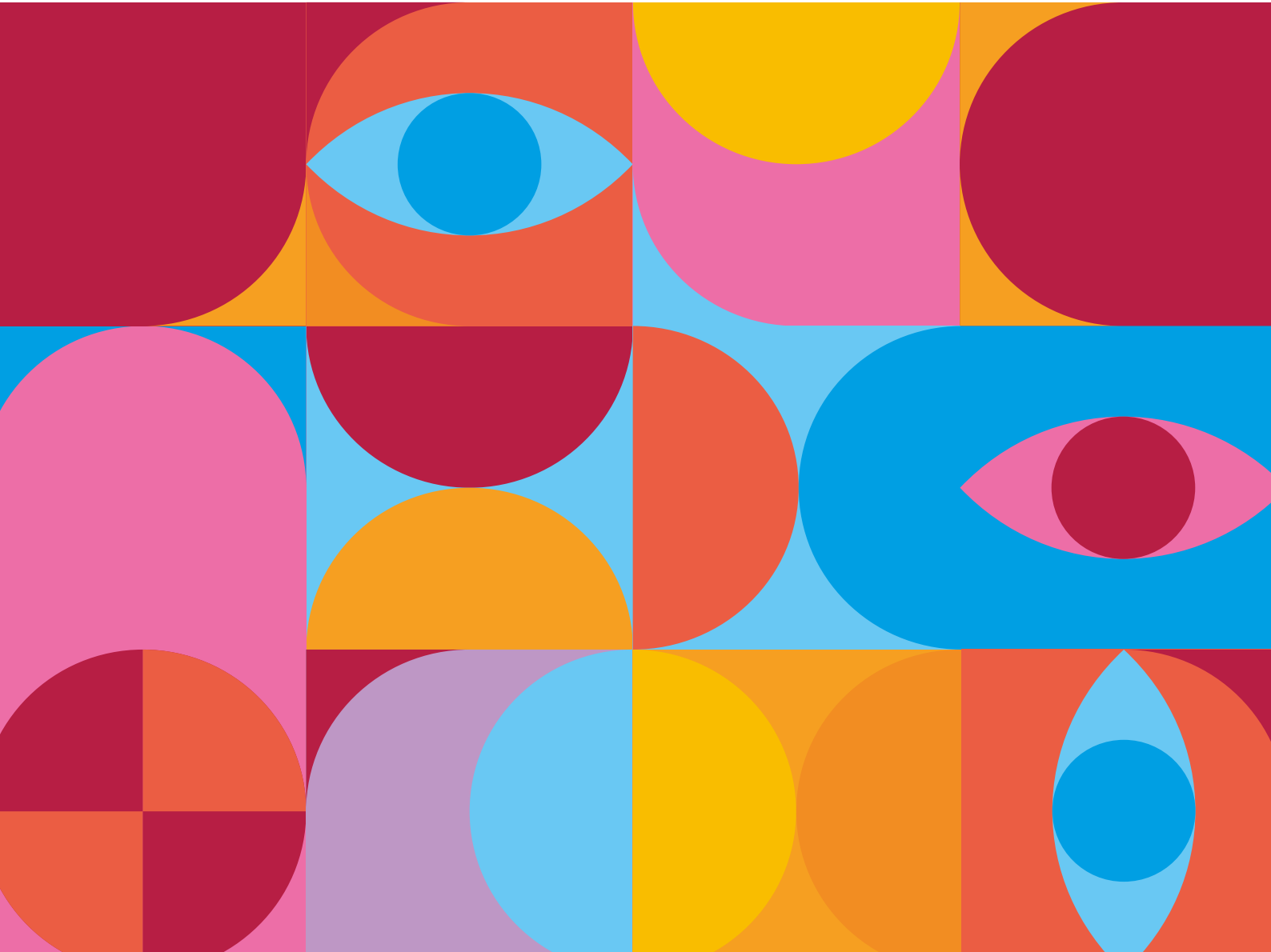




NAVIGATING THE FUTURE THROUGH A HUMAN RIGHTS LENS



**Global Campus of Human Rights ETS
Annual Report 2025**

March 2026

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This publication is the result of the collective work of many members of the Global Campus network, including the Communications Department. To bring these diverse contributions together into a coherent report, we have made use of AI tools for editing and translation. Despite our best efforts, inaccuracies may remain, and we apologise for any errors.



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The vision of the Global Campus of Human Rights is to foster new generations of human rights defenders able to contribute to a world in which human dignity, equality, freedom, human security, sustainable development, democracy, the rule of law and respect for all human rights are realised.

Through its integrated work in human rights education, research, capacity building and advocacy across regions, the Global Campus of Human Rights contributes to the advancement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promoting dignity, equality, justice and sustainable development worldwide.



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WELCOME

Verónica Gómez — President

The unregulated use of high-risk technologies—and the extractive activities that make them possible—represents yet another contingency that demands global consensus to build a paradigm of caring for humans as part of their environment. This new paradigm must transcend the setbacks connected with the early impacts of past industrial revolutions on the quality of life of individuals, communities, and the preservation of the vital biomes to which they belong. Building this paradigm requires strengthening interdisciplinary approaches based on the best available science—including ancestral, community, and local knowledge—and connecting them to all areas of knowledge that are reflected in the design and implementation of public policy and private initiatives. It also calls for intergenerational narratives that communicate the importance of reaching consensus on ambitious, equitable, and sustainable climate and care strategies.

Education, capacity building and outreach have a crucial role to play in this process. The Global Campus of Human Rights was created to connect universities around the world in their roles as catalysts of knowledge and outreach within their communities and between generations. These constituencies have a role to fulfil in the building of new paradigms for new challenges.

This annual report provides data, insights and stories on the challenges and achievements in human rights education, capacity building and outreach by the Global Campus of Human Rights during the 2024–2025 cycle. Students, alumni, strategic partners and participants in non-degree training courses from all over the world have contributed to this global endeavour through the GC hubs in Europe, the Balkans, Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caucasus, Latin America & the Caribbean, the Arab World and Central Asia. As shown in the Report, the Global Campus community continues to connect academic knowledge, education and capacity building as pillars to sustain democracy and human rights in increasingly challenging regional and global contexts for the protection of individual and collective rights, where learning and well-informed decision-making are more important than ever before.

On behalf of the governing bodies of the Global Campus of Human Rights—its Assembly and its Council—it is an honour for me to share this Annual Report with our readers.

FOREWORD

Manfred Nowak — Secretary General

We are living in an increasingly crazy world. The rule-based international order, established in reaction to WWII and the Holocaust, is crumbling and gradually being replaced by the rule of the jungle. International organisations are sidelined, and autocratic rulers are waging wars for their own egoistic interests and profits, supported by oligarchs and AI-generated weapon systems. The triple planetary crisis, which threatens the very survival of humanity, future generations and other species on our planet, is denied by mis- and disinformation and accelerated by new investments in fossil fuels despite all scientific evidence, global warming and global warnings. Economic inequality, driven by neoliberal economic policies and globalisation, has reached dramatic dimensions, undermining the social coherence and democratic legitimacy of our societies. Only less than 7% of the world's population are still living in well-functioning democracies, which are, however, also threatened by polarisation, radicalisation, extremism and a constantly shrinking space for civil society, free media, an independent judiciary and academic freedom.

This alarming situation begs the question of how this trend towards authoritarianism, repression, environmental destruction and armed conflicts can be stopped and redirected into a more peaceful, democratic, equal, rule-based and environmentally sustainable future. We believe that the key to navigating the future must be found in human rights which, at least from a legal point of view, still constitute the only universally recognised and legally binding value system of our time. Volker Türk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, recently launched the initiative of a Global Alliance for Human Rights, which aims to bring together multiple stakeholders who still believe that it is not too late to build a better and more sustainable future for our children, future generations and nature: democratic governments from all world regions; sustainable and responsible businesses; civil society; wealthy individuals and philanthropists willing to invest in a sustainable future; scientists; faith leaders; celebrities from the arts, culture and sports; youth movements; independent media; and academia. As the world's largest network of universities specialised in human rights education, the Global Campus of Human Rights is ready to join the Global Alliance for Human Rights by navigating the future through a human rights lens.

Our Annual Report 2025 provides testimony that the Global Campus is a highly resilient and persistent network of changemakers who provide human rights education, advocacy and capacity-building in the midst of armed conflicts, such as in the Arab World, Ukraine and the Caucasus region. In most regions where we operate, we are confronted with

authoritarian regimes, repression, attacks on academic freedom and a shrinking space for human rights advocacy. When we started to develop our master's programmes almost 30 years ago, our students were inspired by the prospect of becoming human rights professionals working in a welcoming environment in governments, international or non-governmental organisations. Today, our students consider themselves human rights defenders already used to working, or expecting to work, in a hostile and often dangerous environment. We are not only educating future human rights defenders in our eight regional master's programmes. We are also providing e-learning tools and tailored training programmes for and with human rights defenders, and we support a selected group of human rights defenders in exile with an opportunity to continue their courageous advocacy work in a safe environment. Thanks to our partnership with Right Livelihood, we also work closely with some of the most outstanding grassroots Laureates fighting for human rights, indigenous peoples' rights, democracy and a sustainable environment, whether in the Pacific Islands, Sudan, Myanmar, Taiwan, Sweden, Afghanistan, Russia or Nicaragua, just to name a few countries of origin and advocacy work.

