



INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENT BY THE CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL COUNCILS OF SPANISH UNIVERSITIES (CCS) CONCERNING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 IN SPAIN

The Executive Committee of the Conference of Social Councils of Spanish Universities (CCS), which met remotely on 1st April 2020, wishes to communicate the following institutional statement to the whole university community and to the whole of Spanish society:

We are living through a public health problem which has brought us to a social, economic, and health crisis which is unprecedented in our recent history. Therefore, we wish to firstly communicate our sympathy for the victims and to pay homage to them, as well as to communicate our support to those who are ill as a result of the pandemic and to their loved ones, family and friends. This is particularly the case concerning those from the university community and the social councils who we have lost or who are fighting against this disease. The huge dedication and generosity of our healthcare workers and those from other sectors, such as national law enforcement officials, should also be recognised. They do not hesitate to put their own health and even their own lives at risk in order to tackle this national emergency, very often in difficult conditions.

The social councils are society's participatory body within universities. During our plenary sessions entrepreneurs, professionals, the self employed, Trade Unions, students, graduates, and representatives of the public administration and of the university itself, all have a voice. With this strong social backing, we value and give thanks for the effort being made by our universities in very difficult conditions, in order to guarantee teaching and to continue undertaking their research and the communication of their results to the productive sector. It goes without saying that, in carrying out our duties, we unreservedly support the accomplishment of this great challenge.

This serious health crisis highlights the extraordinary importance of healthcare for our society. We are now more aware than ever that science and research not only generate wealth and wellbeing, but also save lives. Proof of this is that society is demanding scientists be listened to when they make decisions to fight the virus and place their trust in them, along with their expectations of a cure. However, the fight against the pandemic is also highlighting the important role played by industry and businesses within the current crisis, faced with the need to produce goods and offer healthcare services to care for the ill. Their generosity represents a commendable milestone in the history of our country.



It is important for us to draw the correct conclusions from the current situation and put them into practice, because other crises and pandemics may arise and we will only be stronger and more resilient in the face of these if science is conducted on a wider scale and at a higher quality and if we have a more competitive productive sector. For this reason we wish to make a public appeal: when we defeat this pandemic and confront the reconstruction of our economy and our society, we must pay greater attention to the investment which has previously been made in science and research, to the close connection between these areas and universities, as producers of talent and knowledge, to the necessary improvement of their governance and financing following comparable European models, and to their necessary links with businesses and our social and productive fabric.

1st April 2020.

Antonio Abril Abadín,
President of the Conference of
Social Councils of Spanish Universities

