let us leave out the political aspect for when we have to approach it, but now let us focus on technical issues, on reality, on our field work,” noted Mandressi.

In the same vein, Aguirre reported that the trade union’s political choice was to channel efforts into technical work that would enable a future collective agreement to include all of that material and acquire the force of law. “Instead of developing a classic conflict with our forces taking to the street, we said: ‘well, we are undertaking this commitment to take on this technical work, where we avoid multifunctionality, where we commit to the functional career of our colleagues, to recognizing workers’ specific and cross-cutting skills; let us carry out this task with the commitment that if we can agree and can reach a specific outcome, we shall legitimize it and validate it in a collective agreement’,” the union leader recalled.

García considered that another strategy to shield the project from conflict was the prospective attitude: “our work aims to look towards the future, so job descriptions can provide inputs to see what is coming, to detect future needs, not only regarding jobs, but also in vocational training”.

Aguirre explained that the needs for specific training for each job category that makes up the sector were established and in-depth work was performed into the content that must be included in each of the courses through the Terms of Reference (TOR).

Mandressi stated that it was quite a challenge to think of “the whole forest”, from the perspective of small two-star hotels to the large chains, and that they had opted for flexibility. “We actually agreed that certain jobs had their own specific definitions which applied to certain organizations,” he pointed out. He gave the example of receptionists at two-star hotels, who not only act as receptionists, but also help with the bags, and if they have to take water to a room, they do so; unlike a five-star hotel, where the receptionist is simply a receptionist.

Such situations were resolved by including a phrase stating that the definition may be flexible depending on the exigencies and needs of the service provided. This “was not a blank cheque meaning that no other jobs to be recognized,” but was intended to ensure, “under certain circumstances in these establishments and for specific periods, that one worker could cover certain gaps so that the service was not affected,” explained the entrepreneur. “And it also guaranteed that in slack periods, workers could keep their jobs and that the establishment had no need to send people to unemployment insurance. This clause is a novelty for the labour movement in Uruguay; including flexibility was not well thought of,” Mandressi noted. He clarified that when an employee performs part of another job, for however long, he or she gets paid at the higher rate, thus “ensuring that the establishment does not benefit from applying this flexibility”. Aguirre agreed that the spirit was to “neutralize and limit multifunctionality, which is detrimental to the occupational health of my colleagues”.

Finally, the result of their work was incorporated into the collective agreements of the hospitality industry and has the force of law. In addition, Aguirre announced that, with the advice of CETFOR, they were now seeking to assign a wage minimum for each job category, “with the technical reference of assigning a wage on the basis of specific and cross-cutting skills as defined for each task,” she emphasized.

Gonzalo Graña, of the ILO/Cinterfor team and moderator of the discussion group, reported that there were CETFOR projects for other sectors; construction, forestry and timber, and the public sector at a subnational level. He stressed that this tool was available to anyone interested and as a strategy, it is “very powerful for human resources management at the sectoral level, and even for social dialogue”.

In addition to recounting these experiences, the discussion group addressed the following topics:

**Training foresight.** Mewes reported that ChileValora, together with the Chilean government, is developing a foresight project to discover what training to provide in the trade sector, with what skills and how such skills would be certified, so that people “can transform their current jobs, which they will probably lose, into new opportunities”.

**The reduction of working hours in Chile.** The Chilean employer and worker representatives in the discussion group were consulted on the project to reduce the working hours in Chile



from 45 to 40. Union leader Juan Moreno considered that this might be a double-edged sword, requiring workers to have more than one job in order to achieve a living wage. Business representative Ricardo Mewes believed that the issue of productivity needed to be analysed. “What will become of small and medium-sized enterprises when they are forced to reduce their working hours? Costs are likely to increase. All of this discussion sounds fantastic from the social point of view, who would not want to have more time to devote to their personal activities? But, clearly, the discussion does not include these elements that I am putting on the table. Whenever you talk about these things you have to show numbers and see how it affects the country,” he considered.

**On platforms.** The representative of the Uruguayan business sector, Álvaro Mandressi, reported that they had introduced a bill to regulate applications such as Airbnb, to ensure that they adhered to the regulations: that they were registered, paid taxes and complied with the legislation. He stated that the emergence of these platforms “really affects” the sector because they represent “unfair competition”. In addition, they can encourage criminal activity, because they are exempt from the obligation that formal hotels must abide by of reporting everyone who lodges at their establishments, in order to spot people who are wanted by the police.

Trade union leader Fernanda Aguirre agreed on the need to regulate platforms. “The emergence of these applications in Uruguay generally results in precarious working conditions for the workers,” she maintained. She pointed out, in particular, the case of ‘external waiters with a vehicle’ (deliveries), a job category regulated in collective agreements, with specific benefits, who have been displaced by applications workers, who have no direct dependent relationship with restaurants, but are in a situation of “abstract subordination” that “does not safeguard their social and labour rights and makes their work tremendously unstable”.

**Links between collective bargaining, job descriptions and vocational training.** Silvia García, of INEFOP, reported that in the latest round of Wage Councils in Uruguay, one of the guidelines promoted by the Uruguayan government was the introduction of a clause stating that the parties agree to develop mechanisms for vocational training. “The CETFOR project on job descriptions provides the opportunity of having a clear occupational structure and a clear definition of skills for the sector, and this therefore shows us whether a vocational training gap exists or not, and on what subjects training is needed. There is a clear link between job descriptions and vocational training, because once we have this job description output, we can put the focus on what training we need,” García stressed. She maintained that there was “a very clear link between collective bargaining, which promotes vocational training clauses; job descriptions, which provide a map of where the gaps are and where to direct vocational training; and certification, which is also part of vocational training”.

**Key elements in building trust.** When Gonzalo Graña enquired about the key elements in building trust among social dialogue stakeholders, Mewes answered that he considered it important “to look at each other in the face; being and seeming, to be consistent in one’s actions”. Mandressi agreed on the importance of consistency, as well as of “honesty and transparency to gain the trust of the other”. “And don’t do to others what you don’t like to be done to you,” he added. Aguirre considered that it is essential to respect collective bargaining and compliance with the agreements reached; “when this does not happen, damage is done and trust is very difficult to rebuild”.

## Discussion panel 2: Vocational training for environmentally sustainable development

### Participants

Armando Núñez Chavarría / Regional Manager, INA, Costa Rica

Rafael Diego Costa / Technical Advisor, SENAR, Brazil

Patricia García / Vocational Education Directorate, SENAC-DN, Brazil

Anaclara Matosas / ILO/Cinterfor (moderator)

Discussion 2 focused on one of the cross-cutting lines of the ILO/Cinterfor's work: Vocational training for environmentally sustainable development. Anaclara Matosas, a member of the ILO/Cinterfor team and in charge of moderating the discussion, maintained that immediate changes are needed to slow down and try to reverse environmental degradation in the world, and considered that vocational training can make an important contribution in that regard.

First, the experience of Costa Rica was addressed; Matosas recalled that this is a country whose goal is to become a green hub for Central America, as well as a plastic-free area. Armando Núñez Chavarría, of the National Training Institute (INA) of Costa Rica, explained that the institution incorporated environmental issues as a line of work in their strategic plans more than 10 years ago. They work on the basis of three pillars: the environmental culture is incorporated at the level of the institution, with best practices in all training centres and administrative areas; it is included in curricular plans as a cross-cutting issue in various training programmes; and the topic is incorporated into training services aimed at the business sector.

Núñez stressed that the issue of the environment has been taken up throughout the country, not just within the institution. Costa Rica has set decarbonizing goals which are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals; the country has achieved a significant recovery of its forests – forests cover more than 52% of the country – and it has committed to the care of biodiversity. “The INA is not indifferent to this and its services are also geared to contributing in that area,” explained Núñez. He cited the case of waste operators: people from vulnerable populations who were trained in the recovery of solid waste, or the management of collection centres. They have also been working on energy efficiency and there have been dual training experiences.

Patricia García of the National Commercial Learning Service (SENAC) of Brazil explained that the institution has had a sustainability project called Ecos for ten years, along with the Social Service for Commerce and the National Commercial Confederation, which is in charge of funding. The programme addresses environmental sustainability issues with employees of the three organizations, focusing on product management, controls and notifications. The environmental issue is incorporated in consumables procurement descriptions, which involve the administrative area.

The “sustainable attitude” is one of the five “training brands” of SENAC, and is mainstreamed into its programmes. “When our teachers design their learning situation plans, they are required



to incorporate these training brands and also to evaluate these training skills in situations that students are presenting,” explained García. This brand is also incorporated into project-based learning. In addition, the institution offers a variety of alternatives ranging from free courses to postgraduate courses in the area of environmental knowledge.

García reported that they now have about ten educational companies in the form of training restaurants and cafeterias within the National Congress and public agencies in Brasilia, such as the Ministry of Justice and the Superior Federal Court, and there is “great concern regarding the management of solid waste” because “there is a great deal of waste generation in these environments”. “There are about five thousand people at lunch time. So, production and waste management are one of our concerns. Not only acquiring, but also disposing of this material,” she explained. There is a team of nutritionists working with gastronomy students on separation and subsequent waste management.

Rafael Diego Costa, of the National Rural Learning Service of Brazil (SENAR) said that in rural areas “there is no way not to work sustainably”. He recalled that in the 1970s in Brazil many foods were imported: basically, they only produced coffee, milk, a little sugar cane. At one point, “there was a decision made by the government, workers and employers to invest in technology,” to diversify production. The Brazilian Agricultural Research Company (Embrapa) was established as a research unit. Thus, production increased exponentially.

“When we study the phenomena that helped that happen, we find three pillars: land conditions, working conditions and production technology conditions. Production technology accounts for 80% of that evolution,” noted Costa. He added that in such a context it had been a challenge to manage the training and sensitization of farmers to produce more using the same area of land, in order to achieve “productivity awareness”.

He said that in Brazil, producers are required to conserve between 20% and 35% of their production area. “We managed to show them that technology can be used on the land. With a skilled workforce, it was not necessary to move away from the land. They could keep their business, their production, with sufficient quality and quantities. That remains one of the great challenges, to seek information produced by universities and technological centres and introduce it into the world of farmers and workers so that they can adopt the technologies, using them to their best advantage, with the concepts of sustainability, and soil and water conservation,” Costa observed.

The following topics were also addressed in the discussion group:

Determining the labour skills needed for “green jobs”. In the case of INA, they analysed other international experiences to identify skills and profiles. In SENAC, the institution’s own specialists provided their knowledge. In SENAR, meanwhile, a technical assistance structure provides for a consultancy in order to identify new profiles, new functions and skills within existing occupations. Costa, of SENAR, told participants, as an example, that as a result of this consultancy, the need for new skills for machine operators was detected. With agriculture 4.0 and precision agriculture, it is no longer necessary for operators to drive the machines because they are on autopilot. Instead, these people can devote themselves to computer calibrations in order to reduce fuel consumption, to combat gas emissions and to ensure that spraying is performed properly.

Projects that incorporate environmental issues into the sustainable economy. Patricia García referred to a project developed jointly by SENAC and SENAR, aimed at rural producers. SENAR provided technical and management assistance, and SENAC worked with the Gastronomy team to acquire products which would then go to the aforementioned training enterprises within the National Congress. SENAR worked with farmers to eliminate middlemen and connect them directly to the end consumer – thus increasing their profits – and to transform their farming techniques, which used to use large quantities of agrochemicals. “Today, a large number of those producers who were enfolded within that green belt, are working organically,” García underscored. In addition, Gastronomy students become directly involved in production. The process improved the image of local producers and allowed them to create networks of contacts for production, maintained the SENAC representative.

Costa stressed that a methodology was applied in this project in which the first step was planning: to determine the need. The analysis revealed the need for rural vocational training, “training for the agent of change”. The final step involved the evaluation of field technicians. Training technical specialists, both in production and in management, is a challenge, which is why SENAR developed a project called “centres of excellence”. “Today our schools are training technicians for large companies, but they are also training for SENAR. We need 120 thousand technicians. We have a mere 3,000. We have to work on these centres in order to obtain technicians,” he noted. Costa reported that SENAR had conducted a foresight study to determine how many field technicians would be required.

Labour reconversion strategies in the green economy. Núñez considered that very careful work should be carried out on the programmes and curricular plans, “to gain a better understanding of the future of work, especially in green jobs”. He added that this is often difficult because institutions are anchored in the present and it is difficult for them to apply forward thinking and act accordingly. Costa said SENAR has done some market foresight studies to make the transition in Brazilian agriculture. “People are looking for green jobs as opportunities for sustainable production,” he stated.

In closing the discussion group, Anaclara Matosas suggested that ILO/Cinterfor could undertake to create a resource bank of shared experiences on how to mainstream the transformation to the green economy. “This transformation is already upon us and environmental sustainability must be a commitment for ourselves and future generations,” she maintained..



## Comments from social stakeholders

### *Workers' sector: Rosane Bertotti*

Bertotti warned that when it comes to sustainable development, "it seems that we only refer to environmental issues," when in fact sustainable development is necessary for the welfare of people, and of workers in particular. "Because if we think about a sustainable development process from an economic viewpoint alone, it is not sustainable. It may have some other quality, it may be organic, but not sustainable. Sustainable involves understanding that the process is comprehensive," she stated. She added that technicians are essential, but urged the consideration of farmers' "ancient" knowledge of techniques.

"Sustainable development involves conducting research, watching the market, observing the needs of each country, and also thinking about human development," she concluded.

### *Employers' sector: Pablo Dragún*

Dragún remarked that the issue of green jobs seems right to employers, although sometimes "some countries say 'let's go for green jobs' and then they fail to do so". In that regard, he noted that companies often commit heavily to reconversion, but sustainability must be guaranteed, because "there may be fluctuations that may push them out of the market because they made that reconversion". He indicated that, for example, in a country like Argentina, "with a fairly vitiated and complex macroeconomic environment, with a system of very low financing, very high interest rates and a great deal of economic volatility," it is difficult to carry out strategies for sustainable reconversion, in particular for small and medium enterprises. He argued that industrial reconversion involves a very significant investment of capital and that in Argentina, "there are really very few incentives in taxation and credit terms" to undertake such an enterprise.

He also warned that environmental requirements often become tariff measures that hinder the entry of production to the central countries, although they are, in fact the largest sources of carbon emissions.

Finally, he expressed his support of lifelong learning, but wondered who was going to pay for it; he said that "obviously it will not be the workers" who pay, but added that "there is always the temptation to make the company pay" and wondered whether this would make companies less competitive.

## Discussion panel 3: Strategies for equity and inclusion in vocational training

### Participants

Gustavo Gándara / UOCRA Foundation, Argentina

Vilma Sahari Molina / Chair of the Board of Directors for the labour sector, INSAFORP, El Salvador

Federico Graña / National Bureau for Socio-Cultural Promotion, MIDES, Uruguay  
 Víctor Manuel Barceló / Ambassador of Mexico in Uruguay

Roberto Villamil / Specialist, ILO Office, Andean Countries (moderator)

Discussion 3 addressed the strategies of equity and inclusion in vocational training. The moderator, Roberto Villamil, a member of the team of specialists of the ILO's Country Office for the Andean Countries, said that governments should aim not only to achieve a more dynamic labour market, but also to promote and encourage social and labour inclusion and access to the labour market of disadvantaged people, or who are at risk of social exclusion.

Gustavo Gándara, of the UOCRA Foundation (Construction Workers Union of Argentina), referred to his trade union's experience in vocational training for persons deprived of liberty. He explained that in Argentina, vocational training has historically been in the hands of trade unions. These not only participate in the discussion of public and sectoral policies regarding training, but also conduct management through their own structures, in many cases in agreement with the business sector or the State. Trade unions in Argentina have schools, institutions, teachers, technical teams, projects that manage educational provision autonomously.

The UOCRA Foundation in particular has about 40 educational centres of its own and every year trains between 30 and 40 thousand workers. The training provided is free and public, and is not intended only for construction workers, but "for anyone who wants to undertake, through education, a change in their professional development," asserted Gándara.

The union leader explained that the construction sector often takes in people from vulnerable sectors of the population. One of the groups they receive consists of persons excluded and expelled from other labour activities or the education system. "In Argentina, 50% of people attending middle school do not finish it, and we have almost 10 million adults at work who have no recognized qualifications and have had trouble finishing their formal studies; all of which are issues that constitute barriers to their social, occupational, and educational inclusion," indicated Gándara. Another vulnerable group that the sector includes is workers who have been deprived of their liberty, "who view the labour organization as the first board for released prisoners, and their first stop to look for work once they have served their sentences". "So we have developed a number of programmes that cater to these groups," he added.

In particular, Gándara referred to a programme to include persons deprived of liberty that has already been in operation for eight years. Through this programme, workers who have been sentenced by law are trained for a period of six months before completing their sentences, in



the various skills and capabilities required by the industry, so that when they leave, they can begin work in the sector. The programme operates in 35 different prisons and trains between 2,000 and 3,000 workers per year. When people leave the prison system, they can gain access to the construction industry's job pool, which is a necessary requirement for entry to work in the sector. At the same time, the labour skills of workers serving time are certified. "As workers have been trained by the trade union and obtain a qualification that is recognized by the employers' sector under the collective agreement, they have a card recognizing their qualifications, and their employer do not require a 'recidivism certificate' (criminal record certificate). This gives them very significant opportunity to enter the labour market, of inserting themselves quickly and developing their professional tasks," Gándara emphasized.

Regarding results, after eight years, records show that more than 30% of workers trained are engaged in formal and ongoing labour activity in the industry, and a similar percentage of workers are working informally. "This is not positive, but it is positive in terms of the programme. Nearly 60% of workers have a job, and of course, we attempt to bring those working informally into formal work," Gándara indicated.

The union also has other inclusion programmes. For example, there is a gender programme. "Construction is a male-dominated industry, and what this programme does is to include women in the work process. We have already included over 2,500 women in the industry, in tasks previously done by men. Because sometimes it is said that there is gender inclusion and the women who are included end up working for the cafeteria or in housekeeping, which are very good jobs, but what we want is for them to have an active participation in the industry: handling machinery, handling lorries, doing the plastering, laying bricks," Gándara underscored.

UOCRA also has a vocational training programme designed for people with disabilities, which contributes to their insertion, in association with third-party institutions that have specific expertise in providing support in these situations. They are also working with employers in order to set aside some jobs to include people with disabilities.

Another of the trade union's programmes aims to synchronize vocational training for work with the problem of addiction. "There is a process which begins by providing containment, working on the disease, avoiding exclusion, and through training, generating a new process for inclusion. Many workers are forced to leave the labour market to get treatment, they confine themselves in farms, and we understand that vocational training is an element that reinstates them, that saves them from that rationale. Especially for workers who already possess a work culture, and perhaps at those recovery venues they carry out activities that they perceive to be too simple or less complex, which will not generate added value for them when they are able to return to the industry's workforce," Gándara indicated.