Navigating the future through a human rights lens also means that we work with children, for children and for future generations. We are inspired by our Child Leadership Teams and Youth Advisory Groups operating in different regional settings. The dominant themes of our manifold activities described in this Annual Report are children's rights, artificial intelligence and climate change. The three biggest events which the Global Campus organised or co-organised in 2025 were the World Congress on Justice with Children, held in early June in Madrid; the Global Classroom on Business, Human Rights and the Environment, hosted by Mahidol University in Bangkok in October; and the Youth Forum on Human Rights Education – Unleashing Human Rights, organised in cooperation with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council of Europe in Budapest around Human Rights Day in December.

We are convinced that educating, training and supporting human rights defenders is one of the most important keys that may open a window of opportunity to turn the current dynamics of world politics from the rule of the jungle back to the rule of law, democracy, peace and a sustainable future based on the universal values of human rights.

THE NETWORK

Elisabetta Noli — Administrative and Human Resources Director
George Ulrich — Academic Director

In 2025, the Global Campus of Human Rights (GC) has continued to pursue its core objectives as an international network of universities engaged in human rights education, research, training and advocacy. Evolving from its origin as a European inter-university cooperation based in Venice, the GC has expanded into a global consortium that operates through eight regional hubs, each hosting a master's programme on human rights and democratisation: Europe (EMA), South East Europe (ERMA), the Caucasus (CES), Africa (HRDA), Latin America and the Caribbean (LATMA), Asia-Pacific (APMA), the Arab World (ArMA) and Central Asia (MAHRS). Together, these programmes form a coordinated framework for postgraduate human rights education and related didactic and awareness-raising activities, involving over one hundred partner universities worldwide, and with the European Union serving as the Global Campus' main institutional partner.

The GC's educational approach remains aligned with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011), emphasising the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes through education about, through and for human rights. Across the eight programmes, multidisciplinary curricula draw on law, social and political sciences, and the humanities while integrating applied learning, research training and mobility opportunities adapted to regional conditions. Programme delivery increasingly reflects the need to respond to rapidly evolving political, technological and environmental challenges affecting human rights and democracy.

A shared objective across the GC network in 2025 has been to prepare professionals equipped to advance human rights and democratisation in complex and often constrained environments. Graduates continue to apply their expertise in a broad range of settings, including academia, public administration, international organisations and civil society. Together, they make a formidable contribution to the formation of local, regional and international communities of practice grounded in common standards. In parallel, the GC has expanded its non-degree learning activities—including specialised trainings, short courses and online programmes—to reach a wider range of practitioners and stakeholders.

Operating in widely diverse social and political contexts, the GC combines global reach with regionally grounded expertise. During 2025, regional programmes have been massively impacted by armed conflicts, democratic backsliding, shrinking civic space and heightened restrictions on mobility. Such conditions shape teaching modalities, field activities and safety considerations for students, alumni and faculty. They necessitate an ongoing adaptation to ensure continuity of learning while maintaining academic standards and support for human rights defenders working under adverse conditions. This, indeed, is integral to the challenge of navigating the future through a human rights lens.

THE CRUCIAL VALUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

“Human rights education is an investment in prevention, and when prevention does not work, the toolbox of human rights enables the documentation of abuses, encourages peaceful resolution, gives voice to victims, and delivers justice in times of crisis and war.”

Volker Türk — UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Global Campus continues to deepen its longstanding engagement with the United Nations to reflect on and strengthen human rights education in an evolving global landscape. A significant step in this dialogue was formalised on 15 July 2025 in Geneva, when UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk and Global Campus Secretary General Manfred Nowak signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Global Campus.

The MoU establishes a structured framework for enhanced cooperation in education, research, training and expert exchange, reinforcing a shared commitment to advancing human rights education as a cornerstone of resilient, inclusive and rights-based societies. It builds on decades of collaboration and recognises the Global Campus as a key academic partner in implementing the principles of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011).

Earlier in the year, on 6 May 2025, Elena Ippoliti, Coordinator of the Human Rights Education Unit at OHCHR, joined a meeting of the GC Council for an in-depth exchange on the future of human rights education. The discussion reaffirmed the centrality of education about, through and for human rights, and highlighted the need to cultivate critical thinking, ethical responsibility and interdisciplinary approaches capable of responding to complex institutional and societal challenges.

→ Venice (Italy) – Elena Ippoliti, OHCHR (left) with GC Academic Director George Ulrich (middle) and GC Secretary General Manfred Nowak, 6 May 2025

Reflecting on developments since the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995–2004), the exchange underscored the progress made in establishing international standards and national implementation mechanisms, as well as the continued importance of academic institutions in shaping the field. The Global Campus, through its eight regional master’s programmes and diverse global network, remains well positioned to bridge academic, non-formal and community-based human rights education while adapting to varied regional contexts.

The signing of the renewed MoU, for which the Human Rights Education Unit at OHCHR serves as the anchor office, marks not only a continuation of cooperation but a strengthened institutional partnership aimed at advancing innovative and context-sensitive human rights education worldwide.



“Echoing the UN vision that expanding human rights education (HRE) is essential to empower individuals and strengthen the human rights movement, the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the UN World Programme for HRE prioritises children and youth, with a focus on digital technologies, environmental justice, climate change and gender equality — areas deeply embedded in the curricula and training initiatives of the Global Campus.”

Elena Ippoliti — Coordinator of the Human Rights Education Unit, OHCHR



Global Campus Europe

European Master's Programme
in Human Rights and Democratisation
EMA

Global Campus HQ in Venice



Global Campus South East Europe

European Regional Master's Programme
in Democracy and Human Rights
in South East Europe
ERMA

University of Sarajevo & University of Bologna



Global Campus Latin America-Caribbean

Master's Programme in Human Rights
and Democratisation in Latin America
and the Caribbean
LATMA

University of San Martín in Buenos Aires



Global Campus Africa

Master's Programme in Human Rights
and Democratisation in Africa
HRDA

University of Pretoria



Master's Programme in Human Rights
and Democratisation in the Caucasus
CES

Yerevan State University



Master's Programme in Human Rights
and Sustainability in Central Asia
MAHRS

OSCE Academy in Bishkek



Arab Master's Programme
in Democracy and Human Rights
ARMA

Saint Joseph University of Beirut



Master's Programme in Human Rights
and Democratisation in Asia-Pacific
APMA

Mahidol University in Bangkok

The Master's Programme (LLM) in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa

GC Africa | HRDA

People

Frans Viljoen
Magnus Killander
Michelle Maziwisa
Ntandoyenkosi Moyo
Razan Ali
Emily Laubscher
Elvis Fokala
Rotondwa Mashige

Regional network

Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria, South Africa—coordinator
Université d'Abomey-Calavi, Benin
Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale, Cameroon
Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
University of Ghana, Ghana
University of Nairobi, Kenya
University of Mauritius, Mauritius
Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique
University of Lagos, Nigeria
Université Gaston Berger
de Saint Louis, Senegal
University of Venda, South Africa
University of the Western Cape, South Africa
Makerere University, Uganda

REGIONAL CONTEXT: CONFLICT AND DEMOCRATIC PRESSURES

Across Africa, 2025 has been marked by a period of heightened geopolitical uncertainty in which armed conflicts, contested political transitions and restrictions on civic space continue to place significant strain on the protection of human rights. Ongoing violence in Sudan, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and parts of the Sahel has generated severe humanitarian consequences and heightened risks for civilians, while political instability and security-driven governance approaches in several countries have narrowed space for civil society, independent media and political participation.

At the same time, growing public frustration with inequality, corruption and limited state capacity has contributed to declining confidence in democratic institutions in some contexts, alongside the continued spread of narratives challenging the legitimacy of human rights protection—particularly in relation to gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and the rights of minority communities. These dynamics highlight the persistent gap between formal commitments to human rights and their effective implementation, especially in conflict-affected settings.

Within this complex regional environment, the Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa (HRDA) continues to focus on strengthening the capacity of mid-career human rights practitioners and defenders through **rigorous training grounded in evidence-based research and African normative traditions**, including ubuntu, with the aim of reinforcing shared commitment to human rights even in periods of instability and conflict.

ADDRESSING CORRUPTION AND CONFLICT: A LECTURE HOSTED BY GC AFRICA MEMBER UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE D'AFRIQUE CENTRALE

In March 2025, the Centre for Human Rights and the Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale (Cameroon) co-hosted the annual **Julius Osega Memorial Lecture** in Yaoundé, focusing on **corruption and governance challenges across Africa**. The lecture—held within the HRDA network of universities—commemorates the legacy of **HRDA graduate Julius Osega**, who dedicated his career to promoting human rights in policing **before being killed while serving in Darfur**. The gathering brought together over 80 academics, practitioners, civil society representatives and students to reflect on governance and human rights challenges across the continent.

The conference keynote highlighted corruption as a major driver of instability, weak institutions and rights violations, particularly where natural resources are managed without transparency. Panel discussions explored ways to strengthen accountability, protect human rights defenders and encourage broader engagement in combating corruption, emphasising the importance of intergenerational dialogue and regional cooperation.

