

English Commentary – Lavis Presentation

Slide-by-slide speaking notes

Slide 1 – Opening

This opening slide introduces the central theme of the presentation: how younger generations are approaching identity, relationships and the future of work. The perspective is deliberately based on listening to young people rather than describing them from the outside. Webboh Lab is presented as the research setting through which their voices, attitudes and expectations are analysed.

Slide 2 – Webboh Lab and the Generation Z Observatory

This slide introduces Webboh Lab as an observatory dedicated to understanding younger generations through a combination of community access, research and advanced statistical analysis. Its distinctive feature is the possibility of combining large-scale quantitative evidence with direct access to young people's experiences, language and perceptions. The objective is not simply to measure behaviours, but to explore values, identities and different psychographic profiles.

Slide 3 – Listening to identity

The Paranoia Milano research marks the first major step in the narrative. The focus moves from general descriptions of Generation Z to a more intimate question: how do adolescents experience the process of becoming themselves? The research presented at Paranoia Festival explores wellbeing, relationships with adults and the construction of identity from the adolescents' own point of view.

Slide 4 – Adolescents and parents

The data suggest that the relationship between adolescents and parents cannot simply be described as a crisis of dialogue. Young people appear to be renegotiating the right distance between closeness and autonomy. They still need parents as a secure relational base, but at the same time they need room to become independent individuals. Listening, recognition, protection and affection remain central, provided that they do not become control.

Slide 5 – Finding the future

One of the strongest findings concerns the future. 77.4% of respondents would like to talk more with their parents about their future and what they dream of doing. This is particularly interesting because topics that adults often associate with adolescence, such as social media or romantic relationships, rank much lower. The result suggests a reversal of the traditional intergenerational relationship: young people are not simply asking adults to tell them what the future will be; they are asking for someone with whom they can explore an uncertain future.

Slide 6 – What adolescents would really say to their parents

The open-ended messages provide a particularly direct interpretation of the quantitative findings. Adolescents ask adults to listen without immediately judging, to try to understand who they really are, to trust them, and to notice when they are struggling. The underlying request is relational rather than instructional: they are not primarily asking adults for more answers, but for a better quality of presence and dialogue.

Slide 7 – The research model

The conceptual model translates these relational insights into a testable structure. Family dialogue is connected to parental recognition, recognition to authenticity, and authenticity to identity construction. Social and digital pressure is introduced as a potentially negative force. The key idea is that identity is not created in isolation: it develops through relationships that allow young people to feel seen and recognised while preserving the freedom to become themselves.

Slide 8 – The PLS-PM results

The PLS-PM analysis makes the mechanism clearer. Family dialogue is important, but its effect on identity is largely mediated by recognition and authenticity. In other words, simply talking more is not enough. Dialogue becomes meaningful when it produces the feeling of being recognised; recognition, in turn, makes it easier to live authentically. Authenticity is therefore the crucial bridge toward identity construction.

Slide 9 – Interpreting the effects

This slide focuses attention on the substantive meaning of the statistical effects. The strongest message is that relationships matter through the psychological processes they activate. Recognition encourages authenticity, while social and digital pressure works in the opposite direction by making authentic self-expression more difficult. The statistical model therefore supports a coherent relational sequence rather than a collection of isolated correlations.

Slide 10 – Zoom on the results

The main effects can be summarised in a simple chain: dialogue leads to recognition, recognition supports authenticity, and authenticity contributes directly to identity construction. At the same time, social and digital pressure has a negative overall effect. This is an important distinction: the research does not suggest that more family communication automatically produces a stronger identity; it suggests that the quality and meaning of that communication are what matter.

Slide 11 – Becoming the person I want to be

The analysis then shifts from relationships to the individual experience of growing up. Adolescents combine exploration, autonomy, recognition from others, continuity between online and offline life, and the courage to be authentic. These dimensions show that identity development is not a linear process. Young people simultaneously need freedom to experiment and relationships that provide recognition and belonging.

Slide 12 – Five identity profiles

The cluster analysis shows why speaking about 'Generation Z' as a single homogeneous group is misleading. Five different identity profiles emerge, ranging from young people who are strongly dependent on the gaze of others to self-determined or authentic explorers. The profiles represent different ways of managing uncertainty, relationships, autonomy and self-definition. Segmentation therefore adds an essential layer to the average results.

Slide 13 – The geography of identity

Identity profiles also show territorial differences. Some clusters are more visible in particular regions or types of settlement, while others are more evenly distributed. Geography should not be interpreted deterministically, but it reminds us that identity develops within concrete social and cultural contexts. The same generation can therefore experience the process of becoming an adult differently depending on the environments in which it grows up.

Slide 14 – Transition to the Talent Equation

This slide opens the second part of the presentation. After asking how young people construct identity, the focus moves to work. The underlying hypothesis is that attitudes toward work cannot be understood independently from the broader process of becoming an adult. Expectations about employment are also expectations about identity, autonomy, relationships and the kind of life a person wants to build.

Slide 15 – Where the Talent Equation comes from

The Talent Equation is organised around four dimensions drawn from the literature on the meaning of work and adapted to the experience of young people: Meaning, Growth, Balance and Trust. Together they describe four fundamental questions: Does this work represent me? Does it help me grow? Can it fit into the life I want? Can I trust the organisation? The framework moves beyond salary and career to capture the wider psychological contract between young people and work.

