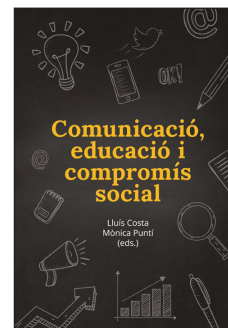


**COSTA, LL.; PUNTÍ, M. (eds.). *Comunicació, educació i compromís social*.
Girona: Documenta Universitaria, 2017, 172 p. Comunicació i societat, no. 4.
ISBN: 978-84-9984-384-1**

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Preserving education and communication as tools for development

The growing influence of technologies in the day-to-day life of social activities and the power they have in citizens' collective participation is the point of departure of the book *Comunicació, educació i compromís social*. It is a joint effort led by the Grup de Recerca en Comunicació Social i Institucional at the Universitat de Girona (UdG) and has been edited by Lluís Costa and Mònica Puntí, professors at the Department of Philology and Communication at the same university. *Comunicació, educació i compromís social* brings together eleven case studies undertaken by different authors and presented at the IV International Conference on Communication and Society (November 2015). The texts analyse the relationship between communication and education and their role as tools for promoting diversity, social engagement and citizens' active participation.

The title of the book leaves no room for doubt. Throughout the several chapters, it shows the research group's interest in defending the duo of communication and education, two activities understood in the text as exercises in social responsibility. "The prominence of technology in this new society is very important, but we must not forget that reasoning and reflection are still human qualities" (p.13): the publication is developed on the basis of this idea and it highlights the importance of communicating and educating in the context of society's diversity.

Following the order in which the studies are presented, the reader journeys through different projects, in most cases from the perspective of teaching (at a local, national, and international level), whose main focus is to promote communication and education in order to "provide answers to the current demands and needs of a society built on the basis of contexts of diversity" (p.13) and "to deepen democracy, development and social change" (p. 16), as presented by Costa and Puntí.

Educator Salomó Marquès's reflection on the importance of

going beyond strictly theoretical university learning serves as a preamble to the articles that follow: "Education is not just instructing, learning content and socialising; it is also [...] critical learning to assess and discern what we're told and [...] ethical living in accordance with certain values that are framed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (p. 19).

The studies presented next cover diverse topics that are developed within a shared framework. On the one hand, we find articles that address the communication-education duo in primary and secondary education. On the other hand, there are articles that analyse the issue on the basis of the university stage, as well as studies that look at diversity and technology, in some cases emphasising the use of social media. Despite this, the studies are not structured into thematic areas, but rather are presented independently.

Professors Guilherme Fráguas and Heloiza Matos see communication as a must-know subject for any citizen to be able to develop socially. This idea is expressed in the article entitled *Educación y extensión en "comunicación pública": habilidades cívicas para hablar y actuar en la polis*. The study concludes that only citizens capable of speaking and acting in the public sphere can engage in life in society.

It's also worth mentioning the article by Mònica Roca and Anna Flotats: *Els nous mitjans, una oportunitat per actuar com a EMIREC i un instrument per educar en la diversitat*. This study focuses on analysing the possibilities that communication technologies offer for playing the role of sender and receiver simultaneously.

The collection of educational proposals presented by the book considers issues such as how to research well-being through music and new technologies. This is the case of Diego Calderón, Josep Gustems, and Caterina Calderón's study, entitled *Los proyectos musicales: la búsqueda del bienestar en contextos de diversidad*. Educating and introducing communication through cinema is the basis of *Cine en curso*, the educational project presented by Núria Aidelman and Laia Colell in their article. A similar line is followed in *"Gent de barri": narratives audiovisuals*

per repensar Poblenou. Gemma Paricio's study presents the audiovisual project of a school in the Poblenou neighbourhood in Pineda de Mar that tries to improve the relationship between students and other citizens in their environment.

The book is completed with articles on different types of topics, including a project on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in the university environment; an analysis of three European newspapers writing on the inter-Mediterranean area that shows how the media contribute to the promotion and protection of Human Rights; the influence of the media and ICTs in knowledge generation processes, focused on complex educational projects; the use of Twitter in electoral campaigns, based on the 2015 Catalan elections; as well as the information policies needed to achieve regional integration in the southeast of Mexico.

The article by Olga del Rio, professor and researcher at the Universitat de Girona, entitled *Comunicación para el desarrollo y el cambio social*, ends the book with an analysis of communication as a mechanism for transformation. The article introduces the role played by ICTs in this process and focuses on communication as a tool for progress. According to Rio, "communicators are any people who wish to communicate their perspective or message for social change". Guided by this objective, whoever wants to use communication as a medium for development and social change must search through all the communication tools available, including new information and communication technologies. This thorough study on the topic includes graphs and tables that show the processes, trends and applications of ICTs in using communication for social change, among other issues.

The approach to the current state of play is taken from different perspectives, focusing on diverse issues that allow readers to explore the subject according to their interests. Moreover, some possible future lines of research are also identified. Due to its cross-disciplinary nature, this book has a broad scope and is a valuable tool for teachers and academics, as well as being useful and interesting for students.