Speakers also underlined the need to address corruption through stronger legal frameworks, independent institutions and sustained civic engagement. Particular attention was given to the role of universities and research institutions in generating evidence-based analysis and training a new generation of human rights practitioners capable of confronting corruption and governance failures. By fostering dialogue between academia, civil society and public institutions, the lecture reaffirmed the importance of collaborative approaches to strengthening accountability and promoting human rights across Africa.



1. Yaoundé (Cameroon) – Participants of the Julius Osega Memorial Lecture, 23 March 2025



ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

| | |
|-----|---------------|
| 25 | graduates |
| 19 | nationalities |
| 40+ | lecturers |
| 491 | participants |

across 6 advanced human rights courses

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA

Africa's economies in 2025 were on a cautiously positive trajectory, with growth in sub-Saharan Africa projected to rise from 3.5 percent in 2024 to around 3.8 percent in 2025 and to average about 4.4 percent in 2026–2027. While easing inflation and recovering trade offer new opportunities for investment, knowledge transfer and job creation, high debt burdens and uneven regional performance continue to constrain progress. From the perspective of the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria, this outlook highlights both the **potential benefits of increased economic activity and the risks** posed by expanding corporate operations for communities across the continent.

In response, the Centre has intensified its focus on **how economic growth intersects with corporate accountability, environmental protection and community rights**. It engages with continental norm-setting processes—including African Commission standards, the emerging Policy Framework on Business and Human Rights and the African Continental Free Trade Area Protocol on Investment—to promote rights-respecting development. In 2025, the HRDA programme advanced this work through its **Business and Human Rights clinic**, where students contributed to inputs for a General Comment and received specialised training on business, human rights and the environment. Looking ahead, the Centre identifies an urgent need to strengthen corporate accountability and human rights and environmental due diligence so that local communities, marginalised groups and African resources are protected as green industrialisation and climate-related investment expand. **A climate-just transition must also be just**



HRDA alumna Abiola Idowu-Ojo (cohort 2003), Executive Secretary of the African Commission

“The HRDA programme has been one of the most profound journeys of my life—an intellectual awakening that deepened not only my academic understanding of human rights, democracy, and social justice, but also my personal conviction to serve communities through transformative action. It has been a year of growth, humility, and renewed purpose—where every lecture, field visit, and research project challenged me to reimagine what it truly means to be an African human rights advocate.”

GC Africa alum*, 2025 cohort

for Africans, safeguarding the rights of indigenous and rural communities, ensuring access to food, water and a healthy environment, and advancing the realisation of the right to development.

CELEBRATING LEADERS WHO HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE IN AFRICA

The annual Vera Chirwa Award recognises HRDA alumni who embody the Programme's principles by contributing to the protection of human rights and the strengthening of democratisation across Africa. The three winners for 2025 were announced on International Human Rights Day, 10 December 2025. Among them was **Abiola Idowu-Ojo**, who has dedicated over fifteen years to advancing human rights within the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights**. During her career at the Commission, Idowu-Ojo has contributed to institutional reforms, including strategic planning, strengthening the communications procedure, and providing technical support to improve effectiveness. She has also mentored numerous HRDA alumni who joined the institution as legal experts, helping build a network of human rights professionals across the continent.





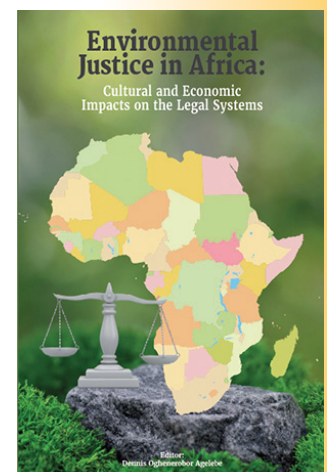
On 5 September 2025, at the Centre for Human Rights in Pretoria, HRDA alumni organised a **webinar to highlight the humanitarian crisis in El Fasher**, Sudan, where a siege imposed since 2024 has led to widespread **starvation, displacement** and severe **malnutrition** affecting millions. The event raised awareness of what is described as one of the world's most underreported crises, examined the legal implications of **starvation as a weapon of war** under international humanitarian law, and mobilised regional advocacy and accountability efforts. Through expert analysis and testimony, the webinar strengthened understanding among human rights practitioners and encouraged urgent action to address both immediate humanitarian needs and longer-term justice mechanisms.

“It is hardly possible to attend a gathering of African human rights activists, professionals and scholars without encountering a number of the Centre’s alumni. The meaningful work and commitment of these continental change agents warm the hearts of all of us at the Centre, and leave a significant mark.

Frans Viljoen — Former Director of the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, at a meeting on the implications of the ongoing African Union reform process for the African human rights system, organised by the Initiative for Strategic Litigation. Nairobi, Kenya, August 2025.



HRDA alumnus Ademola Oluborode Jegede’s chapter, “Extraterritorial Litigation against Multinational Corporations for Climate-Related Human Rights Violations: Lessons from Okpabi v Shell,” in **Environmental Justice in Africa: Cultural and Economic Impacts on the Legal Systems** (PULP 2025), examines how extraterritorial jurisdiction may enable litigation against parent companies for human rights violations linked to multinational corporate activities.



The Arab Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights

GC Arab World | ArMA

People

Sami Nader
Jihad Nammour
Elias Dahrouge
Carmen Abou Jaoude
Mayada Abdallah
Louise Lagarde
Rania Salem
Sara Makki
Anthony Nakhle
Sandra Halabi
Chantal Youssef
Lyne Mneimneh
Amin Mallat-Lopez

Regional network

Saint Joseph University of Beirut, Lebanon—coordinator
Danish Institute for Human Rights, Denmark
University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
University of Jordan, Jordan
International University of Rabat, Morocco
Birzeit University, Palestine
University of Carthage, Tunisia

With the participation of academics from:

Cairo University, Egypt
Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Qatar

REGIONAL CONTEXT: CONFLICT, DISPLACEMENT AND CONSTRAINED MOBILITY

The 2024–2025 academic cycle unfolded amid severe regional escalation. Israeli military operations and their broader repercussions across the region created prolonged insecurity, displacement and mobility restrictions that directly affected students, faculty and institutional planning. In response to the deteriorating security situation and the legitimate hesitation of candidates, the Arab Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights (ArMA) suspended the first year* and concentrated its efforts on the 15 students enrolled in their second year within the programme, ensuring continuity of learning while prioritising safety. Despite nearly three months of interrupted in-person teaching and recurring flare ups throughout the year, ArMA successfully delivered its 11th edition. Academic continuity was maintained through rapid transition to online teaching, calendar restructuring, course redistribution across semesters, and decentralisation of selected activities to partner universities in Jordan and Palestine. The incoming regional mobility scheme was suspended, while outgoing mobility continued where feasible.

* ArMA offers two tracks:

- a full two-year postgraduate programme, providing a solid theoretical and multidisciplinary foundation in human rights and democratic governance in the Arab region;
- and an accelerated one-year track, allowing students with a relevant prior master's degree to enter directly into the second year, complemented by selected foundational courses.



Besides documenting displacement, the project Chronicles of Displacement, supported by UNHCR, engaged with youth across Lebanon in developing policy briefs from below—an innovative bottom-up approach to writing policy papers. This participatory academic discussion focused on evidence-based policy responses and drawing lessons for future solutions.

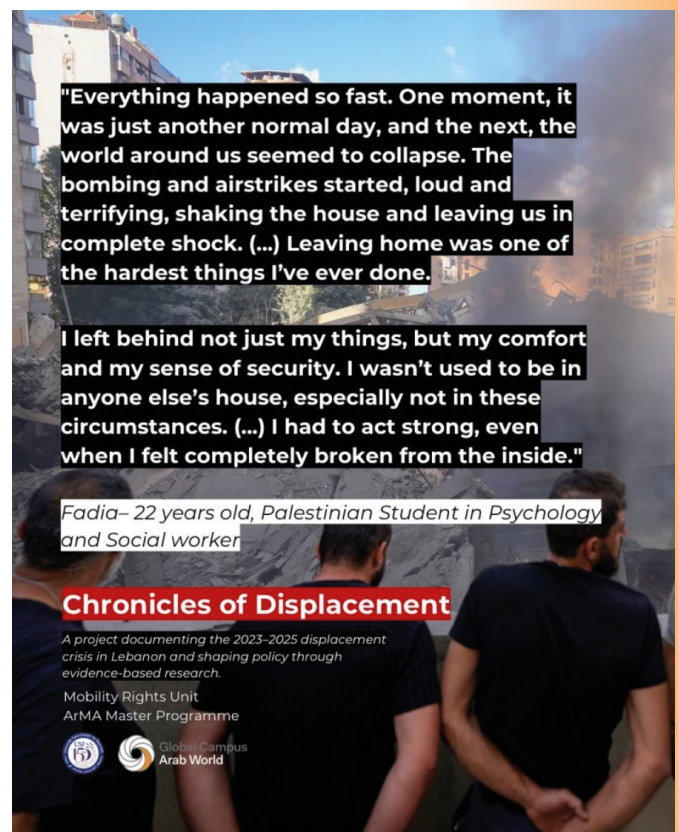
<https://chroniclesofdisplacement.usj.edu.lb/>

THEMATIC ENGAGEMENT

The Programme strengthened its positioning through consolidated **thematic units** inspired by the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria:

- **Mobility rights**, which launched the Chronicles of Displacement to document the humanitarian crisis and supporting policy-oriented student research;
- **Emancipatory human rights**, which organised workshops and a webinar series;
- **Dealing with the past**, advancing research on women activists and transitional justice;
- **Child rights**, which expanded its regional role through blended advanced courses and the Child Rights Clinic.

