PROVIDE TRAINING IN CRITICAL-ETHICAL ANALYSIS AT ALL INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Professor Lennart Levi (Karolinska Institutet)
Professor Bo Rothstein (University of Gothenburg)

2nd Conference on Future Education
WAAS, WUC, Roma TRE
PRESENT MEGA TRENDS 1:

- increasing world population;
- demographic shifts;
- unstoppable immigration waves;
- scores of low-intensity regional wars;
- environmental refugees;
- racism and xenophobia;
- endemic poverty in several regions;
- permanent differentiation of labour market;
PRESENT MEGA TRENDS 2:

- short-term bias in policy making;
- no continued linear growth;
- accelerating globalisation, and white heat of technology;
- crumbling welfare state;
- media exposure to “a good life”...

(Anthony Marsella, 1997; World Economic Forum 2017; Global Challenge Foundation, 2017)
TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD: THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (UN, 2015):

- **People**: end poverty and hunger; promote dignity, equality and a healthy environment;
- **Planet**: protect from degradation; promote *sustainable* management of natural resources; counteract climate change;
- **Peace**: create peaceful, just and inclusive societies;
- **Partnership**: promote global solidarity, particularly with the poorest and most vulnerable, jointly with all stakeholders.
CRITICAL ETHICAL ANALYSIS IN ALL HIGHER EDUCATION

• **Critical:** characterized by careful, exact evaluation and judgement;

• **Ethics:** a set of principles of right conduct.
CRITICAL THINKING:

• Try to show that you are right.
• Try to show that your opponent is wrong.
• Reset and look for the truth.
• Try to prove yourself wrong and accept your original standpoint only after having failed to do so.

(Jarrick, 2017)
ETHICAL ANALYSIS:

An ABC of dishonest practices: Absenteeism, Appropriation, Bribery, Cheating, Corruption, Deceit, Embezzlement, Extortion, Favoritism, Fraud, Graft, Harassment, Impersonation...

We will use corruption as a general term to designate such malpractice, and focus on institutions of higher education.

(CHEA/CIQG/IIEP/UNESCO, 2016)
CORRUPTION IN THE WORLD:

Not a single country comes anywhere close to a perfect score (100) on the Corruption Perceptions Index 2016.

Over two-thirds of the 176 countries are below 50 on our scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (highly ethical).

The global average is 43, suggesting endemic public sector corruption.

(Transparency International, 2017)
BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 2030

Trustworthy, ethical, honest and impartial government institutions that exercise public power and carry out their policies fairly are more likely to promote trust and social capital that improve health and wellbeing.

But this needs to be taught!

(Poznan Declaration, 2015)
POZNAN DECLARATION

“Whole-of-University Promotion of Social Capital, Health and Development” - through critical ethical thinking in all higher education.

Endorsed by

• Compostela Group of Universities (CGU)
• World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS)
• World University Consortium (WUC)
• Quality of Government Institute (QGI)
• Transparency International (TI)
BASIC CAUSES:

Dysfunctional norms → asocial behaviour → economic crisis → austerity → unemployment → poverty, injustice, inequality → decline in social trust → social dissolution → increase in morbidity and mortality →
PROPOSED ACTION TO ADDRESS BASIC CAUSES:
Better education in critical-ethical analysis $\rightarrow$ clear intention and ability to perform such analysis $\rightarrow$ stronger trust and social capital $\rightarrow$ more ethical governance and rule of law $\rightarrow$ higher standard of living $\rightarrow$ improved public health and quality of life.
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SUBGOAL # 4.7

Ensure that all participants acquire by 2030 the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development and lifestyles, including education in human rights, gender equality, peace, nonviolence, global citizenship, appreciation of diversity and respect for the role of culture.
17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, AND 169 TARGETS

• Elusive, due to their range, complexity and occasional incompatibility;

• Therefore extremely difficult to implement - without advanced skills in critical-ethical analysis.
PROPOSALS:

• Organize a high-level conference on critical ethical analysis in higher education, with a focus on the UN 17 sustainable development goals (what should be taught, and how);

• Adapt higher education to the conference’s conclusions in order to train critical-ethical analysis;

• Collaborate to produce videos that illustrate ethical dilemmas and make them available free of charge online.