UOCRA's training activities are financed through a joint economic fund to which projects can be submitted, and in turn this fund is synchronized with other funds from various public policies. "These resources are sufficient, sometimes they are more or less available, but the good thing is that as the programmes are subjected to a certain amount of evaluation and monitoring, the State is becoming convinced that providing resources for such programmes will benefit their beneficiaries," Gándara pointed out.

Discussion also touched upon the experience of the Salvadoran Vocational Training Institute (INSAFORP) in caring for vulnerable groups. Vilma Sarahi Molina explained that INSAFORP is a tripartite institution and that 100% of the financial contributions for vocational training come from employers. “However, as a result of the social dialogue that takes place in the institution, vocational training is not aimed only at workers of enterprises, for their lifelong learning, but also at groups in vulnerable situations,” as defined in response to regulations and national plans on these issues, Molina indicated. She maintained that the institution has “many partners that help us with the productive inclusion of these groups through employment”: business associations that provide practice jobs so that people can do internships; churches and other institutions that contribute with tools, equipment or by providing sums to cover expenses for people who are being trained.

Molina reported that, under the gender-based institutional plan, the fundamental objective of INSAFORP is to contribute to the participation of women and men on equal terms. And it has been a long process: the first objective was for the Board of the institution to become convinced of the importance of the subject, and this was achieved. Then “many things” in the institution had to be modified: a gender committee was formed and they began to think about gender mainstreaming in vocational training. All of the staff of trainers were also trained on gender violence issues and a guide was developed for the prevention and eradication of gender violence in training centres. “People initially arrive and want to exercise the same violence that was perpetrated against them, but if the training centre itself adopts the necessary conditions to manage these issues in the best way, people begin to get used to it,” Molina explained.

INSAFORP trained 77 women out of a total of 211 who work in the plastics industry – traditionally dominated by men – in four occupational paths, ranging from 12 to 14 months of training. “Initially, as this is an enterprise/centre programme, we had some concerns about whether employers would grant us practice slots for young women, but over the course of the training, employers came to realize that women also had the skills they required; they did not think women could handle, for example, a blow moulding machine, and now they are demanding that we give them more practice slots for women, and women who have graduated in these professions are already occupying positions of authority in the company, mostly in quality control,” Molina underscored.

The institution also has a training programme for visually impaired persons: they are trained in the production of cleaning products, in Microsoft Windows, and in the repair and maintenance of mobile phones. Training programmes were developed in Braille and a handbook was drafted so that the instructors and facilitators of the training programmes could serve visually impaired persons, as well as people with other disabilities, reported Molina.

Additionally, as part of the government programme Ciudad Mujer [Women, City], INSAFORP trained vulnerable women in traditional occupations for women, but also in non-traditional trades such as shoemaking. “Since 2011, we have invested more than five million dollars in this and have trained more than 40 thousand women,” stated the senior official.

Lately, the institution has been working with groups of migrant and returnee workers on skills certification and insertion in the construction industry.

For his part, the Mexican ambassador to Uruguay, Manuel Barceló Rodríguez, referred to the “regime change” involving the assumption of Manuel López Obrador as president of his



country, and the commitment of the new government to “the incorporation of large sections of the population, youth in particular, to all areas of productive activity”.

According to research conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI), there are 1.7 million young people between 18 and 29 in the country who neither study nor work, nor do they have any physical limitations that would prevent them from doing so. The ambassador indicated that based on this analysis, a programme called “Youth Building the Future” was designed, which seeks the insertion of these young people, but at the same time, as an indirect target, also seeks to address the problem of violence in the country. “Many of these young people without any specific activity are easily recruited by criminal groups that put them directly in the firing line and some of them die in clashes between groups,” Barceló noted.

The programme has seven components. The first is to provide a scholarship of 3,600 Mexican pesos (about 180 USD) a month to the young people, and health coverage through the Mexican Institute of Social Security. Secondly, training plans of up to one year are offered, which are produced directly by the companies. “It is important to note that training does not imply any commitment to enter into a working relationship for the companies, nor are they required to hire the young people at the end of training,” the ambassador pointed out. In any case, he stated that the companies are already hiring trained young people.

The third component of the programme is monitoring and mutual evaluation: of the young person by the tutor, and of the tutor by the young person, to learn about and monitor compliance with the training process. Young people have one opportunity to change their training venue, when they do not feel comfortable or when it is not really what they wanted to learn.

The fourth component is certification: after training, work centres certify the skills and capabilities acquired by the learner, a certificate validated by the government’s Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. Fifthly, the programme provides a distinguishing mark to the companies that participate, “for their social responsibility and commitment to the youth of Mexico,” reported the ambassador. The sixth component involves the deployment of mechanisms for cooperation with other public bodies so that programme learners can gain access to cultural and sports services, as a way of fulfilling their right to leisure and recreation. And the last component is providing advice on labour matters: at the end of their courses, young people are referred by the programme and can go to the National Employment Service, which advises on job offers by region and allows young people to choose whatever interests them and join the productive world. “This service is free and tailored to each individual. They are given information and tools so that they can be placed in a job. The link between apprentices and businesses is achieved through the relationship between the vocational preferences of young people and the needs of businesses,” explained Barceló.

The programme includes a set of strict prohibitions for companies: it is forbidden to discriminate, demand technical skill, replace workers by apprentices, and ask apprentices for a percentage in compensation or to buy training materials. Young persons receive their scholarship money by means of an electronic card.

Six months after the programme began to be implemented, “there are already encouraging results,” the ambassador emphasized. The programme trained 741,000 apprentices and there are 142,970 work centres delivering training.

The last experience presented in the discussion group was related to the policies pursued by the Uruguayan government, targeting the transgender population. Federico Graña, national director of Socio-Cultural Promotion at the Ministry of Social Development of Uruguay, recalled that the average life expectancy for this population segment is 35 and that little was known about them in Uruguay until the first transgender census was carried out in 2016. The information gathered showed that 30% of transgender people were unemployed, 85% had been engaged in, or were engaged in the sex trade at the time, the highest level of education completed was primary school in 30% of cases, the average age of leaving home was 18 and the average age of being expelled from their homes was 16. “I should like to ask what other people are experiencing this reality,” Graña stated.

The governments of the Frente Amplio [Broad Front] party in Uruguay adopted a series of policies aimed at this population. Firstly, their right to identity was recognized in 2009; this recognition is important because denial of identity “is one of the main barriers, because without that there is no health care, no jobs are generated, and expulsion from educational cycles occurs,” Graña noted.

Secondly, it was decided that all Mides programmes catering to vulnerable population groups should be assigned a specific quota of 2% for transgender people.

A National Council on Sexual Diversity was then formed, giving rise to a legal framework that was eventually adopted by the Uruguayan Parliament. In addition to recognizing rights, the comprehensive act on transgender people provides for an employment quota of 1% on all State jobs to be filled and a quota of 2% on all scholarships granted by the State, as well as provision of comprehensive care. “There are 900 transgender people in Uruguay, and only a few months after the law was passed, there are already trans women and men who have entered the private labour market without there being a specific public policy in this case, only as a result of the simple provision of a regulatory framework that recognizes their right to identity,” Graña underscored.

At present, the challenge is how to link census data to vocational training. Graña reported that after six months of work, INEFOP would implement the first pilot vocational training course specifically for transgender people. The training group will not include trans people exclusively, but their specific features will be addressed, “because in order to reduce all of these levels of discrimination, what we have to do is break down prejudice, mix, because employers do not employ them owing to prejudice, because they have been accustomed to seeing transgender people at night and on street corners,” Graña remarked. At the same time, efforts will be made to strengthen the role of peer reference points. “We realized that in addition to training teams to serve this population, it was necessary to provide for the existence of peer reference points to support these processes; people belonging to the same population to provide support, in order to develop trust and solidarity after decades of infringement of their rights,” Graña explained.

With regard to training interests, the census showed that the greatest interest among this population was to work on issues related to information technology, and this can be linked to the demand emerging from the Uruguayan Chamber of Information Technology in Uruguay, which requires trained workers in the sector.



## Comments from social stakeholders

### *Workers' sector: Marta Roncoroni*

Roncoroni said that she had been in charge of the training school for domestic staff for 14 years, and just as UOCRA's trainees are 99% male, in domestic work, 99% are women. "So, we are in step on this issue of education, job training, inclusion, equity. With education as a tool, always with social dialogue," she stated.

She recalled that domestic work was born as a formal job in 2011, with the ILO's Convention No. 189. She regretted that Argentina still lacks a collective agreement for the domestic work sector that would make it possible to have a training fund; "we believe that capacity-building and vocational training is a way to empower women in terms of their skills, their capacity, of knowing they can do it," she asserted.

She noted that domestic service is a job that includes large groups of migrants, transgender people, and children. And she maintained that there was a great deal of "child labour" in the sector which, she urged, needed to be "eradicated".

### *Employers' representative: Patricia Dalmau*

Dalmau considered that, in terms of inclusion, "the most critical" issue is to achieve the inclusion of people with physical and other disabilities. "It is very difficult to include them within our institutions at present, we have not been prepared for it," she said.

She reported that she belonged to an association of higher technological education institutions accounting for 45% of enrolment in the private sector, and that they "took up the challenge" of taking on young people with some kind of non-physical disability from the Grant 18 State programme. "The young people apply to study and get paid, and for the private sector this was something new, interesting, challenging, eye-opening. In order to cater to this group, we needed to have a specialized area for inclusion. The young people arrive, they are not separated, they are included within the normal group," she stated. She explained that they had needed to work with people who were already part of the institutions in order to achieve this adaptation, and she considered that it was currently "a fantastic programme, which has helped everyone a great deal" and with very low dropout rates. She said that they were at present analysing specific programmes in order to also enable people with physical disabilities to study and train.

## Discussion panel 4: Pre-apprenticeship and quality apprenticeship

### Participants

Janet Dyer / Managing Director, HEART Trust-NTA, Jamaica

Selva Huber / SNPP, Paraguay

Constanza Correa / Project Manager BIBB, Germany

Ernesto Porro / Coordinator of the Department of Educational Management, Division of Training and Accreditation CETP-UTU (DICAS), Uruguay

Valeria Scarova / University of Moscow, Russia

Michael Axmann / ILO/Cinterfor (moderator)

The first part of the discussion revolved around the role of social partners in pre-apprenticeship and quality apprenticeship. Janet Dyer referred to the significant role that social partners have played in Jamaica. HEART-Trust NTA recently took on responsibility as an apprenticeship board, joining with the Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning and the National Youth Service to form the National Training Agency. “The narrative shifted from placing people in an apprenticeship programme to engaging in social dialogue between our young people entering the programme and stakeholders,” Dyer explained.

When students enter the programme, they first complete a pre-apprenticeship programme, where they acquire basic skills for the occupation that interests them. Then they train in the core skills. At all times they receive support from the social partners, who are not only teachers or student supervisors, but become what the institution calls “career coaches”. Students learn at work and once a week they engage in pedagogical training that introduces them to the theoretical concepts of what they are learning. Towards the end of their training they are required to take the National Vocational Qualification exam, and they leave the programme with a professional certification. “The programme not only focuses on training and certifying people in order to put them to work, we observe the whole person. We see these people as human capital that we are preparing for decent and productive work and to build our economies,” Dyer stressed.

The programme works in nine major sectors operating on the island, including tourism, construction and manufacturing. Follow-up studies are carried out up to five years after people have left the system, allowing us to see “the impact of training and certification”. Apprentices are paid according to the level of training they are at – pre-apprenticeship, intermediate group, pre-professional group and graduate grouping. Dyer pointed out that over the programme’s last two years, unemployment has fallen in Jamaica.

Selva Huber, of the National Professional Promotion Service of Paraguay (SNPP), agreed that the work of social partners, both workers and employers, is very important. She explained that work is performed in sectoral working groups tasked with reviewing existing curricula, and companies propose programme content to facilitate job placement.



She reported that two pilot courses were implemented in 2018, on electricity and industrial mechanics, and that there are currently 77 participants in the two fields. Work takes place in a high-tech centre called Paraguay-Japan and the headquarters of SNPP. “It is a very interesting experience; it is the first time that this work system is really taking shape. Participants have very high expectations of the project and the programme,” Huber noted.

She asserted that without the social partners it would not be possible to move forward, because it is they who point out the needs. “These panels are essential to go marking the trend regarding what is needed for today’s work and how and we should be facing up to each stage, each process and each new request or need arising in the labour segment,” Huber indicated.

At present, the SNPP is focusing on the needs of each territory, as determined by sectoral dialogue tables: in some, roadworks are needed; in the border areas, work in tourism and hospitality.

In Paraguay, many people “speak Spanish, but think in Guarani”, and therefore bilingualism should be addressed as a key issue, said Huber. Another issue to be addressed is that of labour certification.

“The SNPP has always been considered a university for the poor. We want to break away from that pattern and turn it into a university to overcome poverty, to move away from backwardness and, above all, that people who attend the SNPP should gain the fluency, ability, knowledge and skills that will help them face the changing world of work,” she summarized.

Constanza Correa referred to the experience of dual vocational training in Germany, which dates back to medieval times, and institutionalized social dialogue in that country, which has been “a driver for vocational training”. Social dialogue in Germany involves “directing together, sharing responsibility”. Dual training is training which is “practice-oriented, that is uniform across standards, and high quality”. These standards are geared to the needs of the labour market.

Correa considered that there are five factors of success in German vocational training, which are transferable to other countries, but must be contextualized by national actors. These factors are: cooperation between State and social partners; cooperation between learning environments; acceptance of standards; the qualification of personnel working in vocational training, both business mentors and teachers or educational referents; research and institutional counselling. This last factor implies that “we need to be constantly looking at how the labour market is developing, what the new skills are” and what quality framework is being handled, Correa indicated.

She added that it is essential for each actor to have a specific role in vocational training and that they do not compete with one another; that the State and the social partners should share responsibility for the financing of vocational training; and that implementation should be systematic, with nationwide standards.

Finally, she considered the levelling of apprentices to be key, because they do not all arrive “with the same capacity and the same quality of education”. On the other hand, she also believed that it is important “to give apprentices a voice”, to listen to them and see what their needs and interests are.

In Germany, institutionalized foresight studies are carried out in order to anticipate future labour market needs. Correa suggested that in Latin America, the output of research institutions could be more closely connected with national policies. Likewise, she considered that in many countries social dialogue has been adopted “on paper”, but that “it is not really experienced and does not work very well, is not very well synchronized with national policies”.

She emphasized that governments change, but social partners remain, and therefore, it is they “who can continue to drive the policies and agreements and commitments that have been reached”.

Eduardo Porro, of CETP-UTU, in Uruguay, explained the steps taken by the institution to balance education supply with the demand required by workers. He noted that there is a programme that allows workers to finish their educational cycles while they receive vocational training, for example. There is also a knowledge accreditation programme that recognizes what workers have learnt in their workplaces. “One of the major difficulties encountered by employers, as well as by workers, is a historical arrogance that derives from the Uruguayan education system. The education system in Uruguay had always believed that education could only develop through itself. Today this paradigm has changed; today we, and education, are convinced that we cannot do it alone and that we need to build together,” Porro considered. He added that at UTU it is understood that building quality apprenticeship should always include workers and employers.

In conclusion, he revealed that he dreams of vocational training “that is second to none” and that does not aim only at getting people jobs, but that people should develop as persons, and make a contribution to society. He considered that Uruguay is on track to achieve this “epistemological breakthrough”.

He said that often, when we think about vocational training, we think about young people learning to be builders, when companies today require, for example, software testers, which would be a job opportunity for young people from low-income or vulnerable backgrounds.

At the end of the discussion, Valeria Scarova, of the University of Moscow, referred to an experience conducted jointly by the Russian government and the ILO, which began in 2012. It was a pilot experience in support of the initiatives of the governments of five countries in capacity-building for education, vocational training and human resources. In this framework, tools for skills anticipation and tools aimed at vocational training managers were produced “to achieve successful managerial skills,” Scarova explained, and training programmes were also developed.



## Comments from social stakeholders

### *Workers' sector: Julio Perdigón*

Perdigón noted that, from the point of view of the unions, no one can be against quality apprenticeships or the meeting of the world of work and education. "But in fact, all is not a bed of roses in the world of work," he noted. In that regard, he regretted that "whenever dual training comes up, it is implied or proven that workers' rights have been lost." "It has been found that apprentices have been used as cheap labour. It is, therefore, important to agree on how to do it," he elaborated. He maintained that there should be a legal framework that protects students when they go to companies for their practice sessions, and that they should have the same rights as workers: leave, bonuses, holiday pay and also draw a salary as students. He considered that the dual education act passed in Costa Rica does not protect students and "is doomed to failure".

He asserted that students need to practice, but at the same time continue studying, and that also implies harmonizing the world of work and the world of education.

### *Employers' sector: Gerardo Garbarino*

Garbarino recalled that in Uruguay, 20 years ago, there was an attempt to come up with a dual training process, with the support of German Cooperation, but it did not work. In 2017, within INEFOP, attempts were made to reach agreements to achieve a dual training process and the parties became familiar with the German and French experiences. The representative of the Uruguayan employers' sector disclosed that an inter-agency agreement had been signed the year before, in which several organizations, social partners, INEFOP and the ministries of Labour and Education undertook to "bring education and work closer". In any case, he warned that "if conditions are not right for businesses to participate in dual training, alternate training or systems bringing education and work closer," there will be nowhere for students to conduct their practices. He argued that the business sector is committed to "collaborate permanently in everything that is necessary" to reach agreements in this regard.

## Conference: Changing trends in labour markets, new occupations and skills

### Educating for the future

Claudia Costin, Getúlio Vargas Foundation, Brazil

The impact of new technologies and accelerated job automation determines the need to train and retrain workers. However, there are some issues to be resolved first, noted Claudia Costin, one of the experts who was a member of the Global Commission on the Future of Work. The central task is to rethink basic education, because otherwise, “when adult workers try to retrain and reinvent themselves, it will be too late,” she warned.

Costin asserted that the future of work is “both a blessing and a curse,” because just as many jobs demanding simple skills will disappear, others that we now consider to be indecent will also disappear. “Everything will depend on well-designed public policies,” stated the specialist.

She mentioned some of the challenges that Latin American countries face:

- While social inequality had declined in the region over the past years, recently it has increased again.
- Automation and robotics will lead to the demise of certain jobs.
- Labour productivity has been stagnating since 2011 in most of the countries in the region.
- Citizenship in the countries of the region is fragile, resulting in the risk of populism. Costin indicated that jobs are lost as a result of technological changes and that the middle classes tend to “blame the wrong enemy”. “This creates favourable conditions for the rise of populism,” she warned. In this regard, she maintained that it was very important to work on citizenship within the education system, not just prepare people for the world of work.