Slide 16 – The new talent equation

The four dimensions suggest that young people evaluate work as part of a broader life project. Meaning concerns coherence between work and personal values; Growth concerns learning and transformation; Balance concerns compatibility between work and life; Trust concerns the credibility and consistency of the organisation. The resulting idea of valuable work is therefore multidimensional: talent is not only a set of skills, but also a set of expectations.

Slide 17 – Six ways of experiencing work

Once again, segmentation challenges the idea of a single generational attitude. Six psychographic profiles emerge from different combinations of Meaning, Growth, Balance and Trust. Some young people search primarily for meaning, others for equilibrium, growth or security, while others show lower involvement across the dimensions. The managerial implication is that organisations are not dealing with one 'Gen Z' but with several different relationships with work.

Slide 18 – From imagined work to real work

Age and experience change the relative importance of the four dimensions. At 14–18, work is mainly imagined and connected with aspirations and identity. At 19–24, expectations begin to encounter concrete choices and first experiences. At 25–30, sustainability, balance and trust become increasingly important. The point is not that a generation suddenly changes its values, but that people reinterpret those values as work moves from imagination to lived experience.

Slide 19 – Artificial intelligence and the future of work

Attitudes toward artificial intelligence illustrate the same transition. Among younger respondents, AI is associated more strongly with curiosity, creativity, speed and possibility. As respondents approach or enter the labour market, the emotional tone becomes more ambivalent: pressure, replaceability,

competition and the need to distinguish oneself become more salient. The technology has not changed; what changes is the position from which young people experience it.

Slide 20 – Transition to the Trento research

The presentation now moves to research on young women and work presented at the Trento Festival of Economics. This section extends the Talent Equation by looking at the relationship between employment, autonomy and freedom. The central question becomes not only what kind of job young people want, but what role work plays in enabling the life they want to live.

Slide 21 – Young women and the new idea of freedom

For young Italian women, freedom is strongly associated with economic autonomy, the ability to choose, personal time and independence. Work is therefore central, but it is not necessarily valued only as a source of identity or self-realisation. It is also an enabling condition: it provides the resources and autonomy needed to make choices. The challenge is to find work that supports freedom without absorbing the whole of life.

Slide 22 – Two grammars of work

The research identifies two broad narratives that coexist rather than exclude one another. The first is vocation: work as meaning, self-expression and positive impact. The second is security: work as stability, economic autonomy and quality of life. Many young women recognise themselves in both. This coexistence is important because it moves the debate beyond the simplistic opposition between idealism and pragmatism.

Slide 23 – Four profiles of young women

The four profiles show different combinations of aspiration, growth, balance and security. Realistic Idealists want meaningful work without losing sight of reality; Ambitious in Evolution see work as a route to learning and development; Independent Balancers prioritise sustainability and autonomy; Strategic Pragmatists place greater emphasis on stability and economic security. Again, the evidence points to plurality rather than a single model of the young worker.

Slide 24 – When imagined work meets real work

The Work Reality Exposure Curve describes how the meaning of work evolves as expectations encounter actual experience. Meaning and growth are especially prominent in the aspirational phase, while balance and trust become more important with exposure to real working conditions. This does not imply disillusionment in a simple sense. Experience produces a recalibration: work remains important, but its place within the overall architecture of life changes.

Slide 25 – Adolescents, success and the future

The focus returns to adolescents and to their ideas of success. The responses reveal neither complete rejection of traditional routes nor uncritical enthusiasm for digital shortcuts. Young people recognise uncertainty in education and work, are attracted by new digital opportunities, and place considerable importance on adaptability and the ability to seize opportunities. Their view of success is therefore open, pragmatic and still in formation.

Slide 26 – New cultures of success

The factorial map reveals three broader cultures of success. One emphasises digital opportunities; another questions the sufficiency of traditional routes; the third stresses personal initiative and the ability to act independently. The important point is that these orientations are not simply attitudes toward money or career. They express different ways of imagining how agency, education, innovation and opportunity will interact in the future.

Slide 27 – Identity and success are connected

The identity clusters occupy different positions on the map of success. This connection suggests that ideas about the future are related to the way adolescents are currently constructing themselves. A young person's relationship with autonomy, recognition and authenticity also influences how he or she imagines opportunity, education, digital pathways and personal initiative. Identity and expectations about success are therefore two sides of the same developmental process.

Slide 28 – Thinking about leaving school

The finding that more than one student in ten has considered leaving school introduces a more critical dimension. This is not necessarily equivalent to actual dropout, but it signals a meaningful level of disengagement or distress. The size of the sample makes the finding particularly useful as an indicator of how many students have at least contemplated breaking with the educational path.

Slide 29 – Why students think about leaving school

The reasons are multiple and interconnected: overload, stress and anxiety, difficult relationships, lack of recognition, doubts about the usefulness of school, and material or economic constraints. The synthesis at the bottom of the slide is especially important: too much study, stress and pressure can coexist with too little meaning, listening and recognition. School disengagement therefore cannot be reduced to academic performance alone; it is also relational and existential.

Slide 30 – From identity to conflict

The final slide brings the entire narrative together and opens toward the research on the 'grammars of conflict'. The path is now clear: dialogue can create recognition; recognition supports authenticity; authenticity contributes to identity; and identity is eventually tested in the encounter with someone who thinks differently. The next question is therefore relational and social: can people remain authentic while recognising the other, even in disagreement? Conflict becomes not merely a clash of opinions, but a test of the quality of relationships and of the capacity to stay in dialogue.