Regional decentralisation became a strategic priority. Activities were relocated or organised in collaboration with our partners the University of Jordan, Birzeit University and Carthage University.



ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

18 registered students

16 curricular internships

22 outreach events

367 learners

across 14 human rights courses
(in-person & online)

TAKING THE CONVERSATION GLOBAL

During the second semester, ArMA launched four **Spring Courses**, delivered in English and Arabic, covering refugees, migration and mobility rights; combating corruption in the Arab World; enforced disappearances in Syria and transitional justice prospects; and political regimes and dynamics of democratic backsliding. Originally designed for ArMA students, the courses were opened to external learners to **enhance accessibility and global engagement**.

The Programme also organised webinars and workshops on key themes such as child rights in times of war, emancipatory human rights and decolonising human rights, strengthening its online visibility and multilingual profile.

These activities, offered in English, Arabic and French in collaborations with scholars and activists from Africa, Asia, Europe and South America, generated significant interest, attracting over 900 applicants and engaging more than 600 participants.



↑ Beirut (Lebanon) – Introducing the “Decolonising Human Rights” workshop: Dr Farah Mihar, visiting lecturer from Oxford Brookes University, breaks down foundational concepts developed by Kenyan academic Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o and Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano, 30 April 2025

FOURTH EDITION OF THE BEIRUT ACADEMY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

In the summer, the Programme organised the Beirut Academy of Human Rights, held both online and in-person in French, English and Arabic, and open to both ArMA students and external participants. It included 4 courses and a workshop, including 2 regional initiatives: Child Justice (with Terre des Hommes) and the International Human Rights System (with the UN Human Rights Training Centre), drawing participants from 13 Arab countries.

Key components were:

- *Legal Disinformation in Armed Conflict*, exploring International Humanitarian Law misuse and narrative strategies
- *Child Rights Short Course*, featuring Nabaa, War Child and Defence for Children International
- *Advanced Child Justice Course*, with internationally renowned lecturers
- *Child Rights Clinic*, with experts from GC member universities and in coordination with the Lebanese Higher Council for Childhood
- *Regional Summer School for Youth* on the international human rights system, with UN and Norwegian Centre lecturers.

BEIRUT HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK

Against the backdrop of heightened tensions and fears of a third military escalation, the Programme organised a week of activities in Beirut (8-13 December) under the title “Human Rights in Wartime”. The week featured an exhibition, two film screenings, an expert panel meeting, two webinars and a hybrid event. Discussions addressed challenges in international criminal law, human rights in armed conflict, forced displacement, child participation and modern slavery in domestic work. Special attention was given to the situations in Sudan, Syria, Palestine and Lebanon.



↑ Beirut (Lebanon) – A panel discussion within the Beirut Human Rights Week on ‘Human Rights in Armed Conflict: Lessons from Sudan’ featuring Mazen Shaqoura (OHCHR’s regional representative), Mona Rishmawi, Dr Zeina Jallad and Brahim Snoopy Ahmad (co-director of Khartoum, screened beforehand). Organised with OHCHR, UNIC Beirut and FIFDH. 10 December 2025



↑
Amman (Jordan) – During the conference “Ending Children’s Deprivation of Liberty in the Arab Region: From Data to Action”, Prof. Manfred Nowak presented the conclusions of the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty (2019), 30 January 2025. The GC Arab World relocated some of its outreach activities and meetings to Amman following a second round of Israeli military escalation in Lebanon.

FRONT LINE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

In response to escalating conflicts, ArMA established a **Vulnerable Graduates Internship Programme**, supporting graduates unable to return home due to war. Internships were completed with organisations including UNESCO, Global Network Initiative, Un Ponte Per, Broederlijk Delen and Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor.

In addition, across the 2024–25 cohort, 16 curricular internships were carried out in intergovernmental, governmental and civil society organisations. The Programme also introduced structured **stress-management and trauma-sensitive support mechanisms** for students and staff, including collaboration with Saint Joseph University’s Psychological Assistance Service and external experts.

ADVANCING A REGIONAL HUB AND INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Despite restricted mobility and persistent security risks, the 2024–2025 cycle reaffirmed ArMA’s role as a **multilingual, decentralised and innovative hub for human rights education in the Arab region**. Through adaptive delivery, strengthened thematic positioning and expanded regional outreach, the Programme continued to combine postgraduate education, research and capacity-building in highly constrained environments.

Looking ahead, priorities include reinforcing inter-regional cooperation, consolidating thematic units, strengthening alumni engagement and further decentralising activities to enhance sustainability in contexts of instability.



The Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Asia-Pacific

GC Asia-Pacific | APMA

People

Mike Hayes

Suphatmet Yunyasit

Fahmina Karim

Arinkorn Kittisirachad

Regional network

Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP) at Mahidol University, Thailand—coordinator

Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

Kathmandu School of Law, Nepal

Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Associate member

Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e, Timor-Leste

REGIONAL CONTEXT: CIVIC SPACE AND YOUTH MOBILISATION

In 2025, the human rights and democratisation landscape in the Asia-Pacific continues to be shaped by shrinking civic space, expanding authoritarian practices and recurring challenges to democratic governance. At the same time, youth-led movements, civil society initiatives and academic institutions remain important sites of resistance and renewal. It is within this complex regional context that APMA continues its work.

For fifteen years, the Programme has worked with young activists, human rights workers and researchers to strengthen their skills and knowledge across the region. For much of this period, education has taken place against a backdrop of closing civil society space and growing authoritarianism. While pressures on democracy and human rights occasionally ease, such moments are often temporary.

Over the past year, youth movements across the region have again challenged political systems perceived as unresponsive to younger generations. Large-scale protests in Indonesia, Bangladesh and Nepal reflected dissatisfaction with entrenched elites, corruption and underinvestment in public services, particularly education. Earlier initiatives, such as the Milk Tea Alliance in Myanmar, Thailand and Hong Kong, demonstrated the potential for cross-border youth solidarity, even where political outcomes remained limited. Youth activists were central drivers of the so-called “Gen Z revolutions” in Nepal and Bangladesh, with universities often serving as focal points for mobilisation. These movements reflect demands for political representation grounded in democratic values, justice and rights.

While APMA staff and partner universities were not directly involved in these mobilisations, **many students and alumni expressed support for the underlying demands**, and some engaged as citizens in their national contexts. These developments form part of the broader environment in which APMA operates and underscore the continued relevance of advanced human rights education in the Asia-Pacific.



On 8–9 July 2025, the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, with Thammasat University, SHAPE-SEA and other academic partners, organised the international hybrid conference Responding to a World in Disorder: Emerging Research in Rights, Politics and Sustainable Development. Students, researchers and stakeholders shared **research** on pressing challenges in Asia and beyond across politics, the environment, technology and society, while exploring effective responses to these evolving dynamics.

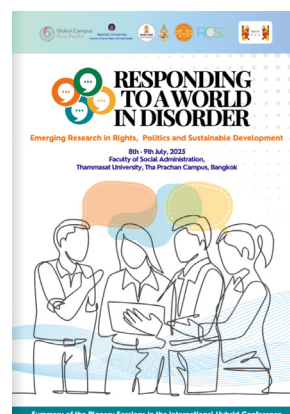
A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE COHORT

Within the 2024–25 cohort of 23 students, 18 identified as human rights defenders. Five students came from LGBTQ+ groups, and three from indigenous or minority communities. Students represented ten countries across the Asia-Pacific, including contexts characterised by illiberal democratic practices or authoritarian governance, such as Cambodia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Myanmar and China. This composition is intentional. In many countries across the region, **quality human rights education is either unavailable or financially inaccessible**. APMA scholarships are designed to address these barriers and ensure access for individuals working in challenging environments.

UPDATED LEARNING OUTCOMES

During the 2024–2025 academic cycle, the APMA curriculum underwent a formal review and was approved by the Thai Commission on Higher Education. The revision aligned the programme with the updated national framework structured around four core domains: Knowledge Domain, Skill Domain, Ethics Domain and Character Domain. The review also strengthened the integration of international human rights education standards, particularly the principle of education about, through and for human rights, ensuring that both teaching methods and learning outcomes reflect these pedagogical foundations.

Within this updated structure, the programme emphasises critical engagement with key concepts and theories of human rights and democratisation (Knowledge Domain), the capacity to conduct analytical research and propose innovative solutions to contemporary challenges (Skill Domain), the commitment to uphold human rights and democratic values in professional and community settings (Ethics Domain), and the ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders in promoting and protecting human rights and democracy (Character Domain).



ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

10 nationalities*

23 lecturers

9 curricular internship host organisations

397 participants across 15 outreach events

* As APMA lasts on average 1.5 years, the 2024–25 cohort of 23 students has not yet graduated



Bangkok (Thailand) – As part of its regional collaboration and stakeholder engagement activities, on 15 December 2025 the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies at Mahidol University organised the SHAPE-SEA Stakeholder Engagement Meeting in partnership with the **Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research & Education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia Programme (SHAPE-SEA)**. Launched in 2015, SHAPE-SEA is a regional initiative that strengthens human rights and peace research and education across Southeast Asia. Held in a World Café format, the meeting enabled participants to exchange experiences on the SHAPE-SEA research ecosystem—covering knowledge production, research capacity building and dissemination—and to contribute to shaping strategic priorities for SHAPE-SEA Phase 3 (2026–2028).