Costin recalled the “very ambitious” Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 of the United Nations: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. She mentioned that three of the targets within this goal were significant:

-Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcomes. “This means that ‘quality’ does not imply having a pool, it is not sophistication in schools, it is nurturing: children learning with high expectations, so that there really are conditions for equity in the future,” maintained the expert.

-Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

-Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

The specialist warned that “in the future, if we do nothing, children and youth will all be in school but not learning, which is tragic”. In this respect, she mentioned the results displayed by Latin



American countries in the PISA tests organized by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). She stressed that the pace of improvement of the countries in the region is high when compared with all participating countries, and the numbers of young people in Latin America who enter and remain in the education system are increasing. However, she noted that in all three subjects evaluated in these tests (science, maths and reading), LA and the Caribbean are situated at the bottom of the international ranking. The countries that rank the best in the region are Chile, Uruguay, Trinidad and Tobago and Costa Rica. “Being in the bottom third of the ranking is a symptom of an education that does not teach, and the saddest thing is that it fails to teach the most vulnerable, because if I were to show the difference here between the performance of the richest and of the poorest children, it would be a tragedy. So we are failing to keep the promise of social prosperity in the region,” she regretted.

Costin considered that there are some factors that explain this situation, including:

-Low attractiveness of the teaching profession. “We pay them little and prepare them poorly for their profession,” stated the specialist. She noted that in earlier times, teacher training was carried out in training schools that “prepared teachers well for the profession”. When, instead, it was decided that training should take place in universities, “in some cases it was a complete disaster, because we decided to teach them theory rather than a profession, as if it were bad to have a vocational course at the higher level of education,” she complained.

-High repetition, evasion and dropout rates, especially in high school. “Young people also leave school because they are not convinced that education will bring them a better future, and they do not feel that the schools are in touch with reality and the culture of youth,” warned Costin.

-Low coverage of early childhood programmes among the poorest populations.

-Low coverage of secondary technical education, which “in some cases is out of step with the needs of their countries,” noted Costin. In the region, coverage of secondary technical education is at an average of 12.8%, compared to 49.2% in Europe.

-The class load in education is low in most of the countries in the region.

-In basic education, teaching is “very traditional in style, with low expectations and not adapted to the different needs of students”.

-There is “a kind of disregard for protocols and techniques in the teaching-learning process, there is much poetic vision of what works in education and little research into what really works in education,” Costin noted.

-There is little emphasis on experimentation and the application of concepts in specific problems, and this is evident in the results of the PISA tests. “We are familiar with, for example, the periodic table of elements, but we do not know what it is used for, and educational outcomes as a result are bad,” pointed out the specialist.

Costin listed some trends in education for the future, taking into account the experiences of countries with good education systems:

- Focus on collaborative problem-solving and creativity.
- Customize the teaching process, taking into account the different needs of young people.

- Make curricula flexible.
- Encourage thinking associated with each knowledge domain: historical and critical thinking, spatial thinking, mathematical thinking. “Teach how to think mathematically, historically, scientifically. School is a place where people can learn how to think, not memorize what the teacher said,” Costin maintained.
- Develop cognitive skills associated with socio-emotional skills: persistence, resilience, empathy.
- Foster student protagonism, train for autonomy and for global citizenship. “Students need to learn very early how to take charge of their own lives; how to show solidarity, engage in teamwork, but also how to be the entrepreneurs of their own dreams,” stated the specialist.

Bearing in mind the risk for future work that automation involves, Costin pointed out some features that distinguish us from robots:

- Empathy, which is “what makes us human”. She considered that, for this reason, the care economy would play a significant role in the future of work.
- Persistence and determination, the combination of effort and passion, which is something that can be learned.
- Learning that mistakes are opportunities for improvement and resilience.
- Critical, abstract and systemic thinking.
- Curiosity and self-control, creativity and imagination.
- Global protagonism and citizenship.
- Learning to undertake projects.

Finally, Costin listed the characteristics that schools of the future should include:

- Schools where everyone can learn, “in which excellence can develop with equity, not just excellence for some, not just excellence for the brightest”.
- Schools not divorced from society.
- Schools that receive those who dropped out, with flexible curricula.
- Schools where students and teachers work together.
- Schools that work on values and attitudes, to shape truly global citizens.
- Schools where knowledge is not fragmented. That teach how to think and how to learn to learn. “Learning how to learn has never been so urgent, at a time when we will have to reinvent ourselves in successive waves,” noted Costin.
- Schools that reserve time and space for student protagonism.

In order to build these schools of the future, we need good public policies, the specialist underscored. “We need to stop discussing ancillary matters and promote public policies that build quality education that includes from pre-primary to job training,” she concluded.



## The key is public policy

Rodrigo Arim, rector of the University of the Republic, Uruguay

The rector of the University of the Republic, Rodrigo Arim, began by pointing out that this is a time for rethinking the overall structure of public policies, including training policies, in terms of understanding that we are training for the unknown. “There are no certainties, and that lack of certainty should also condition the way we think today and how we design policies for the future,” he advised.

When we talk about technological change, there are trends “that are much talked about” and are present in everyday discussions, but we actually have “little in-depth understanding of the tensions and trends that are shaping the labour markets of the future,” particularly in underdeveloped societies, Arim considered.

In particular, he mentioned the case of artificial intelligence. This presupposes the development of non-human intelligent agents that recognize or respond to their surroundings or environment according to the signals they receive. “A priori, this is a clearly disruptive form of innovation, which opens up essentially positive perspectives in terms of social well-being. There are many innovative tools and mechanisms that can potentially open huge doors to improving well-being in all its dimensions: health, education, housing, access to different cultural assets,” Arim emphasized. But then he wondered what effects had artificial intelligence had on the market, and whether artificial intelligence research really aimed to expand productivity and welfare in a broad sense. “Is the research agenda on AI the right agenda in terms of equity and promoting general well-being?” he asked.

Arim noted in this regard that the definition of a research agenda depends on public policies. He recalled that in the 1950s, AI “appeared to be an immediate promise” that would lead to pattern recognition, problem solving, predictions, creativity, communication. But it was a failure, “because cognitive processes actually turned out to be much more complex than researchers of that generation had supposed.” In the 1990s, and particularly in the twenty-first century, there was a resurgence of AI research, “which is achieving concrete results”. “Therefore, we are no longer facing an unfinished research agenda; we now have a research agenda that is moving forward and beginning to show results. But it is a research agenda where AI appears in a much narrower dimension.

It focuses on replicating and improving human behaviour in the areas of pattern recognition and prediction, leaving other aspects aside,” Arim explained. He added that the current focus of research is rooted in constructing algorithms that are capable of processing large volumes of unstructured information, gathered, in particular, from social network interactions performed by people using their mobile phones. “This should be viewed, rather than as a technological change, as a technological platform; as an area where different types of productive and commercial development are possible,” Arim indicated.

The rector of Udelar then pointed out that this research trend is in contrast with another focus of modern technological development: robotization. This makes use of AI, but its focus is on

interaction with the physical world: the automation of a set of restricted tasks previously carried out by human labour. “Robotization does imply the direct replacement of labour by capital,” Arim maintained. He added that we cannot predict the impact that robotization will have on work. “Forecasts can be made, although uncertain, by definition, regarding the future of some jobs that exist today. For example, of some of our colleagues who are accountants, or work related to driving cars, in the face of the distinct possibility that cars driven automatically will appear, but it is difficult to predict what new jobs will emerge. And this is important, because if we do not know this, we can hardly design specific policies for these jobs,” noted Arim.

He mentioned that a common point of view regarding the economy assumes that any progress that increases productivity tends to increase aggregate demand for labour. “This idyllic vision of technological change may be nuanced by the assumption that there will be some transitional problems, including significant increases in inequality, owing to gaps between the skills that people have at any one time and the new requirements generated by technological change,” stated the rector. He maintained that the tool to solve these misalignments is education.

Arim considered that the view that technological change leads to an increase in labour productivity across the economy “has neither a factual nor a theoretical basis”. “Undoubtedly, technological change has been a major source of growth and well-being, but pre-eminently improving well-being is not necessarily an intrinsic feature of any technological change, as a preliminary outcome, and therefore not every technological change is a good thing in any context,” he held. He pointed out that there are technologies that promote automation, which do not increase work productivity, “and that is the most problematic part of this situation”. “Their rationale is to replace labour as a productive input with cheaper capital (the machines), in a set of tasks where substitution is technically feasible and economically profitable. Automation itself, isolated from other factors, always reduces labour’s share in added value,” stated the rector. He reported that recent studies on the incorporation of industrial robots show that these do not increase work productivity, but replace labour. And by decreasing labour’s share in added value, industry’s labour demand falls. In any case, there are “effects that provide a counterweight”: when some of the overall productivity gains due to automation are very significant, they can be transformed into higher demand in sectors whose jobs were not automated.

In Detroit, the capital of the US auto industry, automation was accompanied by a drop in wages and lower employment levels. “Therefore, there may be huge aggregate productivity gains, but with complex distributional effects, which can have permanent effects if not counterbalanced by public policies,” warned Arim.

The rector then noted that automation, “perhaps for the first time since the industrial revolution,” was not accompanied by other technological changes capable of creating new jobs. “Therefore, the end of the world of work is not seen to be looming, but it is a non-inclusive world of work, and that is particularly complex,” Arim maintained, although he added that this was not a “manifest destiny”, but depended on public policy.

In this regard, he mentioned some “keys to success” from the period after World War II, which led to an increase in general welfare. Firstly, technological change that was not the result of business decisions, but was shaped by public policies. The situation today is very different: public investment in R&D in the United States fell from 1.9% in 1960 to 0.7% of GDP in 2015,



and most of the investment in R&D is carried out by large industrial or information technology conglomerates.

Secondly, in the second post-war period, labour institutions emerged that promoted equity and labour productivity. “In recent decades, we have witnessed a weakening of such institutions in the developed world,” warned Arim. And finally, the third component includes public policies that expanded access to training and education. “In recent decades we have again seen setbacks in this area, and this is particularly serious in higher education,” indicated the rector.

To conclude, Arim listed some public policy dilemmas in this scenario. He considered that we need to rethink tax policy, as States now compete on the basis of not taxing capital and favouring the incorporation of “capital” in comparison to the incorporation of “labour” as a substitute input.

According to the rector, we should rethink education, and think about skills and abilities in a broad sense. “‘Training for work’ is a pipe dream with an absolutely uncertain prognosis, to the extent that we do not know what we will be training for. We need to train in skills that will enable people to gain a broad and in-depth knowledge base in order to adapt to a world of work that do not know,” Arim indicated. To that end, he urged drawing the focus away from “training for the task”, because it is difficult to identify the emerging and productive tasks that labour will need.

Finally, he recommended avoiding all “guru rationales”. “We do not know, and we should acknowledge that we do not know, what jobs may be at risk,” he stated.

He concluded that we need “a strong State to synchronize and prioritize education and innovation independently of the risks posed by being taken up by business conglomerates.” He maintained that training institutions needed to understand that access to advanced education “is no longer a privilege” and considered that vocational training should undertake to build capacity and be available in a democratic manner for both formal and informal workers.

## Opportunities and challenges of technological change

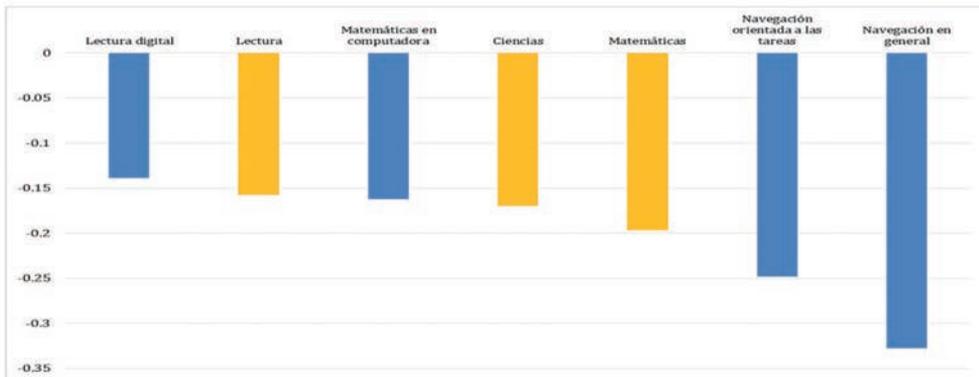
Jürgen Weller, Chief of the Employment Studies Unit of the Economic Development Division, ECLAC

Changing trends affecting the world of work are not only linked to technological issues, Weller warned in his opening remarks. The stagnation of global trade, demographic changes – in particular, an ageing population – and climate change are examples of global trends affecting the world of work.

He maintained that technological change offered some opportunities. Firstly, there is a positive correlation between digitization levels and economic growth and productivity. Secondly, it contributes positively to the Sustainable Development Goals in areas such as environment, health, education, communication, social inclusion and governance. Thirdly, it provides job opportunities and possibilities for the use of assets (new business models emerge, intermediated by platforms).

## But LAC suffers vast gaps in basic and digital skills

**Latin America (3 countries): gaps in the results of the PISA exams 2012, compared with OECD average**



Source: Own elaboration based on OECD, 2015.

Note: The result for Latin America is the simple average of Brazil, Chile and Colombia.

**... with big gaps within and between LAC countries.**

However, technological change also creates challenges. In this regard, Weller mentioned in particular the digitization gap separating Latin America and the Caribbean from the developed countries. “There is a risk that both the external and the internal productivity gap may widen, between people who have access to new technologies and can use them productively, and those who do not,” warned the specialist.

Regarding the impact on employment of the new technologies, Weller noted that there are three perspectives to be found in the literature: one speaks of “compensatory” effects, which means



that there would not be a large increase in unemployment, since there are several factors that counteract the effects of a possible destruction of jobs; another is “deterministic”, and considers that technologies have a very strong potentially destructive impact and that millions of jobs will be lost, without necessarily any compensation; and the third is “contextual”; hypothesizing that the impact will depend on the policies adopted. For his part, Weller favoured a “conditioned contextual” approach: “it depends on the policies, but the opportunity for policies to act is not unlimited”. “If you say that a certain technology will not be applied, and the industry is commercially integrated with the world, there is a risk that production may be replaced by imports that do take advantage of technologies, if they lead to increased production. So we need to see what we can do,” he remarked.

In terms of job substitution and transformation, Weller warned that in Latin America there are many jobs in low-productivity sectors that are “far removed from the technological frontier”. In the region, 43% of employed workers are at high risk of substitution, 41% are at medium risk and 16% are in low-risk jobs. Guatemala, El Salvador and Bolivia are the LA countries with the highest average risk. Without taking the informal economy into account, then the countries most at risk of substitution are Chile, Uruguay, Argentina and Mexico.

People at the lowest educational levels, women and young people are those most at risk of substitution. In any case, “if we take into account the proportion of people in the labour market, more than half of people at high risk are in the intermediate age group, and this is also a difficulty, because young people on average are better able to adapt more swiftly to the changing world, because they grew up in an already digital or digitizing world,” Weller noted.

New job opportunities also emerge in the new technological context. For example, new technologies have been introduced or are being used in occupations related to development. In the United States, between 1980 and 2007, new occupations accounted for about half of the new jobs. These new occupations demand mainly non-routine skills, both cognitive and non-cognitive, and socio-emotional (communication, self-organization, teamwork, customer orientation, willingness to learn, creativity in solving problems, among others). Weller considered that in Latin America and the Caribbean “there might be some incentive to introduce technologies in replaceable routine work and productivity gains could be potentially greater.” But there might also be an indirect effect, because if companies do not take advantage of new technologies, they might lose external competitiveness, and jobs are lost, not owing to technological transition, but as a result of substitution by imported products.

Weller warned that Latin America has “marked basic and digital skill gaps” that are “very worrying”.

In this context, policy challenges are many:

- Strengthen basic qualifications in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), in general education.
- Build up digital skills.
- Develop socio-emotional skills and critical thinking.
- Reduce the digital divide (age, sex, education, ethnicity).

- Strengthen training in enterprises (a combination of skills, reducing the generation gap, tripartite orientation).
- Take on board the lifelong learning perspective.
- Improve identification and anticipation of the demand for skills and strengthen links with education and training provision.
- Improve the labour market information system.

In conclusion, the expert considered that there is indeed risk of job losses, with different impacts and challenges for different groups of workers, but there are also opportunities for transformation and job generation in the context of the technological changes underway, generating significant policy challenges. He considered that an integrated policy approach is required in order to seize new opportunities; a learning process and dialogue. The inclusive approach, differentiated by work groupings, must be predominant.

With regard to curriculum development, the challenge is to develop new skills (cognitive and non-cognitive).

Weller concluded that “the best solution is not obvious”. “It is an example of how the learning process itself can affect policy, which must be developed on the basis of dialogue and experience sharing, and with the possibility of making corrections, not believing that we have found the final alternative and that everything is fine. It is a policy that requires continuous monitoring so that corrections can be timely,” he underscored.

He then noted that a large percentage of jobs can be automated, while another percentage cannot yet be automated, and that there are two possibilities: to restructure the occupation to focus more on activities than are not automated, and creating an opportunity for automation, or to introduce the technology so that in the same production people can learn how to work on the same thing, but in a different way, taking advantage of the productive potential. “This does not mean that people will be doing what the machine is asking them to do, but that it is a job focusing on human beings, that technology can be adapted to make use of the advantages that Claudia (Costin) has pointed out regarding humans,” Weller maintained.



## Discussion panel 5: Methodological and technological innovations for the development of 21st Century skills

### Participants

Arnaldo Alvarado / Manager a.i., INTECAP, Guatemala

Ana Luiza Küller / Development Management, SENAC São Paulo, Brazil  
Arsenio Fernandez / General Manager, SNA / Educa, Chile

Álvaro Pena / Director of Special Programmes, UTEC, Uruguay

Patricia Oliveira do García / SENAC, Rio de Janeiro

Rodrigo Filgueira / ILO/Cinterfor (moderator)

The experiences described in this discussion group focused on methodological and technological innovations for the development of the skills needed for future work.

Brazil's SENAC implemented its educational model in 2015. Oliveira, a member of the institution's governing body for vocational training, explained that the intention was to unify the way they were working pedagogically: the skills development pedagogical method was implemented, curriculum course units were transformed, and the role of a teachers changed; they became more mediators than holders of all knowledge. At the same time, students were assigned a protagonist role: "They have to look for information, choose, develop critical thinking, collaborative activities, communication, interpersonal relations," Oliveira indicated. One of the ways to foster a student's protagonism is by stimulating research. "This was a great gain," Oliveira summed up.

Küller, education coordinator at SENAC São Paulo, explained that it was quite a job to get the model mainstreamed in the institution, and adopted by teachers and students. Students are accustomed to the more traditional model of classroom lectures; however, with the new model they are asked, for example, to identify a problem in the community and develop the solution. Meanwhile, teachers must learn to work in a synchronized manner around a problem and not in isolation within their field of knowledge. "There are several levels of educational innovation: a systemic level with a large number of rules and curriculum models, the school setting level and the teaching practice level, and these levels must be synchronized if they are to achieve a transformation," Küller concluded.

