



-- PRESS RELEASE --

Business leaders address the phenomenon of immigration in new study from PROhumana

- PROhumana has released the results of the study **“How to handle the immigration phenomenon with corporate management of sustainable diversity”** which collects the reflections of 38 business leaders and were commented upon, at the launch of the study, by an important panel consisting of: **Juan Pablo Herмосilla, attorney and founding partner of Herмосilla & Compañía, and Miguel Yaksic, consultant from UNHCR, and former director of the Jesuit Migrant Service.**

At an event, held the 7th of December, where more than 60 representatives from the public and private sector participated, PROhumana announced the results of the study : **“Roundtables: How to handle the immigration phenomenon with corporate management of sustainable diversity”**, which identifies visions from 38 corporate leaders, who got together at the roundtables held in august 2017, and proposes ways to deal with the changes that comes with an increased immigration to Chile.

“ The world belongs to everyone, at some points we divide it, but for the sake of nature and the climate, humankind will be in movement. Now is the time to take charge of this progress and therefore we must get together and share respectful dialogues “ stated Teixidó at the launch of the study.

This was made possible by the support and participation of a group of companies and institutions. PROhumana was sponsored by **Bci, ENAP, Falabella and Paris** in order to carry out this initiative. It also created a strategic alliance with the Confederation of Production and Trade (**CPC**) and the Federation of Chilean Industry (**SOFOFA**)

Main conclusions

The results of the study were commented by **Juan Pablo Hermosilla, attorney and founding partner of Hermosilla & Compañía, and Miguel Yaksic, consultant from UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency) and former director of the Jesuit Migrant Service**, at the launch of the study and the panel was moderated by Soledad Teixidó, Executive President of PROhumana. The following paragraphs are extracts from the panel discussions:

Juan Pablo Hermosilla points out that *“ immigration is a tremendous growth opportunity. We need to have principles of reciprocity with our fraternal countries and we should recognize that we are all migrants. Chile is an adolescent country in this matter, we have a immature national identity, and that is why this is a great opportunity to proceed and progress”*. Adding that, *“ Chile is a country under construction where we all can fit “*.

Miguel Yaksic, concludes with emphasis that *“Chile is a classist and xenophobic country where we are few people that takes all the decisions. I invite you to make us more conscious about how to treat the other, the parlance we use, and to ask ourselves if we are are able to obtain power.”* Adding as well, *“ In Chile the citizens feels like the migrant competes in their daily life, for their seats at the metro or their place at the office. I do believe that the immigrants today are impacting on the employment and economic sector, but that is an entitlement like any other to those who changes nationality.”*

Contextual background

According to figures of numbers from the Immigration Department; there are currently 477,000 foreigners living in Chile - a number equivalent to 2,8% of the total population - and the estimation for 2023 is for this amount to double, reaching one million foreigners according to the data supplied by the Jesuit Migrant Service. ¹

The role of the companies is therefore, in this context of increasing immigration, without doubt gravitating, as great part of the immigrants comes to our country in search for work opportunities. Thus, the companies are key actors for their integration and a deciding factor in the purpose of protecting social stability and managing risks derived from this process.

It should be noted that at the time of the Roundtables, the project of Law for Foreigners had not yet been sent to congress, therefore, all reflections and responses are based on those grounds.

¹ El Mercurio (2016) “Immigration to Chile: 17 numbers to understand the growing phenomenon that was brought up in the presidential debate”

<http://www.emol.com/noticias/Nacional/2016/12/02/833848/Inmigracion-enChile-17-cifras-para-entender-el-creciente-fenomeno-se-instalo-en-el-debate-presidencial.html>

Results of the study

Respects to the results of the study, several analyzed variables of the dialogue generated in the Roundtables were highlighted: the first one is immigration and prejudices, where prejudices like the following were brought up:

- Delinquency and lack of education
- Need makes immigrant workers more committed
- Immigrants tend to be more problematic workers
- Chilean workers fear they will be left without jobs, and fears greater abilities of the immigrants
- Difficulties accepting differences

Another analyzed variable was the perspective of Human Resources, answering the question; *What do we lack doing at the company to include immigrants from Human Resources management?* Here, the following themes arose:

- Reactive to immigration; we weren't ready
- The need for a meaningful immigration policy is evident
- Stagnation and lack of capacity in human management
- Integration; linking Chilean and international cultural patterns

Also present was the issue of resolving the legal anachronism, and speaking openly about the current context, along with providing solutions and successful actions to advance the integration of the immigrants: How to contribute in a concrete way.

To read the complete study, about its methodology and the participants, download it [here](#).

About PROhumana

PROhumana is a Chilean - non-profit, non partisan, independent and self-sustaining - organisation with 20 years of experience with continuous work of promoting cultural change in Chile through transformative initiatives which allows our country to advance towards a society with greater tri-sectoral Human Sustainability Development where corporations pursue their business model to be part of the social, economical, ethical and environmental progress.