DUAL LEARNING PATHWAYS

APMA is designed around complementary learning objectives: students are expected to acquire a solid **grounding in international human rights law, democratic governance and political analysis**, while also developing **practical skills** applicable in professional contexts. These include advocacy strategies, research design, ethical data collection and policy-relevant analysis.

Experiential learning reinforces academic instruction. In 2025, students engaged with representatives from more than 20 organisations, including OHCHR, UNHCR and UNDP, as well as regional and international NGOs such as Amnesty International and Forum Asia. During the second semester, students visited National Human Rights Commissions in partner countries and met with senior legal and political actors, complemented by engagement with local NGOs working on disability rights, refugee protection and environmental justice.

Field trips and site visits provided an additional component, with a focus on environmental human rights through a field trip to the Gulf of Thailand, where students met coastal communities affected by **shoreline recession and ecosystem degradation**. The visit highlighted how climate impacts intersect with rights to livelihood, participation and access to information, and underscored the importance of integrating environmental dimensions into human rights analysis and practice. These experiences also revealed limited understanding within government and civil society of the relationship between human rights and the environment, and how the right to a clean environment remains insufficiently integrated into policy discussions.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGING PRIORITIES

The **environment, business and technology** have been identified as three areas requiring further curricular development. This evolution does not replace existing expertise in areas such as migration and conflict, which remain central to the region's human rights landscape. Rather, research priorities are adapting to new concerns. Students have increasingly explored topics such as **climate-induced migration, business and human rights in conflict settings**, and the impact of **extractive industries**, including rare earth mining, in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar.

Delivering quality human rights education on emerging topics presents challenges, particularly due to limited learning resources. GC Asia-Pacific has a strong background in human rights education and has trained hundreds of academics across the region.

Ensuring access to **updated textbooks and teaching guides** remains essential. Existing materials addressing environment and business are being revised, and work is underway on a new textbook on technology and human rights. While primarily aimed at undergraduate audiences, these resources also support APMA teaching.

Within the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, academics are expanding research on environmental human rights and developing courses for other programmes, including **online undergraduate initiatives for students in Myanmar**. **Alumni engagement** plays an important role in this work, with graduates increasingly serving as resource persons and mentors for current students.

ALUMNI IMPACT

The APMA alumni community now numbers approximately 300 individuals working across public institutions, civil society, academia and the private sector throughout the Asia-Pacific. Alumni are engaged in areas such as climate adaptation, environmental degradation in conflict zones, indigenous rights and labour protection. While APMA does not claim a major role in the broader youth movements in the region, **its graduates contribute to a growing critical mass of rights-based practitioners**.

As more alumni work across diverse sectors, human rights standards increasingly form part of everyday professional and community conversations. **Claiming rights, challenging discrimination and calling out exploitation** are becoming more widely accepted practices in societies where human rights were once viewed with suspicion. The APMA programme's emphasis on values-based education, grounded in strong legal and practical knowledge, continues to shape graduates who apply human rights principles in their daily work across the Asia-Pacific region.



Bangkok (Thailand) – The 2025 GC Asia-Pacific human rights advocacy week focussed on “Human Rights for Everyday Life”. Students organised campaigns and fair booths on what they believe are the three key concerns for young people today: mental health, digital freedom and climate justice. The climate justice team highlighted climate injustice by showing how environmental degradation disproportionately harms vulnerable communities and called for climate action grounded in human rights to ensure fair, inclusive mitigation and adaptation. 14 December 2025

THE GLOBAL CAMPUS COMES TOGETHER IN BANGKOK

The **Global Classroom 2025**, hosted and designed by the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP) at Mahidol University in Bangkok, offered a rare opportunity for students, alumni, faculty and representatives of the Global Campus Council and Academic Affairs Committee from all regional programmes to meet in person. Bringing together participants from more than 20 countries, the gathering created a shared space for cross-regional reflection and collaboration, demonstrating the **value of convening a geographically dispersed academic network** around common global challenges.

The 2025 edition focused on the **intersection of climate change, business activity and human rights**—areas where impacts increasingly transcend national borders. Participants were organised into **five cross-regional working groups** examining: exploitation in global supply chains; the human rights impact of extractive industries, including rare-earth mining; the global food industry; governance challenges linked to the technology sector and artificial intelligence; and abuses connected to the defence industry and conflict financing. Across these themes, discussions addressed structural imbalances between corporations and affected communities, persistent gaps in the enforcement of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the evolving recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

Preparatory online sessions with academics and practitioners preceded an intensive week of dialogue at Mahidol University, where regional experts provided insights on **climate impacts, corporate accountability and environmental governance** in Southeast Asia. A **field visit to Samut Sakhon Province** exposed participants to the realities of coastal erosion, flooding and labour exploitation in the fisheries sector, illustrating the interconnectedness of environmental degradation, migration and labour rights. The working groups then formulated concrete recommendations directed at states, businesses and civil society actors.

The projects culminated at the **International Civil Society Week 2025** co-hosted by CIVICUS and the Asia Democracy Network (ADN), where participants presented advocacy proposals ranging from AI governance frameworks and monitoring tools for critical minerals to campaigns supporting garment workers and community-based accountability mechanisms.

By placing academic research in dialogue with civil society practice, the Global Classroom strengthened advocacy capacities and reinforced the Global Campus network as a platform for coordinated, transnational engagement on complex human rights challenges.



 Global Campus
Asia-Pacific

Global Classroom 2025
Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies
Mahidol University, Thailand
27 Oct - 1 Nov 2025

**Business, the Environment
and Human Rights**

 Global Campus
Asia-Pacific  Global Campus
of Human Rights  Institute of Human Rights
and Peace Studies
Mahidol University  Funded by
the European Union



→ Bangkok (Thailand) – The Global Classroom 2025 took place from 27 October to 1st November 2025



The Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in the Caucasus

GC Caucasus | CES

People

Artur Ghazinyan
Vladimir Martirosyan
Kristine Gevorgyan
Lilit Mirzoyan
Arusyak Aleksanyan
Lilit Karapetyan
Mariam Muradyan

Regional network

Centre for European Studies at Yerevan State University, Armenia—coordinator
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia
American University in Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan
Moldova State University, Moldova

REGIONAL CONTEXT: CONFLICT, GEOPOLITICAL PRESSURE AND DEMOCRATIC STRAIN

In 2025, the human rights and democratisation landscape in the Caucasus and neighbouring regions was marked by deepening instability, conflict and democratic regression. The ongoing war in Ukraine continued to shape the regional security environment, while Armenia faced complex post-conflict challenges related to displacement, governance reform and social cohesion. Most significantly, Georgia experienced a pronounced deterioration in democratic standards: the adoption of repressive legislation, violent crackdowns on peaceful protests, sustained pressure on independent media and civil society, and arrests of opposition figures signalled a serious erosion of fundamental freedoms. These developments effectively stalled Georgia's EU integration process and raised international concern over the weakening of the rule of law. In Kyrgyzstan, adopted laws further restricted civic space, while economic and financial pressures across the region compounded political volatility.

It was within this highly constrained and volatile context that the Global Campus Caucasus programme continued its activities during the 2024–25 academic cycle. The Programme, which has operated under sustained disruption since 2020, required **ongoing adaptation to conflict-related and political challenges across the region**. In 2025, in addition to ongoing conflict-related insecurity, increasingly restrictive visa regimes across the consortium and new admission requirements for international students led to the continued use of **hybrid teaching formats**.

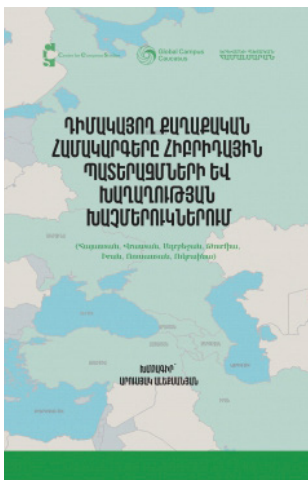
These conditions mirrored the realities faced by students and practitioners working in environments marked by shrinking civic space and political pressure, underscoring the continued relevance of regional cooperation and advanced human rights education.

ADDRESSING AI, ENVIRONMENT AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN 2025

In response to growing student interest and **emerging regional priorities**, two specialised seminars—Children's Rights and Environment and Human Rights—were introduced within the course *Theoretical Basics of Human Rights*. The seminars were delivered by both scholars and field experts. In addition, themes related to artificial intelligence and digitalisation were incorporated into several courses at Yerevan State University and partner institutions. These updates aimed to strengthen students' understanding of pressing environmental challenges, deepen knowledge of children's rights and address the growing impact of AI and digital technologies on society. As a result, approximately **20% of thesis topics focused on AI, digital rights and children's rights**.

BRIDGING EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Beyond running the GC Caucasus programme, the Centre for European Studies is actively engaged in both professional training and research activities. The Centre regularly delivers capacity-building programmes for practitioners—including civil servants, Penitentiary Service staff and personnel from the Ministry of Justice's Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Rehabilitation Programmes—focusing on the protection of refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons. It also organises seminars and training for students, public officials and civil society through initiatives such as DeHuRiS—the **Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Security**. In parallel, the Centre conducts research on democratic governance and human rights, including participation in the Redemos project, fostering dialogue between academia, institutions and society.