Arsenio Fernández, SNA/Educa Chile, gave details of the PBL project (Project-Based Learning), which began twelve years ago. He stated that technical education in Chile "was considered terminal; people studied a technical career, finished their studies and went off to join the world of work". At one point it was understood that this was inadequate and there was a change: "technical education shifted from training technicians to training persons, and that subtle change transformed everything," Fernández asserted. The focus became how to give students, mostly from households with complex economic and social situations, an opportunity to have a better path in life, for themselves and for their families.

PBL implied a change in the teaching of agriculture: before, they used to teach pruning, watering, doing manual tasks. But nowadays that “holds no attraction for young people” and also, “agriculture is undergoing a process of high productivity through the use of technology,” Fernández indicated. Therefore, the aim was for students to learn how to handle technology – 3D printers, robots. “We want our students, who are now between 14 and 18 years old, to be fully up-to-date in ten years’ time and to have the knowledge that they will need in the future,” he noted. He added that although we may not know what the work of the future will be, we do know that it will not be the work of the past, “so we have to modify our school structures in order to support these changes”.

The project, which has received international support, is applied in 20 schools, there are 120 teachers trained, and 21 monitors and educational leaders accompanying the programme at each school. “When the educational community is inspired, things work out,” Fernández stated.

Álvaro Pena, of Uruguay’s Technological University (UTEC), referred to the “special programmes” implemented by the institution. These aim to “boost skills rather than technological infrastructure”. UTEC’s Department of Special Programmes has five cross-cutting programmes associated with these transferable capabilities and skills.

Pena referred in particular to design-based learning: curriculum units are not based on content but are proposed first by thinking about the objectives and expectations of learning, “what we expect the student to take away and what he or she can apply in other areas”. In this regard, cross-cutting programmes are a means rather than an end. He reported that, for example, one of the activities of the language programme is associated with the drones workshop: students are faced with a device and they have to discover how a drone is built, how it can fly, and the manual is in Chinese or English.

Empathy and understanding of the context are skills we aim to develop. “Our sector is engineering, and it is often the case that disregarding the implications of territorial development makes a project fail. Sometimes engineers can lose sight of the impact a project can have on a specific community, from infrastructures such as a bridge to other types of interventions, and it is important that before deciding on a solution there should be empathy and an analysis of different contexts, realities and perceptions,” Pena explained.

The hardest thing for students is to define the problem they are to address; “there is work, effort and often frustration, and it is very important for facilitators to provide support,” said the senior official.

Arnaldo Alvarado, of Guatemala’s INTECAP, referred to the instructor training school project. The institution had already been working with generic skills across the board, but students understood that they were not very useful; therefore, between 2002 and 2005, the design was modified. There were also changes in the profiles of those who were teaching the generic skills; a focus more closely linked to psychology was sought. Finally; what the institution called “comprehensive personal development” was implemented, with a more practical approach and mainstreaming all course options.

However, this was not sufficient. “The business sector in Guatemala recognized the quality of our graduates’ technical skills, but in the area involving attitudinal issues or contextual and adaptive performance they kept saying that there were gaps,” Alvarado explained. In 2016, a study



across large companies accounting for 82% of employment options in Guatemala showed that there was again a need to strengthen or improve the development of skills involving leadership, teamwork, ethics.

In 2015, INTECAP implemented an instructors training school, “which essentially pursued the retraining of all instructors, especially those who were in charge of developing long-term careers,” indicated Alvarado. Today there are seven generations of graduates, and the project is achieving improved results, although there is still “much to be done”. The school not only addresses the methodological changes needed in the programmes, but also works on curriculum design and infrastructure.

The institution allocates between 7% and 10% of its total budget to training and retraining instructors. Every teacher must attend an update course of at least 80 hours in the year, and that minimum of 80 hours is provided by the institution. At first the focus was on training and technical upgrades, but in recent years it has been more on methodological training. There is also a strong focus on self-management, on ICT training, and on mathematics and languages. Alvarado reported that instructors are taken from their regions or their operating units and brought into a total immersion programme for 1,500 hours; the institution handles not only the cost of this investment, but also the living expenses of the teachers at the programme headquarters.

In addition, networks are implemented by speciality, which enable facilitators, for example, those specializing in automotive or industrial mechanics, or food, to have a platform available where they can interact and share best practices and experiences in the courses, “and that really enhances the knowledge provided within the institution,” Alvarado highlighted.

Arsenio Fernández agreed that teachers are a cornerstone for the implementation of changes, and he also underscored the role played by the institutions’ management teams. “We said that everything is going to change in the future, and my concern is that the training of teachers in universities today has not changed their work patterns enough for teachers to adapt to what is happening today in education,” warned Fernández. He added that it is possible to change teachers’ work provided there is a general context within the institution that “pushes towards that.” “It is very difficult for people to change the way they have been working for twenty or thirty years if there isn’t a clear explanation of why they should do so. When there is an explanation, people modify their behaviour,” he stated.

Álvaro Pena, of UTEC, added that it is essential to identify those teachers “who are really making an extra effort” and often “they are not aware that they are engaging in project or problem-based learning”. In such cases, it is important to recognize and highlight their work, systematize the information and share it with the rest of the faculty. Pena reported that good practice or initiatives and projects days are held every year at UTEC; the university selects outstanding teacher practices and “very interesting discussions and very meaningful dialogue are generated”. Pena maintained that it is also key to update teachers in new methodologies and new educational trends.

In the case of São Paulo’s SENAC, Küller reported that there is “a teacher identity development process” taking place, because teachers often come from industry, the world of work, and it is a challenge for them to recognize themselves as teachers. “They often reproduce mistaken aspects of teacher training, and we witness teachers who, rather than developing cross-cutting communication skills, begin to lecture on communication theory,” she remarked.

Oliveira, of Rio de Janeiro's SENAC, reported that between 2010 and 2016, the institution had offered a post-graduate course aimed at training vocational education teachers, and that they had certified 2,000 professionals for the institution. "Until that time, teachers with a great deal of practical experience in the market were highly valued and little attention was paid to pedagogical issues. Since that time, we began to feel the changes even in the profiles of the students themselves," Oliveira noted. The post-graduate course "was an exercise in how the pedagogical model would be delivered" and the outcome was that teachers who took the course found it much easier to adhere to the pedagogical model driven by the institution.

Oliveira stressed that SENAC has a transparency portal where people can access technical papers on the project-based learning model, and where distance education courses are provided.

The increased cost of project-based training was also addressed in the discussion group. Everyone agreed that this kind of training is more costly in terms of human resources, owing to the integration, dedication and planning that teachers need to implement. However, UTEC's director of Special Programmes stated that there may also be "significant savings": it all depends on whether it is possible to organize the institution according to a matrix format, by project. He also said that this was "an investment that has a return in the short or long term".

Discussion participants were consulted on how to address the educational gaps that students display. Arnaldo Alvarado, of Guatemala, explained that they had levelling opportunities for maths and reading comprehension. Arsenio Fernandez, of Chile, indicated that students are evaluated when they enrol and that there is a "rehabilitation" programme. Patricia Oliveira, of SENAC, reported that the institution has educational counsellors, who conduct personalized student monitoring.

Another challenge addressed was the teacher retention capacity of institutions. Álvaro Pena, of UTEC, said that the important thing was to create teams that could retain knowledge and experience when a specific teacher left. Oliveira mentioned that there were virtual practice communities in SENAC, which include forums and blogs, where teachers post information and all of the material is available to the organization. SENAC São Pablo is also committed to systematizing reflection and to achieving the multiplication of knowledge, "whether in the form of guidelines or guidance, or through discussions between teachers" to enable institutional learning. In Guatemala, INTECAP implemented a platform called "Knowledge Networks", where teachers can suggest changes and updates to curriculum design, and share evaluation tools. In addition, they handle their technical and methodological updating on the same platform.



## Comments from social stakeholders

### *Workers' sector: Tyron Esna*

Esna remarked that he had heard references to methodological innovations, “but very little about technological innovations”. He considered that it was important that technology and innovation should assist processes, but not eliminate any jobs. He maintained that professional adaptation and retraining were urgent, to which end, continuous improvement in an environment of social dialogue was necessary, as well as a common framework for skills recognition, both nationally and internationally. “In that sense, the trade union movement calls for common regulatory frameworks, both regional and subregional, in trade agreements and treaties; standardization and accreditation so that people who migrate can have their knowledge and skills recognized in their new work surroundings” indicated the workers’ representative.

He also stressed the importance of soft skills throughout life: “degrees are no longer as important as a soft skill such as teamwork, or empathy,” he considered.

### *Employers' sector: Guido Ricci*

Ricci distinguished training carried out in familiar fields – such as agriculture, “where there are immense technological changes, but we are all familiar with the field” – from training for an as yet unknown world. “In both cases, we think the answer is to cultivate these skills, these cross-cutting attitudes, which will prepare people to join fields they are familiar with, as well as fields that are as yet unknown,” he noted.

He appreciated the work outlined by the training institutions that participated in the discussion group, but felt that in some respects, “they are shouldering too heavy a burden”. “We should insist that mid- or higher-level education institutions should fulfil their missions effectively,” he demanded.

Finally, he urged participants to strengthen the changes that are already taking place and maintained that they could count on tripartism to uphold them.

## Discussion panel 6: Vocational training, productive transformation and productivity

### Participants

Farid de Jesús Figueroa Torres / Vocational Training Director, SENA, Colombia

Federico Lamego / Executive Manager for International Relations, SENAI, Brazil

Matthew Greaves / Manager, Finance and Corporate Services, TVET Council, Barbados

Anabell Mora / Brand Manager, Laboratoria Bootcamp, Chile

Fernando Vargas / ILO/Cinterfor (moderator)

Fernando Vargas, who moderated the discussion group, began by recalling that one of ILO/Cinterfor's priorities was to link training and capacity-building for jobs with productive development, increased productivity and innovation policies. The institutions and initiatives called upon to share in this discussion group have committed to upholding these links.

Brazil's National Industrial Learning Service (SENAI) recently developed a model to anticipate future jobs and has been linked to the creation of innovation centres. Federico Lamego, SENAI's Executive Manager for International Relations, reported that seven years ago it was decided to build a network of 26 innovation institutes in order to conduct research and innovation applied to the industrial sector. This was done at the behest of the National Industry Confederation, which had indicated that one of the crucial factors for increasing the competitiveness of Brazil was innovation. As Lamego indicated, it was understood that Brazilian universities were poorly linked to the demands of industry and were conducting basic research a great deal more often than applied research.

There are currently 23 institutes in operation, as well as 700 researchers working in the network and nearly 500 innovation projects in practice. "We are now trying to organize other actors in Brazil in support of this agenda, because it is very complex. For us it is not just a matter of innovating, but of innovating effectively for the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs)," Lamego noted. He added that there are also elements to be changed in Brazilian business culture, in order to promote willingness to invest in research.

Lamego also reported that two years ago, SENAI had begun to engage in foresight studies in order to attempt to understand the impact of industry 4.0 on the courses delivered by the institution nationwide. Currently, many of the courses offered by SENAI are including content which provides a specific introduction to the subject and they are designing a free distance education course for more than 3,000 engineers, to provide an introduction to manufacturing 4.0.

The manager of SENAI referred to a technology consultancy programme for process improvement that was implemented three years ago, together with the Brazilian government,



catering to 3,000 SMEs. “Our data indicated an increase in productivity in these enterprises from 30 to 40%, just by conducting process improvement,” Lamego emphasized.

They are currently engaged in talks with the Brazilian government on the possibility of extending the programme to 30,000 SMEs.

In Chile, Mexico, Brazil and Peru, a training experience known as ‘a bootcamp’ is being conducted, focusing on the development of digital skills. Anabell Mora, Brand Manager for Laboratoria’s bootcamp, explained that this concept aimed to achieve in-depth education in a very short time. “In our case, they are intensive training camps in programming and user experience design. We work on a 6-month course, from Monday to Friday, on site and under a modality that includes lively training with a coach and replicating the work encountered in some companies,” Mora explained. “It works on the basis of experimentation and testing what works and what does not work,” she clarified. Students are responsible for their learning process, which is flexible, mobile.

They only train women in these two areas of work, as web developers or user experience designers. In Chile, about 15% or 20% of the women who apply actually gain access to the classes, because a selection process is carried out, through which they attempt to determine people’s “ability to learn how to learn”.

“We believe that training and education must be geared to work, to real employability,” Mora maintained. She stated that the best jobs, or those with the highest demand at present, are in the technology industry, and there are very few women in this field, particularly in Latin America. She stated that more than 40 million women in Latin America neither work nor study and that means “a lot of wasted talent”. Many of the women who attend Laboratoria have no programming experience or technological skills at all.

More than 400 companies have already hired people trained in Laboratoria and employability rates are at 86% in the first two months and 100% for the first six months after leaving the bootcamp. “Many of them have tripled their earnings, since the technological industry is one of the most profitable and has the most promising career projection,” Mora emphasized.

Matthew Greaves, manager of the TVET Council of Barbados, explained that this national training institution has committed to certain strategic areas: fisheries; shipbuilding and repair; electronic vehicles manufacturing; solar energy; robotics and artificial intelligence. He regretted that the institution’s capacity to take on students is not “as high as it should be”: every year, 400 students apply to join the programme and they can only accept 18. He reported that TVET, an institution with tripartite membership, had prepared a paper on recommendations to transform the education system, including the implementation of “occupational designations”.

Farid de Jesús Figueroa Torres, vocational training director at Colombia’s National Learning Service (SENA), explained one of the key themes in the work of the institution: the orange economy. This economy refers to the possibility of people earning money from ideas; that is, everything that involves the creation or marketing of intangibles that enable the generation of wealth. This includes the food industry, software development, 3D animation, photography, lighting, and others. “What all of these services ultimately do is to translate an idea into an opportunity to generate funds,” noted Figueroa. The adjective “orange” refers to “getting juice out of an initiative,” he explained.

SENA currently has about 80 technical, technological or technological specialization training programmes. The latter two are considered higher education, and are regulated by the Ministry of National Education. “While it is true that the nature of the SENA is to leverage the increase of domestic industry productivity, we also know that we must provide a response to people who are not necessarily immersed in industry, people who want to live from their ideas and initiatives,” Figueroa noted. According to the country’s National Statistics Administration Department (DANE), in 2017, the orange economy generated almost 11 thousand more jobs than the financial sector.

Figueroa reported that the institution had to engage in a process of cultural transformation in order to become more flexible and agile. “Today we are no longer thinking that curriculum design must be absolutely linear; that is, with a single entry point and a single leaving point, where people are admitted with the intention of becoming technicians in some field and eventually, at the end of the process, leave with a title or certification,” we should, rather, provide partial exits, with skills certification and allowing people to build their own training paths, he explained.

Another challenge is to provide support to the informal economy, which is very extended in Colombia, to help people bolster their enterprises and at the same time initiate a formalization process.

The organization also implements what it calls “a challenges bank”: an industry poses challenges and training environments propose responses to those challenges, and apprentices are given the chance to implement those solutions in the industry. In addition, industries are also open to training institutions making proposals regarding job profiles or skills that an industry may require.

SENA has agreements with universities for the recognition of training and the credits system is key in order to ensure mobility. He mentioned that there are even cases of pre-graduate students in higher education turning to SENA to improve the practical component of their training, which is not provided in the academic world.



## Comments from social stakeholders

### *Workers' sector: Lola Santillana*

Santillana stressed that union participation in vocational training is “essential and key” if it is intended that the transition to the work of the future “be done fairly and in defence of decent work”. “It is necessary to establish tripartite social dialogue agreement between the institutions in order to bring about these changes in regulatory frameworks quickly, as our labour market is really requiring,” she said. She also called for “bringing democracy to companies” to really improve competitiveness and productivity. “When we talk about, and companies talk about improving productivity, there is no talk of improving working conditions,” she claimed. She urged that we not forget that behind the digitization and innovation processes in companies there are people performing those jobs. She considered in that respect that the mentality of entrepreneurs should change, acknowledging that the participation of workers is key to transformation.

### *Employers' sector: Jorge Araya Chávez*

Araya highlighted the importance of social dialogue, innovation and disruption to transform our societies. He stated that in his country, Costa Rica, the National Training Institute (INA) contributed a great deal to productive transformation: in 1987, 75% of exports were primary, and 30 years later, the main export products were medical instruments and devices. “Today we face a new challenge, the industry 4.0 revolution, and how to accommodate the productive sector, businesses and workers to that reality,” he noted. In this regard, he appreciated the importance of vocational training institutions knowing how to read the times and accommodating themselves to them. He asserted that they should be able to attract the new generations to vocational training as a life project. “It’s okay to go to college, but university is not necessarily for everyone. We should position vocational training as a viable life project for our societies, something we have not done and we have failed as countries,” he stressed. In this regard, he felt that qualifications frameworks are essential because they are “the ladder that enables people to move through the education system”. Araya considered that the State should encourage the study of technical trades.

## Discussion panel 7: Lifelong training, synchronization between vocational training, education and certification

### Participants

Gerardo Gutiérrez Ardoy / Director General of the Public State Employment Service, SEPE, Spain

Pabla Ávila / Head of Centres, Assessors and TP Synchronization, Chilevalora, Chile

Ricardo Ruiz de Viñaspre / Deputy Director, SENCE, Chile

Elizabeth Cornejo Maldonado / Director of Labour Skill Standardization and Certification, Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion of Peru

Fernando Vargas / ILO/Cinterfor (moderator)

Lifelong training and bridges between formal education and vocational training were the main topics addressed in this discussion group.

First, the discussion focused on the experience of ChileValora and its achievement of getting technical higher education institutions to recognize skills certifications acquired in technical training. “What we did first was model a basic structure that we then offered to educational institutions. By this means we showed them that in their graduate profiles they could show what skills were contained in each graduate profile, particularly the technical skills,” said Pabla Ávila, of ChileValora. She added that what the proposed model did was shed light on standards: placing the technical skills acquired by a worker in technical training in a catalogue. “When you train, regardless of your training strategy or curriculum design, the outcome must eventually involve a person who has acquired certain skills, and it is verified that he or she has acquired them. We found that point of agreement on the issue of technical skills,” stressed Ávila.

First, we reached an agreement with one higher technical training institution, then the agreement was extended to include secondary vocational-technical education schools. In addition, there is a partnership with State technical training centres in each region. “One such centre, located in the south of the country, welcomed the first 21 student-workers, who had been certified in skills related to the centre’s graduate profile, and the advantage was that they only needed to take the courses that they had not taken previously, because the training institution recognized their skills,” highlighted the specialist.

