

Two thirds of the university community believe agreements between universities, companies and job market access programmes are a priority

- Over 9,000 members of the university community from 19 countries gave their views on the university of tomorrow in three areas: digitalisation, research and contribution to society.
- The survey, carried out by IPSOS, is part of the preparations leading up to the 4th International Universia Rectors Meeting which will make Salamanca the global capital of higher education on 21 and 22 May 2018.

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Universities get a good press and the overall assessment is positive. However, the university community criticises grant and aid programmes as well as agreements with companies.

These are the findings of a survey carried out by specialist market research company, IPSOS, among over 9,000 members of the university community in 19 countries.

This research is part of the preparations leading up to the 4th International Universia Rectors Meeting which will take place in Salamanca on 21 and 22 May and was intended to obtain the opinion of the university community on digitisation, research and contribution to society.

The results show the importance given by the university community to promoting access to the job market through agreements, job centres and other services offered by universities, as well as entrepreneurship. These concerns need to be addressed by universities moving forwards. In any case, all those interviewed believe that a university education is helpful for future job prospects.

Three discussion topics for the 4th International Universia Rectors Meeting

Coinciding with the 800th anniversary of the founding of the University of Salamanca, and under the slogan "University, Society and Future", the 4th International Universia Rectors Meeting, chaired by Ana Botín, chair of Universia and Group executive chairman of Banco Santander, will provide a forum to discuss the three cornerstones for the university of tomorrow: "Training and learning in a digital world"; "Research at universities: a paradigm under scrutiny?" and "The university's contribution to social and territorial development".

In Salamanca, more than 600 rectors and academic representatives from 26 countries will participate in debates centred on these three key topics. The discussion will also use the results of the IPSOS survey which interviewed 9,343 members of the university community.

The views of those surveyed on access to the job market will be discussed in the section on how universities can contribute to society in the 21st century.

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The university community has also opened a debate on digitalisation of teaching resources which they feel universities do not view as a priority. They do note however how online training can help those groups who are unable to attend university.

The university community also demands more and better resources and facilities for research as well as funds and financing.

This global debate can help build the university of tomorrow.

The 4th International Universia Rectors Meeting continues on from the events in Río de Janeiro (Brazil, 2014), Guadalajara (Mexico, 2010) and Seville (Spain, 2005). The debate can be streamed or followed on the Meeting's social media and on its official website – www.universiasalamanca2018.com. At the end, the "Letter from Salamanca" will be published and will include the main conclusions and proposals for helping to build the university of tomorrow and to make headway towards its mission as an engine for progress and social development.

The event has the backing of Banco Santander, the world's largest investor in educational support (Varkey/UNESCO-Fortune 500 report) through Santander Universities (www.santander.com/universidades), with partnership agreements with over 1,200 Ibero-American academic institutions through Universia (www.universia.net).

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