← Resilient Political Systems at the Crossroads of Hybrid Wars and Peace (YSU Press, 2024, in Armenian) compares the stability of Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran, Russia, and Ukraine via a composite stability index. It shows how wars, revolutions, and hybrid conflicts shape resilience, arguing that true regional stability requires not just strong institutions and economies but also political pluralism, social inclusion, and effective conflict management. An English version has been accepted by Routledge for publication.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

| | |
|-----|--|
| 18 | graduates |
| 10 | nationalities |
| 12 | curricular internship host organisations |
| 101 | participants |

in 6 training courses for civil servants

↓
Yerevan (Armenia) – The conference opened on 18 April 2025 with a keynote address by Raji Sourani (right), **Right Livelihood Laureate** and founder of the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, who highlighted the erosion of legal protections in conflict settings and called for stronger international accountability and solidarity. Pictured with Mariam Muradyan (left), Children’s Rights Expert of the GC Caucasus.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WARS, DISPLACEMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In April 2025, the Centre for European Studies at Yerevan State University hosted an international conference on conflict, displacement and human rights, organised in cooperation with the Global Campus, Maastricht University and Right Livelihood. The event brought together academics, practitioners, government representatives and civil society actors to examine the protection of human rights in situations of armed conflict and forced displacement, with a focus on humanitarian law and collaborative responses.

Discussions addressed a range of themes, including **human rights conditions in unrecognised states**, the legal status and socio-economic rights of **displaced** people from Nagorno-Karabakh, children’s experiences of displacement, political stability in contexts of **hybrid warfare** and cooperation between civil society and state institutions. Panels featured the **Child-War research project** on children’s rights in de facto states, a **child-led panel** titled “Our Rights, Our Stories”, and findings from the research project “Resilient Political Systems at the Crossroads of Hybrid Warfare and Peace,” comparing political systems in Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran, Russia and Ukraine.

The conference also explored issues of international legal responsibility, the international legal aspect of child protection in de facto states, the psychological impact of conflict on children, and the roles of local and international actors in protection and integration. It concluded with proposals for innovative policy approaches and a renewed commitment to strengthening humanitarian and human rights responses at regional and global levels.



STUDYING IN THE GC CAUCASUS PROGRAMME: A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

According to a student interviewed in 2025, who enrolled in the Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in the Caucasus after completing a bachelor's degree in political science, the Programme provided a valuable opportunity to connect local realities with global processes and articulate regional perspectives within international frameworks. In a context of regional instability and geopolitical pressure, studying human rights felt both relevant and necessary as **conflict, disinformation and political narratives** increasingly affected fundamental freedoms.

The student noted that the Programme offered **practical tools to analyse political realities** within legal frameworks, helping build credibility, responsibility and the capacity to contribute to safer public spaces and long-term institutional development. **Teaching methods were interactive and practice-oriented**: professors encouraged debate and critical thinking through case studies, group work and mock court exercises, while diverse student backgrounds enriched discussions across different national contexts. **Mobility and exchange** were also key components of the experience, including a semester in Moldova where she compared social and governmental systems between Moldova and Armenia, strengthening cross-regional understanding.



Yerevan (Armenia) – On 16–17 September, the Centre for European Studies hosted student thesis defenses, where research was presented on European integration, foreign policy, regional cooperation and human rights protection.

“CES is not just an academic qualification for me; it strengthened my passion for human rights protection and ignited my curiosity to explore emerging concerns such as business and human rights, particularly the accountability of extractive industries. The Programme grants me not only the knowledge and skills to become a formidable litigator but also a great advocate to serve the community.”

GC Caucasus alum*, 2024–2025 cohort



Yerevan (Armenia) – A standout moment of the day was the Child-Led Panel titled **“Our Rights, Our Stories”**, where young members of the Armenian Child Leadership Team (CLT) shared personal reflections on the impact of war on children, justice, identity and memory. Their moving testimonies earned standing ovations.

The Master of Arts in Human Rights and Sustainability in Central Asia

GC Central Asia | MAHRS

People

Anja Mihr

Cholpon Osmonalieva

Aiym Chotoeva

Victoria Orazova

Arianna Akmatova

Regional network

OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan—coordinator

Karaganda State University named after E. A. Buketov, Kazakhstan

KIMEP International University, Kazakhstan

American University in Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan

National University of Mongolia, Mongolia

University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Uzbekistan

Ala-Too International University, Kyrgyzstan

LEARNING AMID SECURITY AND REFORM TENSIONS

In 2025, Central Asia's geopolitical landscape has continued to be shaped by regional powers and multi-vector policies—particularly in human rights compliance and sustainability. While Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan have secured election to the UN Human Rights Council and contributed to global debates, other countries lag behind. Domestically, compliance with human rights standards and the SDGs remains challenging, with social mobility, fundamental freedoms, media independence, environmental protection and climate justice all at stake.

The Central Asia Master's Programme in Human Rights and Sustainability (MAHRS) at the OSCE Academy addresses these gaps. The Programme empowers young professionals across Central Asia to drive positive change and sustainable development, preparing them to tackle governance, sustainability, democracy and human rights challenges where reforms are shaped by competing security and development priorities.

GROWING THE MAHRS PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

The Programme expanded its regional and international network through new partnerships. Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan) and Kyungdong University Global (South Korea) signed Memoranda of Understanding with the OSCE Academy, opening prospects for exchanges starting in 2026. Partnerships with Green University in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and the Institute of Economy and Trade of TSUC Khujand (Tajikistan) are in progress. Ibn Haldun University in Istanbul has also joined the network and will host students from 2026. The Programme also strengthened its European **mobility** framework through new Erasmus+ agreements with the University of Valencia and the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration in Romania (SNSPA), complementing long-standing cooperation with Philipps University Marburg. These partnerships reinforced MAHRS' international dimension and expanded opportunities for mobility and cooperation.

→ Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) – In March 2025, the MAHRS programme received its first five-year international accreditation from the EdNet Accreditation Agency, in cooperation with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), recognising the quality and innovation of its interdisciplinary curriculum and strengthening academic standards in human rights education in Central Asia. The award was received by Dr Pal Dunay (left), OSCE Academy representative, and presented by Onolkan Umankulova (right), President of the EdNet Accreditation Agency.

CURRICULUM INNOVATION

During the 2024–25 academic cycle, MAHRS delivered a multidisciplinary curriculum combining international human rights law, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), research methods and regionally relevant sustainability themes. **New courses on international crimes, children's rights, arts and human rights, and climate justice** broadened the Programme's academic offer and strengthened links between theory and practice, enabling students to analyse governance, environmental challenges and social development from complementary legal, political and ethical perspectives.

The curriculum placed particular emphasis on environmental justice and its implications for **equitable development in Central Asia**. Through practical case studies and regional examples, students explored climate-related issues and the human rights impacts of environmental degradation. This interest was reflected in the selection of **final thesis topics** addressing the relationship between sustainability and human rights, as well as increased demand for supervision in this field.

Gender equality, children's rights, climate action and environmental justice remained key pillars of the Programme. Courses examined international and regional legal frameworks alongside lived experiences across Central Asia and Afghanistan, strengthening students' ability to analyse rights protection in complex social contexts. Looking ahead, MAHRS will further expand its interdisciplinary approach by integrating artificial intelligence into the curriculum through a forthcoming course on **cyber justice** and the SDGs, responding to the growing intersection of technology, governance and human rights.



ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

| | |
|----|--|
| 11 | graduates* |
| 7 | nationalities |
| 11 | curricular internship host organisations |
| 11 | research outputs |

* As MAHRS is 2-year programme, the 2023–25 cohort graduated in February 2026

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS OUTREACH

MAHRS strengthened its focus on children's rights through a series of educational and outreach initiatives aimed at students and younger audiences. A dedicated **Children's Rights Week** explored legal protections, advocacy strategies and practical approaches to safeguarding children's rights in Central Asia through interactive training led by regional and international experts.

Workshops at the OSCE Academy examined children's rights in practice and introduced child protection frameworks and challenges faced by vulnerable children, empowering participants with knowledge of their rights and engagement with support systems. Creative formats further enriched learning: a children's book club addressed themes of war and displacement, while an art- and reading-based workshop on self-expression encouraged discussion of identity, safety and well-being. Together, these activities combined legal education with experiential learning, promoting awareness and critical thinking on children's rights.

“How is it possible to create human rights education—a human rights programme—in Central Asia? It was so interesting, and so surprising, to have a programme like MAHRS in our region. The Global Campus exceeded my expectations: the programme was full of amazing people—my colleagues and my professors.”

GC Central Asia alum*, 2023–25 cohort



← Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) – Children's Rights workshop held in partnership with Right Livelihood and attended by 25 high school students, 15 February 2025



Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) – On 27 February 2025, as part of their official visit to the region, a delegation of Members of the European Parliament met MAHRS students for an interactive discussion on human rights and EU–Central Asia relations.