Ávila explained that in gathering information on occupational profiles, ChileValora follows the principles of tripartism and social dialogue, through the labour skills sectoral agency, which is tripartite. Also contributing to information gathering on profiles is the information generated by the SENCE observatories, that makes it possible to have “a sort of rapid regional antenna regarding the demands of the production sector and bring that information to these sectoral bodies”. Finally, a skills standard is generated. The readability of this standard is a challenge, but Ávila said that “some translation exercises regarding the information contained there” have been performed.



In addition, the occupational profiles also include information on the infrastructure required for training in each case, which helps institutions to make decisions about investment. “What training we should aim for is largely determined by the associated cost with respect to assembling training equipment, and that information is now included in the occupational profiles; it is important for institutions to somehow learn to use that information,” Ávila pointed out.

Ricardo Ruiz, of Chile's SENCE, referred to the synchronization work carried out by the institution. SENCE provides funding for the training activities of private organizations, and recognizes training performed in enterprises, offering tax incentives. The key question, considered Ruiz, was how incentives can be generated to train for future employment.

In relation to this, the institution has established labour observatories throughout the country; there are people in the institution who create links with universities and companies in order to learn their needs, and with that information, decisions are made about what kind of training to finance.

“SENCE's goal in this administration has been not only to train for the sake of training, as an end in itself, but to train towards an end: employment. We need to train to make it more likely for people to find jobs than if they lacked such training, but we also believe that training alone is not enough; it is the certification of skills that increases the likelihood of our citizens being able to enter the labour market. Therefore, coordination with the education sector, as well as with ChileValora is critical for us,” Ruiz indicated. He added that synchronization should be greater than it is today.

SENCE provides an additional incentive if the technical training body which it is financing is connected with higher education institutions; “we are therefore telling these training organizations: connect with the university, with technical training centres, because that is convenient for you and for the country,” Ruiz noted.

In addition, it is sought to link training institutions with the productive sector, also through incentives; if a person gets a job after having gone through a course, the agency that provided this training receives an additional payment. This encourages training agencies to seek closer links with the productive sector so that their training will translate into employment.

Ruiz referred to another service provided by SENCE: it finances officials in municipalities that carry out work counselling – they explain how to handle a job interview, how to navigate a particular industry – and advise on skills certification. “One of the best ways for people to find work is not by telling them: ‘hey, there are jobs there, go that way,’ but ‘hey, you know what? maybe you need certification so you can show off those skills to the market,’” remarked Ruiz, graphically.

In Spain, meanwhile, a national system of qualifications and vocational training was established in 2002, by organic act. This system covers both the ‘certificates of professionalism’ issued by the Ministry of Labour, as well as the degrees issued by the Ministry of Education. “Thus we make sure that these gateways exist specifically for people who, throughout life, begin by professionalizing themselves through a Ministry of Education degree, and at the end, those skills are perfectly comparable and recognizable also in the field of employment, so that if they want to follow a career path, people may continue to do so through a certificate of professionalism, because it will be recognized that all of the skills they acquired through

their degrees are perfectly valid,” explained Gerardo Gutiérrez, of the Public State Employment Service of Spain (SEPE). He added that in Spain, in many professions all that is required is a certificate of professionalism.

This is not the only move in the direction of building gateways: an accreditation and skills assessment procedure was adopted by decree in 2009. The law states that a group of counsellors and assessors qualified in a particular subject may examine a person to determine if he or she meets the necessary skills requirements for a particular qualification, and if so, a certificate of professionalism is issued. “This is helping, for example, to professionalize many female workers in the social healthcare sector, who had been engaged in family care for many years, but had no degree to recognize this profession,” Gutiérrez highlighted. This was especially important because regulations governing family and dependent care have been issued and they require certification. The European Union recently called this certification procedure applied in Spain an “innovative practice”.

Elizabeth Cornejo, director of Labour Skill Standardization and Certification of the Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion of Peru, spoke about the synchronization between this ministry and the Ministry of Education. “We work in coordination on standards and skills maps, because these maps are useful to us both: to them (the Ministry of Education) because they can draw up their career maps, and to the Ministry of Labour, because they enable us to build tools for skills certification and for job training given through the Productive Youth and Impulsa Perú programmes, which are aimed at young people between 18 and 29 years of age (the first), and at adults between 30 and 50 (the second),” reported Cornejo.

She added that the intention of synchronization was that training be a better match for the demands of the labour market, because in Peru, levels of professional mismatch are “quite high”: seven out of ten students in higher education are not working in the occupations for which they were trained.

Discussion participants were consulted about their experience in relation to generating qualifications frameworks. Gutiérrez said that a qualifications framework was implemented in Spain in 2002. Over 700 qualifications were included in it, but it has not been updated, considered the senior official. “It turns out that the (qualifications) are getting old. Developing a qualification and determining the various skill sublevels is so complex, that often, once they have been approved by royal decree, it turns out that the skills have become obsolete. In Spain we are working with different groups to see how we can speed up this updating process. Clearly, we public authorities need to respond to this, because otherwise, the labour market will be moving in another direction and there will be no transparency, we will not know about the skills that the market is asking us for,” warned Gutiérrez. The idea is that the skills should be incorporated into certificates of professionalism and diplomas as they are updated. In this updating process, both public and private occupational observatories play a key role, and they must synchronize with one another, held Gutiérrez. A software tool is being developed in Spain to achieve this synchronization, he announced. He also considered that an interesting challenge would be to synchronize the various observatories throughout Latin America.

In Chile, there is a law which mandates the Ministry of Education to implement a qualifications framework. “We have an advantage, which is that we have looked at international experiences and have tried to collect all the lessons learned from those experiences,” said Ávila. She



stressed that “unusually and perhaps only for once, the various State actors, particularly the Ministries of Labour and Education, have sat down to work together” on this, together with the representatives of workers and enterprises.

It was resolved that the first major pilot qualifications framework will be on the maintenance sector, which brings together six productive sectors. Ávila noted that Chile has a set of tools that allow policies “to be rapidly modifiable”: the base instrument is the national catalogue of skills standards, which in Chile is updated within a maximum period of four years. “Every so often we review these standards and they are drawn up so that we can quickly discover which part of the qualification requires an update,” Ávila explained.

Work is being done in Peru on a national qualifications framework, with sectoral skills councils to help populate the framework, collect profiles and skills standards. We shall attempt to establish close links between education and work, Cornejo stated. Recognition of learning and certification will enable people to achieve the highest educational levels, and “that will lead to the improvement of the qualifications of our workforce and our human talent will be more positively valued,” noted the senior official.

She reported that the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Peru had just launched a productivity and competitiveness policy in the country and that the focal point on education involves strengthening human capital, and in particular strengthen skills and training. The plan also includes strengthening information systems. In the Ministry of Labour there are currently two information systems. First, there are observatories that help young people to choose what career to pursue in higher education, both technological and university: they provide information on what is on offer, where to attend and the cost, as well as information on the labour market, such as how much they can earn, by occupation. Secondly, there is a “Plan your Future” platform, aimed at the general population. It contains information on short courses being delivered on the market, as well as labour market information. The challenge is to unify these platforms, Cornejo stated.

The challenge of skills certification in a region characterized by significant migratory movements was also addressed by the discussion group. Ávila reported that a couple of years ago, Chile and Argentina had conducted “a first exercise” in skills standards comparison in the construction sector, with a view to issuing a joint standard. Today, Chile is replicating this exercise with Peru in the tourism sector, as well as with Ecuador. In addition, similar work with Mexico and Uruguay is being planned. “Our dream is to produce a regional catalogue, in order to share standards that somehow generate the basis for people’s mobility,” said Ávila. In this regard, the expert considered that certification standards should be “as broad as possible” to allow inclusive policies to be designed. “We have certification programmes for migrants because our certification standards hardly exclude anyone, and the only condition is for people to prove that they have the expertise to be evaluated, but no other restrictions. And that has transformed it into a possibility for inclusion for the population,” said Ávila.

On mobility and certification, Gutiérrez reported that Spain has a pilot project with Argentina to incorporate Argentinean workers trained in ICT in Spanish companies, taking into account the lack of professionals with ICT skills in Spain. Through the Spanish embassy in Argentina, 1000 people with accredited skills in this field were recruited in this country, and they arrived in Spain on a work visa, Gutiérrez highlighted.

## Comments from social stakeholders

*Workers' sector: María Angélica Ibáñez*

Ibáñez felt that lifelong education “entails a dimension which goes beyond work”. “We do not only educate ourselves to work, to be hyperproductive; we educate ourselves as people, as people who do indeed have to work. This means that on this journey we need to go beyond the job issue,” she stated. She wondered what we are doing to incorporate into our training routes “vocation, the issue of citizenship, looking beyond work”. “Especially in a region where inequality is huge, and where many sectors are left behind in this lifelong education path,” she noted.

The union representative considered that progress had been made in terms of gateways, but that more thought should be given to working conditions: “It is not enough to recognize knowledge, we must move towards policies aiming to install dignified, decent work. This entails social security, occupational health, collective bargaining and effective compliance with the fundamental rights”. She further warned that vocational training occurs most often outside working hours.

Ibáñez considered that while in Chile the synchronized work of SENCE and ChileValora had been key, this did not mean that the country had “robust employment policies that effectively prevent technological changes from putting jobs at even more risk and leaving a lot more people without opportunities for working and training”.

*Employers' sector: Mónica Mezquita*

Mezquita remarked that “the whole system is imbued with the education rationale, and there is much less of the labour rationale”, and it is therefore necessary to “‘re-labouralize’ vocational training”. “If we want training systems that really work, they have to be designed on the basis of social dialogue and businesses,” she stated.

She considered that, in social dialogue processes, none of the parties should have “more say or more votes than the other two,” and demanded greater autonomy for training institutions, “which undergo too much intervention from governments”. “And that does not work, because if they have to enter into agreements that are achieved through social dialogue, a large government presence will surely cause some detours as regards intentions,” she considered.

Regarding the qualifications framework design, she suggested that it is “exhausting work that workers and businesses do not actually understand very well,” because “it is not a simple language, nor are correlations transparent”. She found that while these frameworks do play a guiding role for education and training programmes, they also include some problems: the desire to “foresee and regulate everything,” as well as the fact that “they are so complicated, so heavy,” that they do not make it possible to administrate with the necessary speed.

Finally, Mezquita noted that nearly half of SMEs are not familiar with the training system. “I would ask that systems should bear SMEs specifically in mind and do so with great generosity,” she stated.



## Discussion panel 8: The present and future of cooperation in vocational training

### Participants

Cecilia Llambí / Chief Executive, Project Management for Sustainable Development, Southern Region, Development Bank of Latin America - CAF

Fernando Casanova / Programme Officer, ILO/Cinterfor

Linda Karen Vázquez Maldonado / Executive Secretary to the Presidency of IOHE and academic member of the Universidad de Los Lagos, Chile

Ricardo F.J. Montenegro P. / Chairman of the Board, employers' sector, INSAFORP representative to REDIFP

Pedro Américo Furtado de Oliveira / Director, ILO's Office Argentina (moderator)

The future of cooperation in vocational training was the focus of this discussion group. The moderator, Pedro Américo Furtado de Oliveira, Director of the ILO Office in Argentina, stated that ILO/Cinterfor clearly considered South-South cooperation to be very important within the framework of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, a cooperation that requires the collaboration of the institutions taking part in that discussion group. He consulted the participants on the priorities of their institutions on the issue of cooperation.

Fernando Casanova, ILO/Cinterfor Programme Officer, noted that one of the most significant challenges is to achieve synchronization between the various cooperation networks in order to expand their scope and complement their actions. He considered that priorities always need to keep pace with the development agenda of countries at each historical moment. He reported that, for example, in the 1950s, the challenge for Cinterfor's network was the creation of vocational training institutions. In the 1970s they sought to strengthen these institutions, by generating and disseminating educational materials. In the 1990s, cooperation focused on spreading the labour skills approach in vocational training and on the standardization and certification of job skills. "Today we are talking about other issues: quality apprenticeship, project-based training, national qualifications frameworks. We must always keep pace with whatever the historical moment may be indicating, and with the countries' development agenda," Casanova noted. Currently, the ILO/Cinterfor's network includes some clear focal points: productive development policies, productive transformation and vocational training; "the network needs to operate according to these focal points and simultaneously, needs to be very attentive, in order to ensure that the productive development and productive transformation processes do not deepen, but rather help bridge existing gaps in terms of equity and social justice," Casanova explained.

Cecilia Llambí, Chief Executive of Project Management for Sustainable Development in the Southern Region, of the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), recalled that the institution began as an infrastructure bank, and while infrastructure is still at the heart of their activities, in recent times, other important issues for developing countries had been incorporated. For

example, in recent years, CAF had drawn up an educational agenda, which began with infrastructure issues and then expanded. Currently, CAF's educational agenda has three strategic lines of action: access, quality and relevance. It seeks to improve access to education, especially in some age groups. CAF also seeks to help overcome the problems of quality throughout education and improve relevance, understood as "the link between the skills people are trained in and the skills demanded for work and life," Llambí explained.

She noted that the institution has two or three basic instruments: financing, loans to education projects and vocational training, and technical cooperation and technical assistance to countries.

Like the ILO/Cinterfor, although CAF establishes some priority areas of action, it then adapts and contextualizes its actions according to the needs of each country. She mentioned, for example, the support granted by the bank to the government of Paraguay to conduct a study to identify skill gaps, which will make it possible to design a roadmap to improve the relevance of mid-level technical education in the country.

One of the most recent of CAF's lines of work was the line on quality apprenticeship, or dual apprenticeship. Together with ILO/Cinterfor, CAF will support Uruguay and its Inter-Agency Committee on Education and Labour in monitoring some initiatives that are being implemented, identifying lessons and starting to think about how to scale up and design new plans for new productive sectors where that line might be relevant. "We see that dual or quality apprenticeship line as being very promising, not only to meet the challenges of relevance, but also as a way of promoting the completion of educational cycles, to improve the school-to-work transition, and to enhance the value of work as a training environment," Llambí highlighted.

Some of CAF's other lines of work include training in cross-cutting and socio-emotional skills, digital skills in particular; and support for initiatives such as national qualifications frameworks. Most of the initiatives are carried forward in cooperation with other institutions and networks, Llambí clarified.

Linda Vázquez, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE), remarked that the institution had been created in 1980 in Quebec with the aim of strengthening the capacities of universities that were being set up in Latin America. Today the network includes more than 350 higher education institutions, from Canada to Argentina, operating under inter-American principles. Not only does it include traditional universities, but also tertiary institutions, institutions for technical education and vocational training and technological universities. "We also have a strong technical training component, because we see that as one of the most significant challenges and gaps that exist in the different developing countries," Vázquez explained.

The IOHE has five major programmes. The first is the Institute for University Management and Leadership (IGLU), which trains management teams in institutions of higher education. The second programme is the College of the Americas, which aims to train universities' professional teams; there are some specializations, particularly in university internationalization, innovation environments, methodologies and designs for curriculum and pedagogical innovation. The third is the Campus programme, which involves university social responsibility and the development of post-graduate programmes.



The fourth programme is Women Leaders of Higher Education Institutions in the Americas, which seeks to promote the growth and strengthening of the capacities of women leaders in higher education institutions. The fifth programme, the most recent, is the Inter-American Space for Higher Technical and Technological Education, dedicated to strengthening institutions that are working in technical training.

Vázquez explained that through these programmes, they seek to promote mutual understanding and overcome the competition rationale, generate greater student and academic mobility, and create inter-cultural sensitivity. She also stressed that network cooperation improves bargaining and advocacy power.

Vázquez then pointed to the experience of the Inter-American Space for Higher Technical and Technological Education (EIESTEC). She explained that it is based on three pillars: integration as an opportunity to facilitate institutional cooperation, identify best practices and make the best use of consolidated experiences; training to provide professional development opportunities for teachers and managers in technical and technological education; and research to learn more about the educational provision in the sector and promote applied research. She reported that they are in the midst of developing and putting together a diploma course in innovation management for technical and technological education, which will be 100% online.

Regarding the characteristics of training, Vázquez wondered how it was possible to train differently. She considered that we need “people who are much more competent in innovation leadership, but also with critical thinking, capable of teamwork, with communication skills, because at one point we were training technicians who were highly specialized in their fields, but who did not know how to communicate their ideas”. She remarked that this type of soft skill should not only be included in vocational training, but also among international and inter-cultural skills. She stated that there is a strong convergence towards the internationalization of the curriculum, which, in fact, refers to incorporating knowledge and skills into student practice, to achieve better synergy with people of other nationalities.

Ricardo Montenegro, representative of the Salvadoran Vocational Training Institute (INSAFORP) to the Network of Vocational Training Institutes in Central America, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Haiti (REDIFP), reported on the network’s cooperation experience. In 1994 it was decided, at the initiative of Guatemala and El Salvador, to set up a Central American network of vocational training institutions. “The idea was to try to share experiences, to cooperate,” Montenegro indicated.

The network facilitates vocational training institutions’ cooperation with ILO/Cinterfor and institutions in Europe, particularly with Spanish Cooperation. In 2010, a programme was implemented to develop regional-level technical standards, curricula, job skills assessment, standard approval, trainer training, green jobs, skills certification and indicator catalogues.

He related that INSAFORP was the first institution to conduct foresight studies in the region, and that, on the basis of their network cooperation, other institutions in other countries also started to implement them.

Currently they are working with ILO/Cinterfor on the project-based learning methodology. “Several of our regional institutions are highly interested in this methodology, which we believe will allow us to achieve better education and training, more innovative for our young people,”

underscored Montenegro. They were also able to get support from German Cooperation in order to initiate a dual education programme on energy efficiency and new energy methodologies in Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica, which has achieved 100% employment.

The discussion group addressed the issue of the sustainability of cooperation mechanisms. Casanova considered that the key to sustainability was to break away from the donor/recipient rationale, and aim to have all institutions simultaneously receive and give; that is, become active cooperation actors. "There is, as a result, a sense of ownership of the mechanism," Casanova emphasized. Recipient institutions must have sufficient strength to set their agenda and decide what kind of cooperation they want to receive, on what issues, how and under what conditions. Casanova stated that all work under the Cinterfor network was carried out on the basis of detecting demand, but also by identifying strengths.

Finally, everyone agreed that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a way prescribe the goals of cooperation and align countries in the search for common goals.

### **Comments from social stakeholders**

#### *Workers' sector: John Jairo Caicedo*

Caicedo stressed the importance of SDGs 4 and 8, which point to free public education for all, and decent work. In terms of cooperation, he said that it should always be clear "where we want to go". Finally, he stressed the importance of the creation of the Vocational Training Union Network, which "has contributed to achieving advanced experiences, which serve as an example" for all countries.

#### *Employers' sector: Armando Urtecho*

Urtecho stated that cooperation often fails to engage in prior consultation with the employer sector in each country, and that it is important that this should be done. "If the employer sector, which is in need of skilled and quality labour, is not heard, governments, however well-intentioned they may be, will surely fail to convey what it is that businesses in the present and in the future want," he warned. He considered that when vocational training institutions outsource their services, they "reach (goals) more accurately," and faster, and contribute more to training efforts. Finally, he considered that cooperation "should be flexible" and synchronize among different actors.



