

Foresight workshop with actors of International Geneva: Reinforcing collaboration

Following the publication of the results of its 2019 participatory survey, the Council of State of Geneva decided to continue this process by enabling an ongoing dialogue with international organizations. The objective is to include these actors in reflecting on the future of Geneva, and to facilitate potential future collaborations between the Canton, International Geneva and their partners by engaging in foresight on topics and issues of mutual interest.

The first in this planned series of events was a workshop organized with the support of the Directorate of International Affairs (DAIF), focusing on:

- The future of work
- The future of digitalization
- The future of education

Foresight aims to identify the changes ahead (part 1). Discussions between the Canton, IOs and their partners aim to identify the required synergies (part 2).

1. Anticipating future disruptions: The importance of foresight in an uncertain and volatile world

Mr. Rickli (Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy – GCSP) outlined the importance of foresight. For an organization, risk analysis is a way to identify events that could impact its work and on which it can act. Foresight goes a step further: it anticipates possible developments in the future to shed light on present actions. To imagine a different tomorrow is already to think about how to change things today.

Foresight can thus also be mobilized as a tool for participatory management and organizational learning. It differs from



forecasting, which seeks to predict future events with a degree of confidence.

To illustrate the future direction of international governance, Mr. Rickli presented three geopolitical scenarios for 2030 and outlined their possible impacts on International Geneva:

1. Deglobalization and social fragmentation: Return of political and economic nationalism (accelerated by the Covid-19 crisis) and US isolationism (UNESCO, WHO, JCPOA, TPP, etc.).
2. US/China duopoly: Escalating global tensions between the US and China (trade war, WHO access blocked, security issues in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the South China Sea) which are transforming the hegemonic system inherited from the end of the Cold War into a duopoly.
3. Globalized society and multilateralism: Development of international cooperation, including new forms of international

public-private collaboration (for example, US rejoins WHO, Human Rights Council, Paris Agreement) and new agreements in response to common challenges (cybersecurity agreement, international treaty for pandemic preparedness, etc.). These scenarios are a forward-thinking exercise.



What lessons can we learn from the COVID-19 crisis?

The pandemic has accelerated many long-anticipated trends, such as remote working, flexible hours and digital resilience, which are favourable to a cultural transformation of the workplace. However, economic, social and gender disparities have likely contributed to variations in individuals' acceptance of remote working.

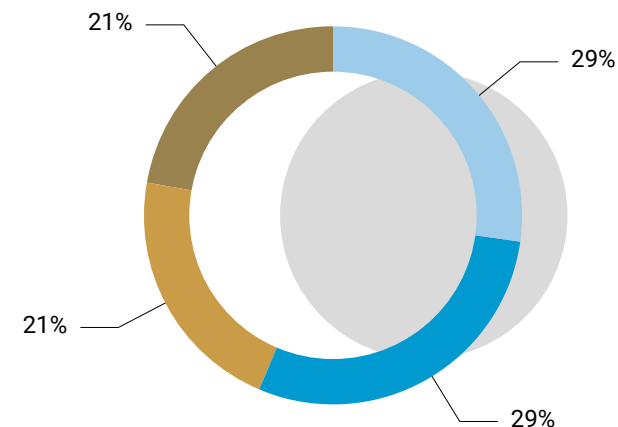
2.Objectives and proposals of the working groups

Three working groups were created (Canton, IO and partners) to reflect together on the future of employment, education, and digitalization.

Objective: Share perspectives, define potential common approaches (note:these orientations have not yet been validated).

The future of work

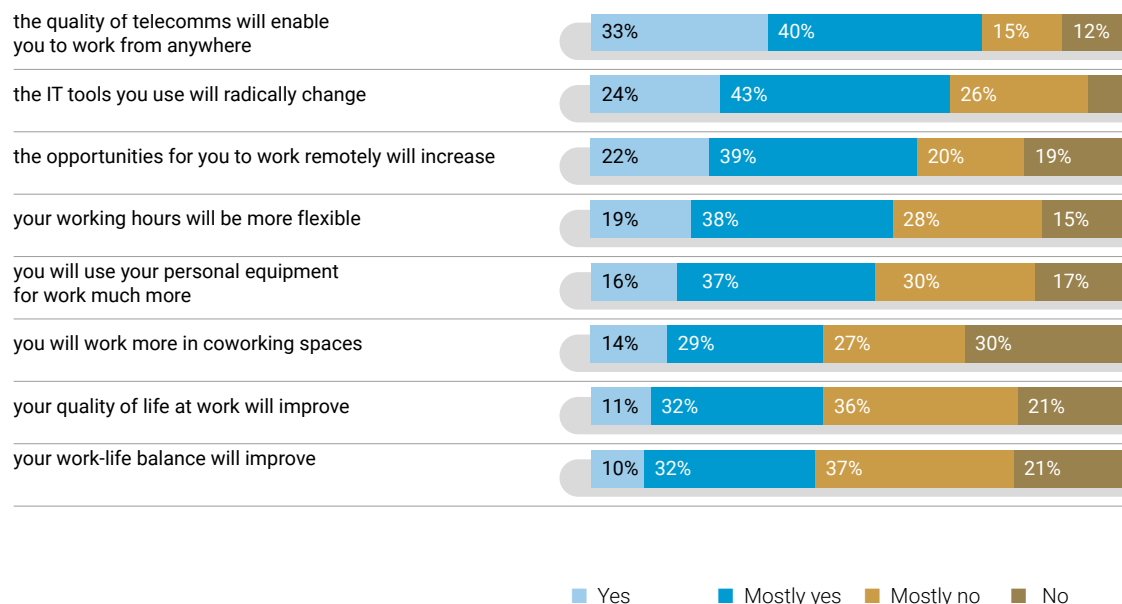
Major technological transformations are underway and economic models are changing. The Covid-19 crisis has accelerated the process, exposing the fragility of certain sectors (transportation, airlines, business travel, hotels, etc.). In 2020, the Canton created an "employability" task force to support workers in at-risk sectors.



