

# Pope Francis calls for new education pact at audience with UNESCO and experts

February 13, 2020

This meeting, organized on the sidelines of a two-day conference at the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, prepared the ground for the signing of a Global Compact for Education (link external) at the Vatican next 14 May.

Drawing attention to inequalities in access to education and the "globalization of indifference" Pope Francis stated that the "educational compact is in a state of breakdown and can only be fixed through a renewed universal effort of generosity and cooperation involving families, schools, and social, cultural, religious institutions.

During the hour-long audience, Pope Francis shared his views on how to renew this educational compact. "Each generation needs to consider how best to hand on its knowledge and its values to the next, since it is through education that men and women attain their maximum potential and become conscious, free and responsible," he said.

He stressed the role of education in the "promotion of a culture of dialogue, encounter and mutual understanding, in a spirit of serenity and tolerance." He called for valuing traditional cultures so that future generations may develop "their own self-understanding by encountering and appropriating cultural diversity and change."

Describing teachers as the "artisans of future generations," he called for stronger recognition and support to their profession. "By their knowledge, patience and dedication, they communicate a way of living and acting that embodies a richness that is not material but spiritual, and creates the men and women of tomorrow."

The Pope's vision resonated with UNESCO's humanistic message. "The future of education

the future of society are inextricably linked,” said Ms Giannini during the seminar at the F Academy. “We need a more fundamental rethinking on the vision and purpose of education today,” she said, presenting the Futures of Education project and UNESCO’s work to integrate global citizenship and sustainable development into learning contents. “Education alone cannot solve all development challenges,” continued Ms Giannini, “but a humanistic and holistic approach should contribute to achieving a new model, guided by environmental stewards’ concern for peace, inclusion and social justice.”

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