## Conference: The frontiers of innovation in vocational training and the future the work

### Being agents of change

Márcio Guerra, Foresight Manager, SENAI, Brazil

“Looking to the future is important, but at the same time, we must not forget what has gone by,” said Márcio Guerra at the start of his presentation, which focused on technological changes and the attitude we should adopt towards them. He stated that the debate on technology, employment and transformations is not new, and that the challenge is “how to anticipate it” and anticipate at what speeds it can take place.

Guerra cited a study estimating that 47% of current occupations in the United States of America are liable to be automated. Another study, conducted in 54 countries, concluded that 78% of overall employment will be transformed in some way as a result of automation.



Guerra considered that the debate on the future of employment “should be approached carefully, because a great deal might happen, or nothing at all, or it could happen one way and then change the next moment”. He said the changes are closely related to the capacity for innovation and technology diffusion, and that the future of Latin America in this area will depend on how countries prepare to face this process. He indicated in this regard that Brazil has one of the lowest innovation rates in the world and one of the factors that has had the greatest bearing in this situation is the lack of knowledge of technology and of its impact on the production process.

In relation to anticipated changes, Guerra mentioned two issues to be addressed: premature deindustrialization in countries undergoing competitiveness issues that jeopardize their performance; and discussion of a new social pact and new growth and vocational training models. “And here the discussion should be what we want from this future, how we will act: Are we going to be protagonists in that process or are we going to wait until the transformation occurs before we start making adaptations?” he asked.

He said that vocational training institutions should also become agents of technological dissemination, because often “the company does not even know what technology it is going to acquire”. “If we do this well, we will be able to influence the discussion and will be capable of changing the vocational training issue faster,” Guerra maintained.

The great challenge for vocational training institutions is to balance tomorrow and today, he asserted. How can the demands of businesses be addressed today, but also, how can we begin to build the future? “That will also depend on how we adapt to the technologies that keep emerging. We must think of a strategy for our institutions, to bring on that future,” he urged.

He reported that on the basis of SENAI’s foresight model, it was possible to create new courses that are not yet being required, but which will be demanded in the future. He said that the occupations of the future will be knowledge-based, analytical and non-routine.

At SENAI, over the last six years, 74 prospective studies were conducted, related to different areas of knowledge. Foresight studies were also performed on methodologies and tools: augmented reality, virtual reality, cognitive-affective recognition. A publication was produced which refers to the 30 professions of the future: the study identifies what knowledge, skills and attitudes will emerge over the next five, ten and fifteen years. There are references to technologies and their likely market penetration. And finally, the educational impact of these outcomes is discussed, identifying the most significant skills and knowledge, Guerra explained.

SENAI’s work thus entails a continuous path: it begins with foresight studies; technological and organizational impacts are determined; impacts on labour are determined; trends are monitored; skills, aptitudes, capabilities are upgraded; and finally, new courses are created and curricula are updated. Guerra reported that on SENAI’s sectoral technical committees there are not only representatives of the government, employers and workers, but also academia, associations and observers, in order to ensure a broad debate on the results of the foresight studies. “I think this transformation process opens up our institutions and positions them in a different place where they can act upon that future. And we must work with responsibility to spread this knowledge,” Guerra stressed. And he added: “We shall continue to train in our vocational training institutions, but we also need to take up that social role of debating, of taking the knowledge to employers too, so that discussions can occur in a healthy way and so that we do not lose our place in society. And that will require much greater speed in sharing information; while we are here debating, there are innovations that are emerging, and we need to share that information.”

Guerra stated that SENAI was developing a digital platform proposal for regional foresight, and invited countries to join it.



## Technological change as an opportunity

Carlos Hernández Mendocilla, Development Manager at SENATI, Peru

A nut, a half nut: that was the image representing Peru's SENATI many years ago. Today, its new image represents a change in the way of seeing things, a different way of conceiving training; the focus now is on automation and robotics, Hernández revealed in his opening remarks.

He noted that the information available on the impact of robotics, automation and artificial intelligence on the work of the future indicates that some jobs will change, others will improve, "and therefore for us this is an opportunity".

He considered that a challenge that vocational training institutions must face is how to train outside the classroom too, since they are currently very focused on classroom training. "Our biggest investment is in equipment in physical spaces where people are trained, and today clients, users, spend less time there, they look for more comfort. How much comfort do we give them? What do we do to retain them?" he asked.

Hernández gave an example to show how robotization, which appears to be a threat to work, can become an opportunity: the implementation of a robotized kitchen in the United States would be an opportunity for Peruvian cuisine, if it were known how to exploit it.

He said that five years before, SENATI had determined to become a digital organization, and today, for example, they produce podcasts for training in gastronomy and take advantage of the learning tools available in digital environments. Between 20% and 30% of the learning process is performed remotely.

In addition, SENATI has committed to a dual academic model based on a relationship of trust with businesses. They seek to create spaces for young people to "learn with the companies, incorporating their values, and developing innovative projects with them, with which they graduate". "This would not be possible if we did not have physical areas in the organization that replicate the enterprise experience, which makes it a topical issue to have the technology and invest in it," Hernández emphasized. He added that this is a novelty in Peru, where the dual system is not yet widespread.

He indicated that partnerships have been established with global companies that needed to have a venue in which to present their technology and innovation projects. They do this in SENATI, thus generating "a space to build knowledge that is often not even in the curricula, but is later transferred to them". "In fact, there are many courses that have been developed on the basis of these experiences," added Hernández.

He stated that SENATI is an industry 4.0 pioneer and helps train technicians and industrial workers in this line. "How did we do it? In partnership with everyone. (Global) companies needed technology diffusion and we needed technology transfer. Companies need to become familiar with the technology, so we were all at a point at which we needed to learn. And we all won," he said.

Hernández also referred to SENATI's technological postgraduate courses experience, which were developed upon realizing that the universities were not giving SENATI graduate technicians

the knowledge and skills they expected. SENATI provides technological specializations and master's degrees in partnership with international universities, with a technological expertise component and a very strong soft skills development component.

## The future of work is governable

Gerardo Gutiérrez Ardoy, Director of SEPE and Antonio De Luis Acevedo, Managing Director of FUNDAE, Spain

The Public State Employment Service of Spain (SEPE) and the Tripartite Foundation for on-the-job Training of Spain (FUNDAE) have committed to vocational training to help overcome gaps and ensure equity.

Gerardo Gutiérrez Ardoy, director of SEPE, stated that we are surely the “protagonists of a genuine change of era”. “Within a few decades, historians will name this the age of robotics and technology, and we hope that it will also be the age of humanism; at least, the age that did not forget about humanism,” he remarked. He added that the future of work “is governable, and training for employment is one of the key instruments to govern it”. “And govern it in public terms, with whatever public-private cooperation is needed; let this not be something that fate imposes upon us, with the consequent loss of jobs and people who will be left behind. We cannot let that happen, we must be able to govern the future of work,” he insisted.

He considered that training for employment should not be seen as something rigid, but seen in the context of “real and vital” issues that humanity is currently facing: the demographic challenge – migratory movements, depopulation – and the challenge of climate change.

He noted that typically, when we talk about the future of work, we do not talk about training in the prevention of occupational hazards and occupational health. However, he recalled that two million people die on the job every year. “No war leads to such a number of deaths per year,” he said.

Gutiérrez stated that the size of the territory is key in detecting training needs, and that we should be capable of “going into the territory”.

Another key aspect that should be on the table, Gutiérrez indicated, is that the right to personalized support throughout people’s working life should be a fundamental right. He considered that the ILO should incorporate a new right into its documents, in the same category as others, such as equal treatment and equal pay: the right to tailored support throughout one’s working life, “because more than ever we need skilled personnel, technical personnel, public employment service counsellors who can advise, guide people so they know what the future of the labour market holds, so they know first-hand what professional skills they need to be training in so as not to be displaced from the labour market”.

If this does not become a fundamental right, there will be “a very large group of people who will not have the necessary, or rigorous, information with which to make decisions that will affect their fate,” and at the same time, “an elite (will emerge) that will have access to that information, because they have been trained in good centres, maybe private centres; because they have



family or friends who will be telling them what they have to do”. “We have to incorporate all of this human component into vocational training,” he concluded.

Antonio De Luis Acevedo, managing director of FUNDAE, held that we need to generate devices to start foreseeing the impact of the “disruptive” technologies, such as artificial intelligence, the internet of things, nanotechnology, robotics and 5G technology, on labour relations and training.

De Luis Acevedo explained that SEPE and FUNDAE have several devices which are “very powerful, but disjointed” to detect training needs. SEPE has an Occupational Observatory and the national reference centres, which conduct research and development for all the professional supply available. FUNDAE has jointly-run sectoral structures, which analyse all of the training needs in 23 sectors, quantifying workers who will be needed and observing training specifications.

Today in Spain there are significant gaps that must be addressed in terms of productive sectors, territory, gender, and size of company, De Luis Acevedo indicated. In relation to this latter point, he mentioned that large companies in Spain do not have much of a problem regarding means or resources for training and labour relations; medium companies must face a more sizeable problem; while small companies “do not even know what their training needs are, or where they can train, or for what”.

## Closing session of the 44th Technical Committee Meeting

At the close of the meeting, representatives of the employers’ and the workers’ sectors pointed to the challenges of the future in terms of vocational training.

Juan Mailhos, on behalf of the business sector, stressed the importance of social dialogue. He said the employers’ sector is convinced that vocational training must be aligned with productive development, with technological change and with investment policies, and that it should serve to mitigate the skills gap that exists in the labour market.

He urged not to forget the role played by “sustainable enterprise, the private sector company,” which is “the largest reserve of decent work that exists in our societies”.

He considered that we should work on making vocational training and formal education complementary, with a focus on continuity between one kind of training and another, as well as “combining effectively the theoretical world, training, education, with the world of work”. Mailhos stated that vocational training should incorporate technological innovation, so as to make it “more relevant and more effective”.

“We need to train people, but with their intended incorporation into the labour market in mind, otherwise, we often end up training just for the sake of training. People train and then cannot get a job in the area they trained in,” he pointed out.

Mailhos asserted that vocational training needs to increase its funding, to make it more sustainable. “With respect to the ILO/Cinterfor, we need budget distribution to be conducted in a more equitable manner between workers and employers,” he maintained.

The employers' sector also considers it necessary to conduct a review of national vocational training institutions, Mailhos noted. "We wonder if some of the problems we are facing in our countries are not due to the structure of these institutions behind closed doors. Perhaps in this, ILO/Cinterfor, with its expertise and its network of institutions, could find, even theoretically, a way in which to review the structure of these institutions in order to make them a great deal more effective," he indicated.

Finally, he stated that the employers understand that a biennial meeting of the Technical Committee is "too infrequent" and feels that often, at these meetings "we are often presented with a fait accompli". Therefore, he proposed that ILO/Cinterfor should consider the possibility of establishing consultative advisory councils, for both the worker and employer sectors, taking advantage of new technologies, in order to hold at least a couple of virtual meetings year. This would make it possible to "monitor and follow up on the activities performed by the Centre itself, before the event" or at least, "receive input, comments, and, if necessary, make corrections to the work carried out," Mailhos pointed out.

Meanwhile, Rosane Bertotti, vice president of the assembly for the labour sector, highlighted the creation of the Trade Union Vocational Training Network. "The trade union movement also has its differences, and setting up this unit is part of the development of the workers' struggle, so they can then speak in tripartite venues. This is why establishing a Trade Union Vocational Training Network is essential for us in this context," she maintained.

Bertotti warned that there is "a regressive trend" in most countries in the region, and in that context, workers want to reaffirm democracy, social dialogue, trade union freedom, and to strengthen trade unionism as a key player in democratic processes. "Collective bargaining as a means to agree and resolve labour's economic and social interests is increasingly important and urgent," she maintained. She then added that this is not only for the benefit of workers, but is also essential for society, for sustainable economic development and the building of collective knowledge.

She noted that we cannot forget that while we discuss the fourth industrial revolution and the future of work, there are millions of workers who have no access to basic education, and that there are high rates of illiteracy in our countries. "That is why we need to defend quality, public and comprehensive education for all," and "ensure that no one is left behind, because training is a human right, as the 2030 Agenda says," she stressed.

She remarked that workers are committed to continuing to contribute constructively, albeit critically, to advancing the issues of social dialogue, vocational training and the future of work. Finally, she urged the need for "training utopias" and to dream about the vocational training we want.

Meanwhile, the director of INEFOP, Eduardo Pereyra, emphasized that the Technical Committee Meeting made it possible "to reassess the international debate on the issues of work". He argued that there is currently no single vision on the future of the world, but confronting positions. "There is no single model of competitiveness in the world: there is a labour competitiveness model with social and labour inclusion, with rights, and there is another model based on deregulation, on the absence of social security and protection. There is no single vision of the State: there is one that conceives a more hands-on State, settling conflicts, being participatory, leading, and



there are other visions in which the State is practically a testimonial agent in the development of economic forces,” Pereyra indicated.

The senior official pointed to the support granted by ILO/Cinterfor to developing countries, and particularly the support given to Uruguay. ILO/Cinterfor has collaborated with Uruguay on “major projects” in the construction, pulp-paper, hotel and catering industries, and has collaborated in promoting social dialogue “with a high political and technical commitment,” emphasized Pereyra.

At the close of the meeting, Enrique Deibe, director of ILO/Cinterfor, thanked the participants, educational and vocational training institutions in Uruguay and the technical team of ILO/Cinterfor for their commitment and work, and ensured them all that he would take “into account very seriously” the recommendations made at the 44th Technical Committee Meeting.

Finally, it was agreed that the next ILO/Cinterfor Technical Committee Meeting would take place in Spain, in 2021.

## Venue for the 45th Technical Committee Meeting

Before concluding the meeting, Gerardo Gutiérrez Ardoy, Director General of SEPE and Antonio De Luis Acevedo, Managing Director of FUNDAE of Spain, submitted their proposal to hold the 45th Technical Committee Meeting of ILO/Cinterfor in Spain, an announcement which was received with much satisfaction and approval by those present.

## APPENDIX I: PROGRAMME AND BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

### Conclusions of the ILO/Cinterfor Programme and Budget Committee Montevideo, Uruguay, 5 August 2019

The Programme and Budget Committee is a body whose function is to guide and support the implementation of the ILO/Cinterfor's Work Plan. The Committee met on 5 August 2019 within the framework of the 44th Technical Committee Meeting, in order to analyse and discuss the following items submitted by the Director of ILO/Cinterfor in his report.

- Report on activities related to technical assistance, South-South cooperation, publications and knowledge management, for the period between August 2017 and July 2019.
- Report on the situation of the Centre's human and financial resources.
- Work Plan Proposal for 2020-2021.

The representatives of ILO/Cinterfor member institutions and employers' and workers' organizations decided to:

1. Recommend that the 44th TCM plenary assembly approve the above-mentioned document in its three areas.
2. Without prejudice to the above, they considered that a number of considerations and recommendations should be made, as detailed below.

Considerations in relation to the Report of the ILO/Cinterfor's Director:

The members of this Committee agree to assess very positively the quality and consistency of the report submitted, which adequately reflects the action taken by the Centre during the past biennium, in terms of technical assistance, South-South cooperation, publications and knowledge management, and as regards the management of human and financial resources.

Several of the participating institutions highlighted how, in their specific cases, they had received from ILO/Cinterfor an adequate and timely response to their requests for support. Because of this, they expressed their appreciation of the work carried out by the current management and the entire team.

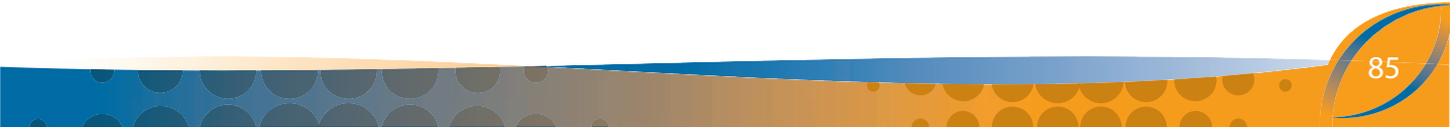
The representatives of workers' organizations highlighted the support received in the development of capacity for the participation of social partners in social dialogue forums on vocational training. They also stressed the positive aspects of the greater participation of employers' and workers' organizations in the different areas covered in this Meeting.

With regard to the proposed work plan for the next biennium, the following observations and recommendations were made:

1. The lines of work are described in general terms. This can hinder the establishment of priorities, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the actions deployed.



2. For a more effective operationalization of these lines, it was suggested that they should be organized in a “double entry table” that would make it easier to cross-reference them with other items, such as the individuals and groups to be focused on; specific issues such as health and safety at work, the environment, migration, technological change in work processes, among others. This would lead to achieving clearer impacts, through actions aligned with more specific goals, more clearly contextualized than those set out in the proposal. At the same time, it was suggested that Cinterfor’s work on synchronizing vocational training with collective bargaining should be more clearly emphasized.
3. Several participants agreed on the need for changes in order to bring the institutional culture closer to the language that is being used as a result of technological advances and the digital transformation taking place in companies, and to translate their demands effectively. New methodologies and technologies should also be incorporated into the training process to facilitate the development of 21st century skills and abilities.
4. There was an emphasis on the need to adopt a comprehensive development approach regarding the different skills, both technical and cognitive, as well as socio-emotional. This constitutes a challenge because it requires greater cooperation between our countries and institutions on several focal points, such as training trainers, identifying the best modalities and methodologies for the development of these skills, as well as for their certification.
5. Along with the challenges that the digital transformation poses for training, it was recalled that a great many workers have still failed to complete their basic education, which constitutes a source of inequality and restrictions for lifelong quality training. Similarly, it is necessary to promote the increased participation of women, especially young women, in vocational and technological training, in order to reduce the gender gaps that persist.
6. The key role of social dialogue in vocational training was highlighted. Its contribution is essential, both for management and innovation, and to move forward with strategies for training and job placement, such as those that combine training in centres with training at work, which effectively contribute to decent work. ILO/Cinterfor should, therefore, continue and strengthen its support to employers’ and workers’ organizations, in order to develop their skills in these fields.