Would you like to work remotely more often in future?

- Yes
- Mostly yes
- Mostly no
- No

In the future, do you think that...?



75% think their work will change with digital developments

Source (graph and key figure): Geneva 2050 Report www.ge.ch/document/geneve-2050

Working group proposals

- Map existing capabilities, for example, to anticipate future skills requirements (also considering trends such as population aging, etc.); knowledge-sharing between the Cantonal administration and the ILO on research methodologies.
 - Foster more flexibility and dialogue on key issues between the public sector and international Geneva, for example, by facilitating temporary staff secondments.
 - Develop professional bridges between International Geneva and the public and private sectors.
- Use Geneva as a “proving ground” for joint projects with IOs.
 - Promote start-ups addressing youth access to work, while expanding school-workplace linkages (i.e., not just in the final year of study).
 - Engage International Geneva (ILO, WTO) and Geneva-based enterprises and multinational companies in discussions on the future of work.
 - Define Geneva’s core values to maintain its attractiveness and attract talent.



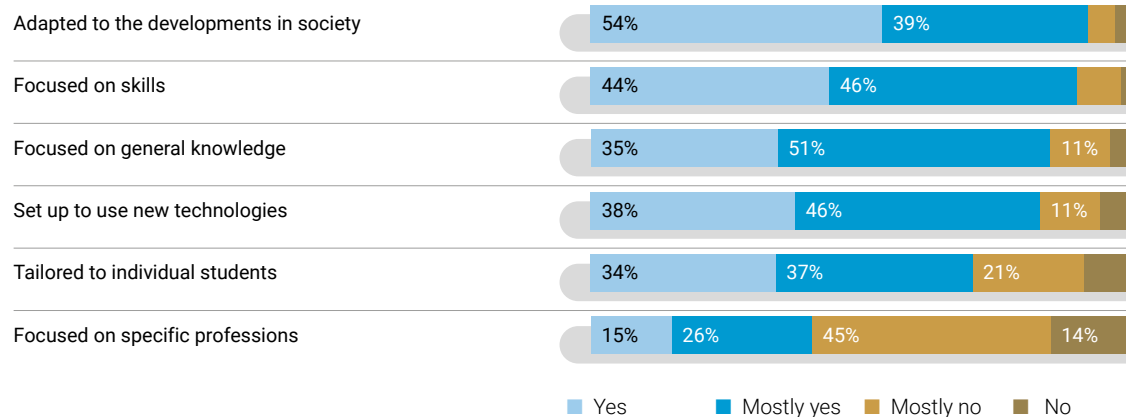
The future of education

The governance of the Swiss educational system comprises 3 levels: cantonal, inter-cantonal and federal. The Geneva Education Department (DIP) has defined several key priorities for the 2018–2023 legislature:

- Prevent school dropout: A priority for the Council of State (“For every student a diploma and a future”), addressed through implementation of psychosocial support measures and alternative educational models (dual system, apprenticeships).

- Support the most vulnerable (UNESCO inclusive education concept).
- Develop digital education, especially following the COVID-19 crisis: promote digital literacy (how to use, understand, evaluate, engage and create in a digital society) and ICT in the classroom (introduce digital tools only if they add pedagogical value).

What kind of schools would you like to see in the future?



■ Yes ■ Mostly yes ■ Mostly no ■ No

95%

think that everybody should be trained throughout their lifetime

Source (graph and key figure): Geneva 2050 Report
www.ge.ch/document/geneve-2050

Working group proposals

- Promote human values, human rights and non-violence.
- Develop the skills needed to become citizens of tomorrow, at every level and in all areas (digital citizens).
- Enable and ensure inclusion.
- Create confidence and trust.
- Education as a lifelong journey.
- Work together on organizing an “International Education Hackathon” to promote cultural exchange, knowledge-sharing and different perspectives (see Open Geneva, Cité des métiers).

