

THINK TANK

Deliberation process on the work of the future: Working Document No. 2

(17 September 2020)

THEORETICAL AND PERCEIVED PRIORITIES IN THE FACE OF THE CHALLENGE OF THE WORK OF THE FUTURE

Working Document No. 1 is based on the reflections of the Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa on the future of work and a proposal on priority axes for deliberation raised by a series of experts who have considered the subject in Gipuzkoa.

Working Document No. 2 incorporates into this framework the reflections of the participants in the work group, with the aim of establishing an agenda for deliberation on 17 September, taking into account the proposals of both experts and participants.

One of the participants in the group asked about the relevance of distinguishing between the *whats* and the *hows* of this process. This is the arrangement that has been adopted for ordering the contributions. The *whats* are relevant themes that could be addressed in deliberation. The *hows* are the way that deliberation process should be conducted.

The *whats* of the deliberation process: relevant axes for understanding and building/transforming the work of the future and the future of work¹ in Gipuzkoa

In line with the arrangement suggested by the experts consulted, there is a preliminary reflection which, in short, consists of a debate as to whether or not we are witnessing a

¹ One of the participants highlighted the need to distinguish between the two concepts (the work of the future and future of work), although both were valid for this reflection. In drawing up this working document, both concepts have been used, since it was felt that some contributions related to one concept and some to the other.

change in the model of work. If so, it will not be possible understand the future of work (or the work of the future) using current parameters and the first step in the deliberation process must be to share ideas on what the potential new model might look like.

Deliberation oriented towards understanding the potential change in model

The session then considered the features raised by the experts. This was followed by questions arising from the interventions by the participants in the group:

- a) **The physical space will cease to be as decisive** as it is now and we will move to a relational paradigm, in which the relationships we establish with people from whom we are physically remote might also be as decisive as those we establish in our immediate surroundings.

Is there a "Gipuzkoa style" when it comes to addressing the future of work? What are its characteristics? Will it be relevant in the future?

- b) **The social function of work will be relevant.** Work will go from being seen to a great extent as a means of earning a living to being seen as a personal contribution to society. People will spend fewer hours of their life on paid employment (an economic activity in the sense that it is viewed today)

What will the society of the future be like?

What will the function of work in people's lives be in the future? How will the distinction between work and employment be manifested?

What characteristics does the work of the future need to have to ensure that it is a source of happiness, dignity and a feeling of belonging?

How we can incorporate the change in values as an element in building the transition towards the future of work?

What employment-related problems will arise within the framework of the work of the future?

- c) The business model will go from prioritising shareholders to **taking into account the interests of other stakeholders (shareholders, workers, trade unions, public bodies, social partners, etc.)**

What will the companies of the future be like?

How can we help industry to continue placing the person and their participation at the centre of their activity?

What will it mean to invest in people?

What can we do today to ensure that women are fully integrated in the work of the future and the achievements of the past are not squandered in the new context?

How will we integrate the supportive dimension with regard to exclusion/inequality?

How can we guarantee that the work of the future is of high quality and guarantees decent working conditions?

- d) Increasingly, an organisation's competitiveness depends on the **talent and commitment of individuals**. To make maximum use of these it is necessary to transition towards **a more flexible and horizontal culture**, based on problem-solving and on teams and based on trust

How will we be able to attract talent and ensure that it is innovating?

How can existing jobs be adapted to make them attractive to people?

How can we better align the educational process with the rapid pace of change in the world of work?

How can we involve young people in the construction of the work of the future or the future of work?

Deliberation oriented towards reacting to the major trends affecting work

In addition to the debate on the change in model, experts have discussed major trends that will affect the future of work and the work of the future. These will occur within a shorter period of time than the previous issues, since they are processes that are already affecting the world of work and are going to be heightened.

Experts have also indicated that these trends will affect different industries and demographic groups differently; they will lead to the creation of new activities and products, occupations and requirements in the area of training and talent. It will be important to understand how these impacts might affect work in Gipuzkoa.

These four major trends were used to class the various questions arising from the participants' interventions:

a) Digitalisation and automation

What approach should be taken to teleworking to ensure decent working conditions?

What will the role of technology be in the work of the future?

b) Environmental sustainability

Although the green economy and the challenge of sustainability were mentioned, none of the statements on this subject have been included in the report.

c) Globalisation

Although globalisation was mentioned as one of the elements of the current context, none of the statements on this subject have been included in the report.

d) Demographics (aging and migrations)

How can we cope with the demographic challenge? (aging / migrations)

The hows of the deliberation process:

The following questions arose out of the interventions by the group participants:

What should we do to prevent the results of this deliberation from going no further than the reports?

How can government and civil society collaborate to address the challenge of the work of the future?

How can we generate capacities/attitudes for change?

How can we generate a transformative conversation that guides us towards action?