7. The statements of the Declaration of Panama were recalled, in the sense that without better future production, there will be no better future for work. This implies recognizing the mismatch between available skills and the needs of businesses. Therefore, ILO/Cinterfor should support the greater involvement of employers and workers, taking into account the needs of sustainable enterprises, continue to promote the alignment of training with

Countries/Institutions	Subregion/Gruop
1. Costa Rica, INA 2. Guatemala, INTECAP 3. Mexico, STPS 4. El Salvador, INSAFORP  Alternate member: Cuba, Ministry of Labour and Social Securityial	Central America, Panama, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba and Mexico
5. Jamaica, HEART/NTA 6. Barbados, TVET COUNCIL  Alternate member: Bahamas, Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI)	English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean
7. Colombia, SENA 8. Peru, SENATI  Alternate member: Bolivia, INFOCAL	Andean Countries
9. Argentina, LABOUR EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY 10. Brazil, SENAI 11. Brazil, SENAC 12. Paraguay, SNPP  Alternate member: Chile, SENCE	Southern Cone
13. España, Fundación Tripartita	Non-regional
14. Uruguay, INEFOP/ MTSS	Uruguay
15. Employers' Representative 16. Employers' Representative 17. Employers' Representative 18. Workers' representative 19. Workers' representative 20. Workers' representative	ILO Governing Body
21. Employment Sector – SKILLS 22. Regional Office, Lima	ILO

VTIs LA and Caribbean	12
Non-regional	1
Host country	1
Governing Body	6
ILO	2
Total	22



## Appendix II: SUBREGIONAL AND SECTORAL GROUP REPORTS

### LATIN AMERICAN SOUTHERN CONE CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS

After analysing the report submitted by the Director of ILO/Cinterfor, the institutions represented issued the following considerations and recommendations:

1. The ILO/Cinterfor Network's institutions and member countries have a wealth of experience in various dimensions of vocational training. It is important in this regard, and as expressed in the proposed work plan, to continue moving forward in managing knowledge as a basis for ongoing and effective exchange.
2. The existing databases on the ILO/Cinterfor's knowledge management platform ([www.oitcinterfor.org](http://www.oitcinterfor.org)) are, in this respect, useful tools. However, the group wishes to make two recommendations: the first is to seek to reflect in them not only "good practices", but also, "lessons learned". This means emphasizing not only "what", but also, "how", making it possible to learn from both successes and failures, delving into the challenges and solutions tested in the process of implementing policies and actions. The second, to increase work on the usability of these databases and the information they contain. This entails the joint work of ILO/Cinterfor and the institutions, in order to be able to condense on the knowledge management platform, databases containing comprehensive information on the key issues in our countries. As a result, it is hoped to have available in a single place, all relevant information required when it is necessary to identify demand, design and plan actions, and monitor and evaluate them.
3. Participants agreed in pointing out that the region and the world are undergoing a process of deep transformations, focusing on technology, but with major impacts on the organization and content of work, as well as on the behaviour of labour markets. It is a critical moment, in view of the emergence of disruptive technologies, but it has the advantage that VT can make use of these transformations, although it must be careful not to miss a step and lose track of these changes. This entails a major challenge for vocational training institutions and, in general terms, for qualifications systems. They account for only part of the existing training provision, while in the world of business and especially those located at the forefront of technological development, major investments are made in the field of foresight, skills development and talent acquisition. It is imperative to connect the rationales of these two worlds, while improving our understanding of present changes and future prospects.
4. Various experiences were mentioned, such as the establishment of agreements with technology companies, the creation of sectoral committees, the development of labour observatories, or the improvement of methodologies for the anticipation of demand (foresight). Connecting these mechanisms with design and training implementation processes is essential. But it is also crucial to synchronize them with vocational and career counselling, especially public employment services as well as services to small and medium-sized enterprises. In this regard, digital platforms at the service of training, guidance and job placement, and the search for and recruitment of staff by companies are a very useful tool to disseminate and translate these synchronizations with and approaches to businesses, workers and students.



5. Despite the significance of all the lines proposed for the work plan, it is understood that they are not all at the same level. Three of the proposed lines are especially significant: the synchronization of vocational training with productive development processes, the synchronization of vocational training with strategies for promoting equity and social inclusion, and the synchronization of vocational training with formal education, certification and lifelong learning. Their importance lies in that they reflect comprehensively the general approach that guides our institutions. The importance of other lines, such as the line relating to the promotion of the pre-apprenticeship and quality apprenticeship, lies in the contributions that these training methods can make with regard to the preceding lines of work.

6. Other key aspects of the current situation should also be under the focus of ILO/Cinterfor and the network institutions, such as climate change and its challenges, migration movements and their impacts. ILO/Cinterfor should, together with its network member institutions, promote sharing on how they are contributing to confronting these challenges in their respective countries.

7. The role of ILO/Cinterfor should not, however, be restricted to promoting and facilitating the sharing of experiences. The training of multipliers for the new methodological approaches and vocational training management, which is already under way, should be extended. The survey and synthesis of experiences, and making these available, should be complemented by support for cooperation between institutions and countries that are aiming at the interoperability of issues such as their occupational observatories, certification systems or vocational and career counselling services.

8. A particularly notable field of innovation was the one linked to the development of new methodological approaches, in view of the challenge it entails to train people in technical skills and, at the same time, in the ability to navigate an increasingly complex world. Progress is needed in both experience sharing and in training multipliers in those approaches that give students a protagonist role, promoting research and the development of critical skills, redefining trainers as mediators of knowledge, which is handled by the students, within the framework of inclusive projects.

**Participants**

Carlos Mattos / UTEC, Uruguay

Alejandra Cervio / Production and Labour Ministry – Employment Secretariat, Argentina

Gerardo Gutiérrez / SEPE, Spain

Fernando Ubal / INEFOP, Uruguay

Gabriela Rodríguez / MTSS, Uruguay

Rosana Perdomo / INEFOP, Uruguay

Aldina Delgado / IEFPP, Cape Verde

Ricardo Guisado / FUNDAE, Spain

Fabián Capdevielle / UTEC, Uruguay

Juan Pablo Móttola / UTEC, Uruguay

Antonio Luis Acevedo / FUNDAE, Spain

Ricardo Ruiz de Viñaspre / SENCE, Chile

Pabla Ávila Fernández / CHILEVALORA, Chile

Selva Huber / SNPP-MTESS, Paraguay

María Antonia Agudo / SEPE, Spain

Patricia García / SENAC-DN, Brazil

Ana Luiza Küller / SENAC-SP, São Paulo, Brazil

Rafael Diego Costa / SENAR, Brazil

Marta Iglesias / Centro Paula Souza, Brazil

Claudia Lamas / UTEC, Uruguay

Pedro Furtado de Oliveira / ILO, Argentina

Fabio Bertranou / ILO Office for the Southern Cone of Latin America

Fernando Casanova / ILO/Cinterfor



## ANDEAN COUNTRIES CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS

During the meeting, discussion took place on the following focal points:

1. Vocational training and technological change.
2. Strategic training actions for cultural and technological transformation considering a training model that includes new actors (andragogical, centennials, millennials).
3. Designing curricula in connection and increased dialogue with employers' and workers' organizations.
4. Foresight work with social dialogue is essential (the voices of all should be represented in all areas of society).
5. Long-term training strategies to achieve improved productive development, considering new areas of activity.
6. Considering political advocacy as a strategy that enables the streamlining of training and curriculum development projects relevant to the appropriate industry.
7. National Qualifications Framework and System, national training plan, skills certification and competitiveness.
8. Creating quality standards to facilitate employability.
9. Innovating to represent new actors and analysing legislation changes to facilitate and promote innovations and adjustments to current needs.

### Conclusions

- Create quality standards to facilitate employability through a seal of quality.
- Innovate to represent the new actors identified (millennials, centennials and others), identifying changes in current legislation to provide answers to society on how to reconvert institutions in this perspective.
- Promote forward-thinking cultural reform, considering the vocation to serve, technology, and digital transformation.
- Contribute to the construction and development of national qualifications frameworks as an opportunity to strengthen relationships between education and work, from the point of view of closing human talent gaps in order to dignify and formalize work that requires the productive apparatus of the countries of the Andean region.
- Join efforts with international cooperation bodies that are present in the countries. Through these institutions, the possibility arises of requesting special funds from CAF.
- Request support from Cinterfor for a comprehensive consultancy to determine the skills required at the regional level to enable the sharing and standardization of programmes and training.

- The group decided to continue working on the topics mentioned and convened a meeting for late October or early November, to be held in the ILO offices in Lima, with Cinterfor coordination and funding from the organizations themselves.
- Generate a virtual sharing area for this group on Cinterfor's virtual platform, with the commitment of each participating body.

### **Participants**

Carlos Quiroga / INFOCAL Cochabamba, Bolivia

Elizabeth Cornejo / MTPE, Peru

Roberto Fuentes Ávila / INFOCAL Cochabamba, Bolivia

Marco Antonio Flores / FAUTAPO, Bolivia

Leonor Rodríguez Ruiz / Swisscontact

Douglas Ascarrunz / INFOCAL La Paz, Bolivia M

iguel Serrano / INFOCAL La Paz, Bolivia

ván Darío Arenas / FIDAGH, Colombia

Carlos Hernández / SENATI, Peru

Torre Ana Carrillo / SENCICO, Peru

Marco Antonio Guzmán / INFOCAL, Bolivia

Farid Figueroa / SENA, Colombia

José Raúl Ferrufino / INFOCAL, Bolivia

Roberto Villamil / ILO Andean Countries

Melva Díaz / ILO Colombia

Douglas Ascarrunz / INFOCAL La Paz, Bolivia (moderator)

Ana Torre Carrillo / SENCICO, Peru (rapporteur)

Leonor Rodríguez Ruiz / Swisscontact (collaborator)

Roberto Villamil / ILO Andean Countries (ILO coordinator)

Anaclara Matosas / ILO/Cinterfor (Cinterfor coordinator)



## CENTRAL AMERICA, PANAMA, MEXICO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, CUBA AND HAITI CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS

Participants in this group were invited to discuss a number of topics already on Cinterfor's agenda for work with the countries of the region. Among the topics discussed were the sustainability of financing for the institutions, the synchronization between formal education and vocational training, dual models and in a broader sense, "quality apprenticeship" models, institutional strengthening through the tools included for information management, methodological and technological innovation and vocational training and its links with social inclusion.

Regarding the first issue, financial sustainability, it was agreed to work towards the strengthening of the VTIs' technical and professional autonomy. It was understood that this independence depends to a great extent on ensuring and sustaining stable funding mechanisms, where it is the institutions themselves that have discretion over their use. One example is the funding mechanism based on contributions, which is often brought into question on the basis of various events, ranging from policy changes to fiscal deficit problems.

The group recognized Cinterfor to be a support platform thanks to which the REDIFP is strengthened, and which they can count on to carry out their activities. The absence in the group of INFOP, INATEC and INFOTEP, among others, was noted with surprise. There were calls for Cinterfor to redouble efforts to help institutions that for various reasons have reduced their participation in Cinterfor and REDIFP, so that they are able to resume contact and enhance their participation.

INSAFORP stressed that in view of the fact that the director of Cinterfor would be changing this year, it was hoped that the new management would keep up the office's work and level of cooperation, which have proved to be of great value to the institution. Among other matters, the work on methodological transfer with Tknika and the Basque Country was cited, as were the courses organized with the subregional office in San José and INCAE, as well as support for institutionality in the face of restructuring proposals considered to be detrimental to the development of VT in their country.

INTECAP of Guatemala expressed similar thoughts, commending the contributions of this management to the region and looking forward to the new director of Cinterfor maintaining the current cooperation strategy, avoiding other styles, which used to tend to reduce the volume of cooperation rather than encourage it. INTECAP stressed the importance of Cinterfor for Central American institutions. At the same time, it mentioned that it was important for Cinterfor to develop activities in the region.

As regards the issue of inclusion, it was discussed from the perspective of generating skills for employability. INA mentioned that one of the most significant challenges, in addition to providing students with the right skills for the labour market, is being able to organize the training provision bearing in mind that there are sectors and occupations for which it is highly likely that there will be no demand in the foreseeable future. A challenge which is linked to the previous one was analysed: what happens when the pool of knowledge and skills available in the organization is very rigid.

The issue of coordination between formal education and vocational training was also discussed. The focus was on national qualifications frameworks and the experience of Guatemala, Costa Rica and El Salvador. In the case of Cuba, it was indicated that synchronization was between the ministries of basic and higher education together with the Ministry of Labour.

The issue of quality apprenticeship was almost always addressed by using its most frequent denomination: the dual model. It was suggested by several that on the basis of their experience in this area, the dual model should be advanced on a voluntary basis, since it is not feasible to apply it in all sectors and from the perspective of many employers, it represents a cost. In the case of Cuba, it was pointed out that dual training is, in fact, applied compulsorily and it is established by law. There was then a discussion about the nature of the employers' sector in Cuba in order to better understand the regulation of this law. Cinterfor offered its technical assistance in areas related to structural definitions, as well as in reference to the design of the various processes it is necessary to implement for these initiatives to be successful.

In connection to the issue above, the topic of pre-apprenticeship was discussed and how it is linked to the need to implement training strategies (project-based training was cited) which could, prior to the dual training experience, develop in students the skills needed to participate in the latter successfully.

### **Participants**

Ricardo Montenegro / INSAFORP Chair

Carlos Gómez / INSAFORP Executive Manager

Arnaldo Alvarado / INTECAP Manager

Arturo Gándara / INTECAP Director, for employers

Víctor Manuel Barceló Rodríguez / Mexican Ambassador to Uruguay

Carmen Bernal Ledesma / Mexican Embassy in Uruguay

Jesús Otamendi Campos / Director for Employment of MTSS, Cuba

Armando Núñez Chavarría / INA Regional Manager



## ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS

Topics discussed regarding which the support of ILO/Cinterfor was requested:

- Developing trainer training in the countries of the Caribbean
- Support for sectoral vocational training work in the region
- Training in foresight methodologies to anticipate training needs
- Strengthening vocational training institutions
- Support for VT institutions in order to address skills gaps at national, regional and sectoral levels
- Strengthening the participation of the private sector in the design and implementation of VT programmes
- Quality apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programmes based on Cinterfor's methodology

### Next Steps

HEART/Trust requested the advice of Cinterfor on the design and implementation of quality apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programmes in Jamaica over the coming years.

The TVET Council of Barbados requested the advice of the ILO office, in cooperation with Cinterfor, on VET policy in forthcoming years.

Joint planning of a four-day workshop on vocational training in Jamaica, from 5 to 8 November 2019, focusing on the anticipation of skills, methodologies for training trainers, social dialogue and designing quality apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship experiences. It was proposed that the workshop should invite the participation of specialists from ILO/Cinterfor, ILO DWT in Port of Spain and the ILO Skills Department, and that it should accommodate 25-30 participants from the region.

### Participants

Srinivas Reddy, Chief, ILO Skills Employment Branch, Employment Department, Switzerland

Hassan Ndahi, Senior Skills Specialist, ILO Decent Work Team (DWT), Trinidad and Tobago

Dr. Janet Dyer, Managing Director, HEART/Trust NTA, Jamaica

Henderson Thompson, Director, TVET Council, Barbados

Matthew Greaves, Manager of Finance and Corporate Services at the TVET Council, Barbados

Michael Axmann, Senior Skills Specialist, ILO/CINTERFOR, Uruguay

## ASSOCIATE INSTITUTIONS

The following is a summary of some of the reflections shared during the meeting:

- Unity and joint work between the various stakeholders are necessary in order to address the challenges of the industrial revolution 4.0, so that technology can really constitute a contribution to productivity.
- As technology is not always inclusive, it is a challenge to make it so.
- Social dialogue is key and so is cross-sectoral and collaborative work.
- Institutionality should be cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial, and State policies should be designed that do not change with each government.
- Training institutions should be close to the productive sector and very aware of labour demands, because there is often a mismatch between supply and demand.
- It is necessary to think dynamically, since all curriculum content changes very fast and it is not enough for it to be aligned with labour demand; it must anticipate change.
- In relation to training, the focus should not only be on labour market demand, but on the individual.
- It is necessary to standardize qualifications and generate information systems that enable different actors to understand each other and align objectives, as well as share best practices.
- Soft skills such as communication are important, but a balance must also be achieved between hard skills and soft, and they must be integrated. It was suggested that rather than 'soft skills', they should be called 'cross-cutting and socio-emotional skills'; the latter are key in a highly technologized society, and mechanisms to measure these skills should be developed, because otherwise they are neglected during training, when it is they that cause the greatest impact.
- Virtual training is important and should be properly regulated in each country.
- The training of trainers is key to the quality of technical training and we must commit to continuous improvement.
- In quality apprenticeship, the protagonist is the student and the new learning methodologies focus on him or her; we must think about and understand the new role of the teacher as facilitator.
- We must achieve a better balance between what we like and what is productive, always on the basis of information.
- It was suggested that a regional network or forum be established in order to continue the conversations held at the meeting.



## **Participants**

Francisco Cudos / Metal Workers Union PAIS

Juliana Lesmes / ASENOF, Colombia

Andrés Angulo / ASENOF, Colombia Jairo Lesmes / ASENOF, Colombia

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## EMPLOYERS' GROUP

Employers reviewed and commented on the work areas proposed by ILO/CINTERFOR within the framework of Work Plan 2020-2021, including the following:

### *Area A) Alignment of Vocational Training with productive development policies (PDP) and with technological changes*

- It was recalled that this issue reflects the priorities of ILO constituents, as was indicated at the 43rd Meeting of CINTERFOR (Costa Rica, 2017) and in the Declaration of Panama adopted in October 2018.
- Not only the PDPs should be taken into consideration, but also the policies on attracting investment and their effect on the training demands of companies.
- It is important to note that PDPs should be designed with the active participation of employers' organizations and should take into account their perspectives.
- It is necessary to give greater consideration to the needs of the private sector, with a prospective vision, considering the rapid pace of technological change.
- It is important to maintain the leadership of the Ministries of Labour in vocational training policies.

### *Area B) Strengthening the capacity of governments and employers' and workers' organizations with regard to tripartism and social dialogue in vocational training*

- It is necessary to improve the alignment of ILO/Cinterfor with the needs of employers. In this sense, it must be recognized that in many countries social dialogue is conducted insufficiently.
- More intensive action is needed in monitoring their activities and in seeking effective social dialogue, as a concept and practice, attempting to get parties to act in a balanced way.
- It is necessary to disseminate experiences of social dialogue where efficient coordination has been achieved and where progress has been made in defining training itineraries and routes for work. It is important to monitor the outcomes and impacts of these experiences.
- Knowledge should be circulated regarding the tripartite bodies dedicated to training and skills certification which, thanks to their autonomy, have been able to effectively advance in the design and implementation of their programmes. Without such autonomy and when most of the participation is done by only one of the parties, progress is not satisfactory.
- We must strengthen support for the institutionality of tripartite social dialogue on training experiences and good practices.
- It was emphasized that vocational training bodies should be autonomous in their management, and this involves ensuring an adequate regulatory framework and funding so they can fully perform their functions.



***Area C) Reform of qualifications systems, regulatory frameworks and sustainable financing schemes for vocational training systems***

- It is worthwhile to closely monitor the experiences and real results achieved in the implementation of National Skills Frameworks.
- Efforts should be made to seek answers for high-tech companies that do not find answers within the traditional training system.