The questions “why and how?” elicited the following responses:

- In a world in crisis, we need to develop critical thinking, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, and teach resilience (“resilient minds”).
- Teach risk prevention in the areas of health and online safety.
- Teach skills necessary to evaluate information in an environment of information overload and misinformation
- Maintain the quality of the educational system.
- Prepare for employment by fostering an understanding of the reality of work.



What lessons can we learn from the COVID-19 crisis?

The pandemic highlighted the need for digital services in all areas of society. Digitalization contributed to safeguarding parts of the economy while meeting basic needs. However, its environmental footprint is steadily increasing, even as energy conservation remains a crucial objective.

The future of digitalization

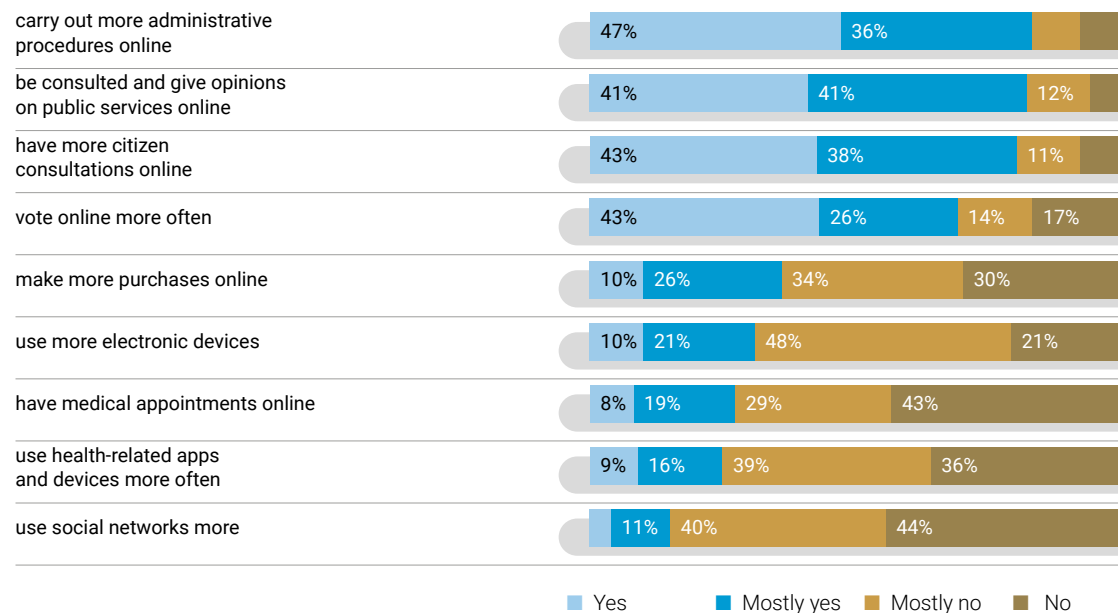
The Canton of Geneva is active in 5 key areas:

- Facilitation: Online government services, e-government
- Education: Digital literacy and ICT (children, adolescents and adults)
- Safety: Foster trust on the Internet
- Regulation: The Canton has passed a Law on Experimental Legislation (LLExp; A 2 35) which allows it to adopt laws for a limited time on an experimental basis

- Promotion: In partnership with International Geneva, position Geneva as a hub for global digital governance.

E-government encompasses all public services (health, education, land use, etc.) and is articulated around 5 principles: user-centred, trust, data protection and valorization, ethical use, and efficiency/innovation.

Digitisation: in the future, would you like to...?



85% think that Geneva should adapt to stay at the forefront of technological developments

Source (graph and key figure): Geneva 2050 Report www.ge.ch/document/geneve-2050

Working group proposals

- Develop Geneva, with its 35,000-strong community of international civil servants, as a proving ground/laboratory for International Geneva.
- Share digital resources: Identify technological common ground between entities and organizations to foster synergies for public-interest projects, for example, through freeware or access to third places (e.g., 3DD); develop interoperable and replicable tools.
- Develop pilot projects, such as new venues dedicated to facilitating dialogue and experimentation amongst local and international actors. Palais Wilson, which belongs to the Swiss government, could become a such a hub.

Upcoming meetings

Another 3 meetings will be organized in 2022 with actors of International Geneva to further this dialogue. The objective will be to discuss major future challenges in relation to public policies.

Dedicated consolidation sessions will be organized to present the proposals of the three working groups and discuss how they can be implemented. A summary of their recommendations will be presented to IO partners at the European Energy Transition Conference. These sessions will also be an opportunity to prepare the following workshop and to identify topics that the working groups will focus on next.

Next steps:

- Reinforce foresight-related interactions between IOs and the Canton
- Identify areas for expertise-sharing as well as events organized by the Canton where exchanges can take place

Participating organizations and bodies:

State and Canton of Geneva, SDB Lab, BIE, Geneva Cities Hub, Geneva Science Policy Interface, UNOG, GESDA, OHCHR, ILO, DiploFoundation, WHO, Free IT Foundation, Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Nomads Foundation.

This list will evolve with the arrival of new partners participating in workshops scheduled in 2022.