

“Italy is still the land of miracles”

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“Do your best, because Italy is still the land where miracles can come true.” Said **Giacomo Castiglioni** to the students, businessman from Como and president of Univercomo , who today has received the Rosa Commacina, the maximum honour conferred by Insubria University. And in some way, also the Athenaeum of Como and Varese is a miracle. This university is living a deep phase of transformation and is about to come of age. This morning, in Como, the 16th academic year was inaugurated in the presence of the regional Assessor **Mario Melazzini**. Also the ceremony has been, partly, an innovation: it is been the first one officiated by both the dean **Alberto Coen Porisini** and the pro-dean **Giuseppe Colangelo** , who were elected in September of last year.

This is not a simple period for the Italian universities and the dean, in his speech, mentioned it: “The atmosphere around us is still affected by the hard economic circumstance, and the hurdles have heavily damaged **the university system, together with those which were already there from the beginning of the crisis**. Through the last five years the Ordinary Financial Fund has decreased by almost 15%, and the number of professors in Italy has reduced by 12,000. The result is under the eyes of everybody.”

The university opens the doors to the “faint recovery” – To describe the context, Coen has talked about the effects of the reforms and of the cuts, and mentioned the **data from OCSE** about the graduates and the investments in education and research in our country. Too often, these data place Italy below the European average, and underline problems that by now are chronic, such as the brain drain of talent abroad. However, in a scenario that remains problematic, some positive glimmers seem to rise: “Nevertheless,” added the dean, **“the Italian university system is still one of the lasted excellences**. According to the experts it is possible to distinguish some weak signs of economic recovery and also we are starting to distinguish some signs

that, professing optimism, we want to read as a shy recovery of the university system.”

The results that have been reached – “We have worked hard,” Coen added, “we have implemented the reforms and now we have a new statute, a new internal order, an improved curriculum and a research system that has obtained a better evaluation than the national average, in terms of quality.” In his speech, the lecturer Coen Porisini thanked the technician and the administrative staff, as well as the dean who was in charge before him, the founder of Insubria **Renzo Dionigi** and the general director **Marino Balzani** who is ending his mandate at the end of the year. “In Como, the presence of the two poles has been confirmed, the techno-scientific one in via Valleggio and the socio-juridical one in Sant’Abbondio cloister, that, with the today’s inauguration of the so-called “Manica Lunga”, gets a significant extension of the Athenaeum’s areas. In Varese, thanks to the decision – shared by everybody – to assign the Bizzozzero area to the university, the building of a university campus will be possible; it is an indisputable reality by now, like the real opening of the boarding school “Carlo Cattaneo” and the start of the building of sport facilities in 2013.”

University at the territory’s disposal – Internationalization, administration modernization, new investments for the research and improvement of services are the purposes of the dean’s activity of the following years. “Insubria University feels young, dynamic and feels like working,” **stressed the vice pro-dean Colangelo**. “It wants to escape from the ivory tower where it may have found itself in any past situation. Though maintaining its own autonomy, it makes itself available for the territory to give its contribution to solve, together with the institutions, the social problems of our communities.

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