***Area D) Lifelong training and synchronization between formal education and vocational training***

- We must be vigilant to ensure that joint experiences do not end up transferring the low-quality results of basic education that many countries in the region exhibit to training for work practices. Emphasis should be placed on improving the quality of basic and secondary education and on coordinating with high-quality vocational training and the acquisition of skills for work.
- There are increasingly noticeable differences between the language of technological companies and that being offered by training institutions. Methodologies used for identifying profiles and skills need to be updated.

***Area E) Boosting pre-apprenticeship, quality apprenticeship for work and other forms of apprenticeship in the workplace***

- Employers stressed the importance of the GAN network's work in Argentina, Guatemala and Costa Rica, among other countries.
- We should take into consideration experiences such as the adoption in August 2019 of the dual training act in Costa Rica, which has interesting elements that can be taken into account in other countries.

***Area F) Institutional strengthening and information management in vocational training***

- Employers noted the importance of truthful and accurate information that will improve the quality of policies relating to vocational training.

***Area G) Methodological innovation in vocational training***

- It should be noted that in many cases, levelling is necessary for those who fail to achieve adequate levels of quality in secondary education and thus have trouble accessing vocational training at more complex levels, and, consequently, employment.
- In processes of change and the use of technology in training, raise awareness among instructors and workers, and clearly explain the effects of new methodologies and technologies.
- Many high-tech companies do not find answers within the system, and as a result do not find a place in it, which leads to separating the system from reality. The legal framework often lags behind the reality of technological change. There should be more flexible regulatory frameworks.

- It is important to know how people are learning today. New generations learn in ways that are different to the traditional methods. Today there are millions of people training online, and training .

#### *Area H) Vocational training for equal opportunities and social inclusion*

- Employers stressed the importance of providing equal opportunities for women and men within vocational training, as an essential element for improving business productivity.
- They also noted the importance of considering other vulnerable groups when designing policies related to vocational training, such as migrants, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples.

#### *Area I) Synchronizing training with employment services, vocational guidance and active labour market policies.*

- Provide information to public employment services on adjusting vocational training to the demands of the market, identifying candidate profiles and capacity-building for employment services staff.
- After discussing the points provided in Cinterfor's proposal, the employers' group proceeded to discuss other aspects to be borne in mind. The following are some of the reflections arising from that discussion, which should be taken into account:
- While the nine points raised are ambitious and cover a broad range of issues, employers' representatives considered that ILO/Cinterfor should actively encourage vocational training bodies within its network to listen constantly to employers in order to incorporate their vision and their needs in training programmes.
- It is essential to include in ILO/Cinterfor's agenda the theme of promoting enabling environments for sustainable businesses. This is a key component, as determined by the ILO's Tripartite Declaration, adopted in 2007. It is essential to listen to entrepreneurial thinking in Latin America.
- When referring to vulnerable groups, it is necessary for ILO/Cinterfor to also expressly consider/include SMEs. This is important, because this group often fails to be heard by vocational training institutions. Moreover, they are the most vulnerable in economic crises.
- The need to develop public policy relating to benefits and tax incentives for training and certification of labour skills should be included.
- Training systems need to be propped up with fiscal resources.
- ILO/Cinterfor should promote and highlight the need to nurture training systems with sufficient resources.



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## WORKERS' GROUP

# UNION DECLARATION: VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE FUTURE OF WORK IN THE AMERICAS

### Introduction

Cinterfor's 44th Technical Committee Meeting, TCM, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, from 6 to 8 August 2019, takes place in an international and regional scenario of rapid change in the world of work and political systems, with a trend towards regressiveness in labour and human rights, and in the context of international discussions on the future of work.

The union delegates present at this 44th Cinterfor TCM, together with the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) meeting on 5 August, prior to the main event that brings us together, present our DECLARATION, which updates the declaration submitted at the 43rd Meeting in 2017; in view of the 2030 Agenda, especially SDGs 4 and 8; subsequent ILO proposals and tripartite agreements, within the framework of the 19th American Regional Meeting (Panama, November 2018) and the 108th Conference (Geneva, June 2019), including the document "The Future of Work We Want" and "Work for a Brighter Future" of the Global Commission on the Future of Work (January 2019) and the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work. We also note Labour 20 (L20)'s significant declaration, appealing to labour and employment ministers of the G-20 (Mendoza, November 2018).

This document was agreed within the context of the Trade Union Vocational Training Network, established by TUCA in 2017, and which has already held three meetings since then, most recently last July, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

### Regional context

The Centenary Declaration reinforces a disturbing diagnosis. Globally, uncertainty is intensifying, inequality persists (including gender) and the world of work is undergoing radical transformations, driven by technological innovations, demographic changes, environmental and climate change and globalization; the trend is towards a lower uptake of labour, as a result of technological changes and changes in enterprise management. The Declaration of Panama focused on other features of our region: low and volatile economic growth; insufficient production development and low productivity; reduction of social security coverage, high levels of poverty, informality and unemployment, deficiencies in terms of respect for and application of the fundamental principles and rights at work, and weakening of effective social dialogue. Another regional body (IDB) has also pointed to the expiry of the "demographic bonus" in our region.

### General framework for the declaration

Estos This recent consensus and the international trade union platform provide an adequate framework within which to return to our subject at the 44th Meeting. Specifically, the Centenary Declaration calls for an approach to work focusing on people by strengthening the skills, capacity and qualifications of all workers throughout their working lives, by means of an effective system of lifelong learning and quality education. This will correct existing and anticipated skills deficiencies, ensuring that education and training systems answer to the needs of the world of work, taking into account the evolution of work and improving the capacity of workers to take



advantage of the opportunities provided by decent work. At the same time, it states that this programme should be a shared responsibility between governments and social partners.

The Centenary Initiative includes a special chapter on the gender perspective, which, in addition to the adoption of Convention No. 190 on ending violence and harassment in the world of work, has led to various special considerations in the overall proposal for the future of work.

The union representatives at this 44th Meeting are drafting ten points, which are framed within this perspective, to act as guidance for regional policies on vocational training:

### **1. Vocational training and sustainable development**

In current discussions on the future of work, a central place is afforded to the call for technological and business organization transformations to be carried out in keeping with sustainable development, in its economic, social and environmental dimensions, with a new emphasis on people, including the gender perspective as another key aspect. To this we add that in-depth discussion is needed regarding what kind of development is necessary for each of our countries.

All the latest proposals position vocational training as one of the key factors in sustainable development in times of change.

Our contribution to this discussion is the Development Platform for the Americas (PLADA) ([www.csa-csi.org](http://www.csa-csi.org)), which aims at the inclusion of persons, workers and peoples, in models where unions are part of management and decision-making processes.

### **2. Synchronizing public policies on education and vocational training**

The State as representative of the general interest of society must guarantee access to employment and education, including vocational training. As noted by the ILO, both facets combine when the time comes to help labour transition to the new world of work ahead. In this regard, the Commission indicates that governments should expand and reconfigure employment services to provide workers with the time and financial support they need for learning, by creating a “job insurance” that will enable all workers to gain access to training courses.

### **3. Vocational training coverage**

Education and vocational training constitute a universal human right to lifelong learning, as stated by the Commission. In this sense, public policies must include in their coverage certain groups that have a tendency to vulnerability. In this regard, the Labour 20 declaration calls for an approach that promotes access and training opportunities for migrants, women and youth from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. The Commission adds self-employed workers, workers in SMEs and older workers. We also add: indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, peasants, remunerated domestic workers, seniors, persons deprived of liberty, persons with disabilities, sexually diverse people.

### **4. Funding and resource management in vocational training**

Typically, it is the State that finances vocational education and training, through national and jurisdictional budgets, or through the sectors. However, we are concerned about a growing tendency for this financing to be implemented by incurring in increasing debt to international finance organizations, which has the dangerous potential for detrimental changes in guidelines

and criteria. We are also noting with concern an even more worrying trend towards the direct privatization of vocational education and training, which should be avoided. We note the importance that vocational training is acquiring in multilateral and financial agencies, beyond the traditional role of ILO/Cinterfor and ILO/ACTRAV: the 2030 Agenda, the OECD, the G20, ECLAC, UNICEF, UNESCO. In view of this increasing range of actors, it is necessary to ensure the inclusion of our vision in all of these bodies and reject any commercial and instrumental approach; vocational training should act as a mechanism for inclusion, a means of recognition and appreciation of knowledge; should contribute to improving the identity of workers and union members and be a linchpin for policies seeking social justice.

### **5. Accreditation and evaluation of knowledge and learning for work and life**

We consider the promotion and development of systems for the accreditation of knowledge acquired in work experience throughout life to be a priority, with the support of tripartite evaluation systems to establish processes for improvement.

Labour 20 has proposed, inter alia: to establish recognition systems for prior learning in the formal and informal economy, and to introduce forms of anticipating demand for employment in the area of skills.

The Commission has also specifically included professional adaptation and adjustment, to which end, the processes of continuous improvement in an environment of social dialogue are necessary, as well as a common framework for skills recognition both nationally and internationally. The trade union movement also calls for common regulatory frameworks, both regional and subregional, in trade agreements and treaties, to achieve standardization and accreditation, so that people who migrate can have their knowledge and corresponding qualifications recognized in their new jobs.

To all of this, we add the need for the strengthening of what is known as quality education or apprenticeship, on the basis of tripartite action.

### **6. A comprehensive perspective of lifelong education**

We reaffirm a systemic vision of education, linking the different levels of the education system with vocational training throughout life, including higher education.

The Commission adds, moreover, that it is necessary to encompass formal and informal lifelong learning, which should begin in early childhood, and contemplate all adult learning.

The unions assert that training for work should also facilitate the political and social integration of workers, as a way to exercise citizenship. The Commission concurs with our position when it recommends that not only the skills needed for work should be addressed, but that the necessary skills to participate in a democratic society should also be developed. In the same vein, the declaration of the Labour 20 highlights the need to include training in skills related to the culture of work, health, safety and environment, civic values and sustainability.

Finally, we add that a substantial contribution to the comprehensive perspective that has not been included in recent tripartite agreements, is that vocational training should be linked to trade union training under our responsibility. This is an ongoing strategic line for TUCA, in its educational and union self-reform perspective, with which we agree.



## **7. Union participation in public policy on vocational training**

We affirm the need to restore the effectiveness of tripartite social dialogue also in the field of education and vocational training. The Labour 20 declaration calls for including the representatives of employers and workers in the governance of skills development systems, apprentice practices and adult learning. The Commission has also proposed that workers' (and employers') organizations be involved in the implementation of training, consistent with Convention C142.

To this we add other forms of union participation in public policies related to the future of work, which are linked to vocational training: as the ILO office for the region has recommended, productive development policies agreed by competitiveness and productivity institutions cannot remain bipartite and require the participation of three actors

## **8. Social dialogue and collective bargaining for vocational training**

The tripartite nature of the establishment and governance of vocational training institutes must be strengthened. In particular, the inclusion should be encouraged of clauses in contracts or collective agreements (at all levels), related to vocational training, introducing elements such as paid educational leave, professionalizing practices, etc.

In this field, we believe that employers and workers, through bipartite committees, should jointly anticipate their future need for skills and determine how to acquire them.

## **9. Vocational training, international labour standards and national legislation**

We believe that the rules contained in the Conventions and Recommendations of the ILO should be the basis for the review and adaptation of national standards and public policies on vocational training and are a parameter for evaluating their development. Following these guidelines entails reviewing ratifications, adjusting domestic regulations and adapting public policy on vocational training to their criteria. We also reaffirm the contents of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy on education and training.

## **10. 10. Recognition of Cinterfor's work**

We wish to underscore the importance of ILO/Cinterfor as an instrument at the service of cooperation and sharing in vocational training in Latin America and the Caribbean. Currently, when various multilateral bodies and UN agencies have focused on the study and development of proposals on vocational training, employment, innovation, science and technology, in the context of global debates on the future of work, it is necessary to strengthen its role as coordinating and lead agency for these issues; increase resource allocation to its management, on the basis of a frank tripartite discussion, expand its coverage beyond our region and make greater contributions from its programmes.

In addition, reaffirm the tripartite nature of delegations and representatives of the sectors to ILO/Cinterfor technical consultation meetings, and fund these activities with contributions from the tripartite institutions themselves.

## Suggestions for action

These ten points summarize the trade union perspective in relation to vocational training, in terms of government policies and among social actors; they should be taken into account in ILO/Cinterfor's future work plan. In this context, and from our specific position as trade unions, we add some commitments for direct involvement regarding which we have already been moving forward in our Trade Union Vocational Training Network and our respective organizations, in order to support the general guidelines for which we hope to have the technical support of ILO/Cinterfor and ILO/ACTRAV.

1. A regular publication produced by our Network (newsletter or journal) on vocational training and the future of work, where different agreements and proposals on the future of work can be presented, as well as our vision on the work of the future with full rights, and the experiences of each of the Network's member organizations.
2. Develop comprehensive training proposals that promote the linkage between trade union education and vocational training for life and throughout life, in general and specific trade union courses, including a training programme for specialized cadres, such as vocational training trainers.
3. Develop strategies for equal opportunity inclusion for women and men, in their access to vocational training and skills development, which will provide them with accreditation for all professions, content and mechanisms, in order to resolve care burdens and make sure that they are shared.
4. As part of the content and definitions involved in updating PLADA, strongly take up again the issue of vocational training in relation to sustainable development.
5. Strengthen trade union strategy on expanding coverage of vocational training for various groups, on the basis of an inclusive approach, with a gender perspective, in line with the latest developments in ILO, ECLAC and other UN agencies.
6. Sustained action to disseminate the contents of regulatory and promotional clauses for the incorporation of the issue of vocational training in collective bargaining.
7. Action to incorporate union presence in the workplace and in tripartite social dialogue and bipartite sectoral dialogue on the proposal for joint work with employers in favour of vocational training.
8. Union advocacy on renewing public employment services in order to also address vocational training in this way, and promote the path to "employment insurance".
9. Promote all kinds of advocacy for the ratification of international labour standards pending in our countries, which have direct links with vocational training.
10. Seek an alliance and joint action plan with Education International on the synchronization of the different levels of the education system with vocational training.



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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACTEMP	Bureau for Employers' Activities, ILO
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities, ILO
ADPUGH	Association of Uruguayan professionals in human resources management, Uruguay
ADRHA	Human Resources Association of Argentina
ANEP	National Public Education Administration, Uruguay
ASENOF	National Association of Education-for-work and human development institutions, Colombia.
BTVI	Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute, Bahamas
BVTB	Barbados Vocational Training Board
CADERH	Advisory Centre for Human Resources Development, Honduras
CAF	Development Bank of Latin America
CETFOR Project	"Development of capacities for the strengthening of the institutional framework of the public policies on employment, labour training and certification in the framework of a work culture"
CETP/UTU	Vocational Technical Education Board – Uruguay's Polytechnic Schools
CFP 401	Project: Vocational Training Centre No. 401, Moron, Argentina
ChileValora	Commission of the National Skills Certification System, Chile
CINTERFOR	Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training, ILO
CIDEC	Research and Documentation Centre on Issues involving the Economy, Employment and Vocational Qualifications, Spain
CONALEP	National Technical Vocational Education School, Mexico
CONOCER	National Council for the Standardization and Certification of Labour Competencies, Mexico
CPS	Centro Paula Souza, Brazil
CSA	Trade Union Confederation of the Americas
DGCFT	General Office of Training for Work Centres, Mexico
DGDR	Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
DINAE	National Employment Bureau of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Uruguay
Duoc UC	Vocational Technical Training Centre of the Catholic University of Chile
EVC	Virtual space of Cinterfor
FATERYH	Argentine Federation of Rental Tenancy Building and Property Workers
FAUTAPO	Fautapo Foundation – Education for Development
FOREM	Miguel Escalera Training and Employment Foundation, Spain
FUNDAE	Tripartite Foundation for on-the-job Training, Spain.
HEART Trust/NTA	Heart Trust/National Training Agency, Jamaica



IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IEFP	Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional, Cabo Verde
IEFP	Institute of Employment and Vocational Training, Portugal
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Office
INA	National Training Institute, Costa Rica
INACAL	National Quality Institute, Uruguay
INACAP	Integrated System of Higher Education, Chile
INADEH	National Vocational Training Institute for Human Development, Panama
INATEC	National Technological Institute, Nicaragua
INCES	National Socialist Training and Education Institute, Venezuela
INEFOP	National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, Uruguay
INET	National Institute for Technological Education, Argentina
INFOCAL	INFOCAL Foundation, Bolivia
INFOP	National Institute of Vocational Training, Honduras
INFOTEP	National Institute of Technical Vocational Training, Dominican Republic
INFP	Institut National de Formation Professionnelle, Haiti
INSAFORP	Salvadorian Vocational Training Institute, El Salvador
INTECAP	Technical Institute for Training and Productivity, Guatemala
ITC	International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin
ITU	University Technological Institute, Argentina
LATU	Technological Laboratory of Uruguay
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture, Uruguay
MTEySS	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina
MTPE	Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion, Peru
MTPS	Ministry of Labour and Social Prevision, Chile
MTSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Cuba
MTSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Uruguay
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NTA	National Training Agency, Trinidad and Tobago
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIT/CNT	Inter-union Plenary of Workers - National Convention of Workers
REDIFP	Network of Vocational Training Institutes in Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic

SEBRAE	Serviço Brasileiro de Apoio às Micro e Pequenas Empresas, Brazil
SECAP	Ecuadorian Occupational Training Service, Ecuador
SENA	National Learning Service, Colombia
SENAC	National Commercial Learning Service, Brazil
SENAI	National Industrial Learning Service, Brazil
SENAR	Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Rural, Brazil
SENATI	National Service of Skills Development in Industrial Labour, Peru
SENCE	National Training and Employment Service, Chile
SENCICO	National Standardization, Training and Research Service for the Construction Sector, Peru
SEP	Public Education Secretariat, México
SESI	Serviço Social da Indústria, Brazil
SEST/SENAT	Social Transportation Service/National Transportation Training Service, Brazil
SETEC	Vocational and Technological Education Secretariat, Ecuador
SKILLS	Skills and Employability Branch Service, ILO
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SNA EDUCA	Educational Corporation of the National Society of Agriculture
SNPP	National Service of Vocational Promotion, Paraguay
SPE	Public Employment Services
SPPE	Public Policies of Employment Secretariat Ministry of Labour, Brazil
SPTS	Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare, Mexico
TCM	Technical Committee Meeting
TVET Council	Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council, Barbados
TVET Guyana	Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Guyana
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South cooperation
UOCRA	Argentinean Building Workers Union
UOCRA Foundation	Foundation for the Education of Construction Workers, Argentina
UPACP	National Union of Domestic Employees, Argentina
UTHGRA	Workers' Union of the Tourism, Hotel and Gastronomy Sector of the Republic Argentina
VT	Vocational training
VTI	Vocational Training Institution