INSIDE THE MAHRS EXPERIENCE

According to a student, the Programme exceeded expectations by offering more than theoretical learning. Small class sizes enabled open discussion, equal participation and critical debate, while case studies and simulations helped students analyse policy decisions from a human rights perspective. Compared with large university settings, the learning environment allowed **closer interaction with professors and peers** and fostered meaningful academic engagement. **International exposure** formed an important part of the experience. Conferences, the Global Classroom (see page 22), an interactive session hosted by MAHRS with a representative of the German Embassy, and engagement with organisations such as the EU Delegation in Kyrgyzstan, the UN Office of the High Commissioner

for Human Rights Regional Branch in Bishkek and the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek connected classroom knowledge to real-world practice and expanded professional networks.

Studying human rights in the region shaped how the student understood the MAHRS' value. In societies where the field is not always well understood and opportunities can be limited, the degree provided practical knowledge of legal protections and how to respond when rights are violated. The student emphasised that the Programme builds **confidence and agency**, equipping graduates to navigate complex political environments.



Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) – Graduation ceremony of the 2023–25 cohort, 13 February 2025

The European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation

GC Europe | EMA

People

Thérèse Murphy
Orla Ní Cheallacháin
George Ulrich
Inge Zwart
Judit Villena Rodó
Chiara Altafin
Elisabetta Zennaro
Martina Urbinati
Stefania Saccarola

Regional network

University of Graz, Austria
University of Vienna, Austria
KU Leuven, Belgium
Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Belgium
Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria
University of Zagreb, Croatia
University of Cyprus, Cyprus
Masaryk University of Brno, Czech Republic
University of Southern Denmark / Danish Institute for Human Rights, Denmark
University of Tartu, Estonia
Åbo Akademi University, Finland
University of Helsinki, Finland
Université de Strasbourg, France
Université de Montpellier, France
Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany
University of Hamburg, Germany
Bundeswehr University Munich, Germany
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
Panteion University Athens, Greece
Eotvos Lorand University Budapest, Hungary
University of Galway, Ireland
University College Dublin, Ireland
University of Padua, Italy
Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy
University of Latvia, Latvia
University of Vilnius, Lithuania
Université du Luxembourg, Luxembourg
University of Malta, Malta
Maastricht University, the Netherlands
Utrecht University, the Netherlands
Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland
University of Coimbra, Portugal
New University of Lisbon, Portugal
University of Bucharest, Romania
Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain
University of Seville, Spain
Lund University, Sweden
Uppsala University, Sweden
University of Lucerne (Institute of Social Ethics), Switzerland
University of Nottingham, United Kingdom
Queen's University Belfast, United Kingdom

CONSOLIDATING QUALITY AND RECOGNITION

The European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA) remained a cornerstone of the Global Campus in 2025, combining rigorous academic training with strong professional preparation across a network of 43 universities. A very diverse cohort of students completed the first semester in Venice—taught by over 80 academics and practitioners—followed by supervised research and second semester placements across Europe, resulting in 73 graduates in September 2025.

A major milestone was the successful accreditation of the Programme without condition under the **European Approach for Joint Degrees**, carried out by EMA member Ruhr University Bochum. This achievement is a strong quality-assurance marker for the programme's academic standards and governance structures and supports wider recognition in countries applying the European approach. The final report by an independent panel of experts, highly commended the programme for the trusting relationship between the participating universities and the high level of commitment and dedication shown to the programme.



Deusto University's human rights journal Cuadernos Deusto de Derechos Humanos marked its 100th issue in 2025 with a trilingual volume on "**Human Rights: Achievements and Challenges**". The issue includes a chapter by EMA's Thérèse Murphy and Orla Ní Cheallacháin arguing that legal literacy is a core competence in human rights education, as well as pieces by EMA colleagues on corporate sustainability due diligence and child rights strategic litigation.

Cuadernos Deusto de
Derechos Humanos

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**Derechos humanos:
Logros y Desafíos**

Giza Eskubideak:
Lorpenak eta Erronkak

*Human Rights:
Achievements and Challenges*

Felipe Gómez Isa (Coord.)

Deusto
Instituto de Derechos Humanos
Deusto Group

STRENGTHENING RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC COOPERATION

Several steps were taken in the academic year 2024-25 to further develop a research branch of the EMA network, particularly in relation to the topic of postgraduate human rights education. Building on a research workshop on human rights education held in July 2024, work is being completed on a special issue dedicated to postgraduate human rights education across several EMA participating universities which is due for publication in late 2026.

In July 2025, a **joint GC Europe–University of Padua workshop** took place at the Human Rights Centre in Padua and brought together EMA directors, faculty and coordinators from related master's programmes to reflect on the **21st-century competencies of human rights graduates** and exchange best practices. The outcomes of this research process aim to inform the continued development of the EMA programme and support participating universities in strengthening their own postgraduate human rights teaching.



Padua (Italy) – Postgraduate human rights educators from EMA universities and practitioners discussed the competencies and skills needed by the next generation of human rights professionals, 30 June 2025.
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ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

| | |
|----|---|
| 71 | graduates |
| 31 | nationalities |
| 35 | EMA member universities hosting 2nd-semester students |
| 15 | paid internships awarded to top graduates |

THEORY MEETS PRACTICE:
THE NEW IN CONVERSATION WITH... SERIES

In Conversation With... is a new EMA initiative designed to create a space for **students to engage directly with senior practitioners** (including experienced alumni) to critically reflect on regional and global challenges in human rights practice. Speakers included professionals from the Council of Europe, EU institutions, National Human Rights Institutions and civil society. On 28 November 2025, the sixth session focused on EU foreign policy, human rights and good administration, featuring Olof Skoog, Deputy Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the European External Action Service and **EMA alumna Teresa Anjinho, European Ombudswoman**. Through an open and candid exchange, students explored the EU's role in promoting human rights and democratisation, and discussed the tensions between normative commitments, geopolitical interests and institutional accountability.

As a member of the first cohort of EMA (1997-98), Teresa recalled Antonio Papisca's (EMA founder) words describing students as "pioneers of human rights". She emphasised that "theory without action is empty, and action without theory is blind," a balance central to the educational approach of EMA. Reflecting on her current role, Teresa explained how the Ombudswoman supports citizens, organisations and businesses in navigating EU administration while identifying systemic problems and the value of soft-law instruments in affecting change. She also stressed the importance of humility, trust and empathy in public service, and the value of communication understood not only as speaking but also as listening. In times of polarisation and declining institutional trust, she argued, transparent decision-making and meaningful citizen participation are essential to safeguarding the credibility of European institutions and the democratic values they seek to uphold.



Venice (Italy) – In Conversation With (from left to right) Teresa Anjinho, Manfred Nowak, Olof Skoog and Orla Ní Cheallacháin, 28 November 2025



"Human rights education networks such as the Global Campus are essential to addressing the complex and urgent challenges we face today. They create a community of informed, engaged, and ethically grounded individuals who are ready to act for justice and human rights across borders. The Global Campus plays a particularly important role in cultivating the next generation of professionals who not only defend human dignity but who also think critically, work collaboratively, and understand the systemic nature of the problems ahead. Being part of this network shaped me profoundly. It made me a better human being, a better lawyer, and ultimately a better public servant. It gave me the intellectual tools and moral grounding to navigate demanding roles in public life, and later, to serve as European Ombudswoman."

Teresa Anjinho, European Ombudswoman and GC Europe (EMA) alumna, cohort 1998

"EU faces a challenging global landscape marked by the rise of autocracies. Yet there is also an opportunity: more countries than ever are seeking closer engagement with the EU, a sign that the EU has a role to play in ensuring the values underpinning human rights and democracy are protected across the world."

Olof Skoog — Deputy Secretary General for Political Affairs, European External Action Service

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ACTION: KOSOVO FIELD TRIP

The trip to Kosovo has been an annual highlight in the EMA programme for over twenty years. Organised to **emulate the experience of human rights field mission**, the trip draws together the diverse topics and themes studied in the first semester and is a unique opportunity for students to experience human rights work on the ground.



A social media post by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo), one of 60 visits to politicians and officials, international organisations, arts organisations, local NGOs and cultural heritage sites during the seven-day study visit.

"The Kosovo trip stands out as one of the most memorable and enriching academic field experiences of my academic journey. It was a unique blend of learning, fun, networking, and real-world exposure. The trip provided valuable insights through engaging discussions and visits, while also allowing us to connect more deeply with each other and the region."

GC Europe alum*, 2024–25 cohort



Venice (Italy) – The 15th edition of the EMA Human Rights Film Festival (12-13 December 2025) turned the Global Campus headquarters in Venice into a lively space dedicated to the right to play. Organised by GC Europe students, the festival—titled *Un, Due, Tre... Stella!*—placed children's perspectives at the centre, combining films, performances and intergenerational dialogue to explore play as a fundamental human right and a source of creativity and resilience.

LOOKING AHEAD: PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC CYCLE

EMA will update core elements of its curriculum to address emerging challenges, including AI governance, climate justice and contemporary conflicts. It will further strengthen its research dimension through annual workshops and joint publications, while broadening career-development opportunities and professional internships for students. At the same time, enhanced support measures—such as improved pre-arrival guidance, expanded scholarships and inclusion initiatives—aim to make the study experience more accessible and responsive to diverse student needs.



The Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Latin America and the Caribbean

LATMA | GC Latin America-Caribbean

People

Jorge Taiana
Héctor Mazzei
Marina Pecar
Verónica Gómez
Jorge Migliore
Diego López
Claudia Couso
Angel Zapata
Melina García Bartolini
Gabriela Ginzburg
Mariana Puerta
Melina Barreto
Carolina Scarfo
Augusto Trelles
Rocío Comas

Regional network

Centro Internacional de Estudios Políticos (CIEP) at the Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Argentina—coordinator
Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, Bolivia
Universidade Federal de Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil
Universidad de Chile, Chile
Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador
FLACSO, México
Universidad del Pacífico, Peru
Universidad Iberoamericana, Dominican Republic
Universidad de la República, Uruguay
Universidad Nacional de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Argentina
Universidad Nacional de Lanús, Argentina
Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Argentina
Universidad Nacional de Villa María, Argentina

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AMID DEMOCRATIC STRAIN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In 2025, the GC Latin America & Caribbean Master's programme served as a regional catalyst, fostering synergy among universities, NGOs, governments and intergovernmental bodies through education, capacity-building and outreach. It equipped students with skills in human rights policy, strategic litigation and advocacy amid emerging challenges such as climate crisis, AI and non-state actors, blending academic and experiential learning with interactions with state officials, NGOs and treaty bodies.



ALUMNI IMPACT

The LATMA alumni community now comprises 324 graduates from 29 countries working in academia, civil society, government and international organisations across the region. Recent career highlights include the appointments in Honduras of Heidi Alachán (2018–2019 cohort) as Undersecretary of Justice and Andrea Jessenia Gómez (2023–2024 cohort) as General Secretary of the Social Development Secretariat. At the regional level, María del Pilar Gutiérrez (2012 cohort) serves as Human Rights Specialist at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, coordinating individual cases.



Buenos Aires (Argentina) – LATMA students attend a lecture by Roberta Baggio, Professor of Law at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul and Global Campus Council Member, on the incorporation of international human rights law into the constitutional systems of Brazil and Colombia, 22 April 2025

CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

GC Latin America & Caribbean continued to support the professional development of public officials, activists and wider audiences through flexible online formats—initiatives that provided timely responses to emerging regional needs while strengthening links with institutional and social stakeholders. The MOOC on *Access to Justice for Persons with Mental Disabilities* reached more than 800 public defenders and related professionals from 16 countries, while an online course on the Design of International Cooperation Projects engaged 88 participants from 18 countries. Additional intensive courses addressed the relationship between cinema and human rights, human rights in education, and the right to care from a children's rights perspective. Together with outreach activities, these programmes equipped academic and professional communities with practical tools to address current challenges while ensuring a flexible learning offer capable of adapting to evolving regional realities.

Acceso a la Justicia de personas con discapacidad intelectual

Este curso identifica y examina los obstáculos que confrontan las personas con discapacidad intelectual en el ámbito de la justicia penal.



ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 20 | graduates |
| 9 | nationalities |
| 16 | specialised articles* |
| 645 | participants in online courses |

* These articles were published on [Diagonalciép](#), a Spanish-language online magazine and platform driven by UNSAM and CIEP that disseminates analysis and reflection on human rights and democracy in Latin America, fostering dialogue between academia and current affairs.

DIAGONALCIEP



Los actuales retos democráticos en América Latina

BUILDING REGIONAL CAPACITY ON AI GOVERNANCE

Artificial intelligence increasingly **shapes decision-making across political, economic and social life**. As highlighted by UNESCO, all stages of the AI lifecycle—from design and deployment to monitoring and termination—affect areas such as labour, healthcare, education, access to information, consumer protection, democracy and the rule of law. These developments require **systematic assessment through a human rights lens**, particularly regarding privacy, freedom of expression and non-discrimination, given the capacity of algorithms to reproduce existing biases and stereotypes.

AI technologies are also **transforming how children and young people learn, interpret information and understand the world**. They influence media literacy, autonomy and social interaction, while potentially challenging dignity, agency and self-perception. At this stage of technological development, **access to reliable, structured knowledge on legal frameworks**, policies and impacts—both regional and global—is essential for informed governance.

In response, GC Latin America & Caribbean established an **AI Observatory**, designed as an open repository of rules, practices and analyses addressing artificial intelligence and neurotechnology. The platform supports policymakers, academics, civil society and the private sector in assessing emerging challenges, promoting responsible innovation and advancing standards grounded in human rights principles.

The initiative is complemented by **new teaching activities within LATMA**, including seminars on

Science and Human Rights, Data Protection and Artificial Intelligence and Public Policies, as well as cross-cutting integration of AI topics into broader human rights courses. These academic components connect theoretical reflection with policy relevance and institutional practice.

Together, the Observatory and related educational activities strengthen regional capacity to conduct human rights impact assessments of AI systems, address risks to democratic processes—particularly in electoral contexts—analyse labour transformations, and support evidence-based public policy. By clarifying legal and ethical responsibilities of developers and users, the initiative contributes to shaping governance approaches that align technological innovation with human rights protection across Latin America and the Caribbean.

"I am the first in my family to attend university and, consequently, the first to have the opportunity to pursue postgraduate studies. I must emphasize that if I had had to cover the costs of my studies on my own, it would have been very difficult for me. I am deeply grateful for the scholarship and the opportunity it provided. I tried to enjoy my time at GC Latin America and make the most of it."

GC Latin America & Caribbean alum*, 2024–25 cohort. LATMA puts significant effort into selecting and supporting talented students who are the first in their families to attend university and who come from indigenous communities.

“How can we not take action? Or at least, how can we not try? In human rights, what other option do we have? There is always something to contribute, to do, to seek, and to change. I believe that a large part of our mission, if we have one, is that. The other is to see others and understand that we are part of the same, whether we think the same way or not: there is no choice but to coexist, to guarantee the full exercise of human rights for us and for others is essential to enjoy our lives.”

Soledad Vallejos — Co-Founder of the Ni Una Menos* movement and invited lecturer at the LATMA programme

* Ni Una Menos is a Latin American feminist movement that started in May 2015 in Argentina via Facebook, sparked by the femicide of 14-year-old Chiara Páez. Translating to "Not One [Woman] Less," it protests gender-based violence and femicide through mass marches, expanding regionally and influencing abortion legalisation in Argentina.



Every year after the thesis defences, a selection process identifies five outstanding works for inclusion in the “Collection of Distinguished Theses”. Following a joint editing process, five theses from each cohort are printed, published, and launched at the book fair.



Buenos Aires (Argentina) – Thesis authors Stefania del Valle Alberti and Rony Rosales Losely at the 49th International Book Fair of Buenos Aires (Feria Internacional del Libro de Buenos Aires), 9 May 2025

“I particularly valued the diversity of human rights-oriented subjects offered in Master's programme curriculum [...] as well as the high quality of most professors and students.”

GC Latin America & Caribbean alum*, 2024–2025 cohort



A proud LATMA graduate on her thesis about how rural women affected by Colombia's armed conflict navigate bureaucratic procedures to reclaim land—reflecting on how the research opened spaces for dialogue beyond administrative standardisation and deepened her understanding of the complex realities behind the guarantee of rights



Adelantar esta investigación en el marco de la Maestría me permitió generar *espacios de interlocución*, para comprender por fuera de la estandarización burocrática, trayectorias de vida que dan sentido al quehacer de lo público, comprendiendo en conjunto los elementos que complejizan el camino a una garantía de derechos integral.

El camino del retorno. Experiencias de mujeres rurales víctimas del conflicto armado en el proceso burocrático de ingreso al Registro de Tierras Despojadas y Abandonadas Forzosamente para el departamento del Cesar, Colombia

Laura Torres Cuenca
GC Awarded Thesis



The European Regional Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe

GC South East Europe | ERMA

People

Asim Mujkić

Marco Borraccetti

Mariana Hadzijasufovic

Alina Trkulja

Marija Ivanović

Nejira Pašić

Mileva Piričić

Regional network

Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina—coordinator

University of Bologna, Italy—coordinator

University of Graz, Austria

New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

University of Zagreb, Croatia

Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany

The University of the Peloponnese, Greece

University of Prishtina, Kosovo

University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, North Macedonia

University of Belgrade, Serbia

University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

University of Montenegro, Montenegro

25 YEARS OF HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

The European Regional Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe (ERMA) continues to be a transformative force in advancing human rights and democratisation across the region. With the University of Montenegro recently joining the network, ERMA now has 12 partner universities. The Programme was launched in Sarajevo in 2000, only four years after the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and amidst ongoing regional tensions. Since then, it has operated in a context marked by slow EU enlargement, political polarisation, governance challenges and recurring instability affecting democratic consolidation across the Western Balkans.

2025 marks an important milestone, as ERMA enters its 25th year of implementation. Over a quarter century, the Programme has built a **strong regional network of almost 700 alumni** who today shape policies, institutions and reconciliation efforts throughout South East Europe. Working across civil society, public administration, international organisations and academia, their expertise remains crucial in navigating the region's uncertain future through a commitment to democratic values and human rights protection.

"Soon marking its 25th anniversary, ERMA reaffirms the power of education to heal, to empower and to inspire. Its legacy is inscribed in the lives of its graduates and professors, and in the communities we continue to build and strengthen."

Anna Krasteva, New Bulgarian University
(GC South East Europe member)

"When I think about the future of the programme, ideally, ERMA continues to grow and inspire. I imagine ERMA in 25 years as a powerful mix of academic excellence, regional cooperation and serious activism. A growing network that remains authentic and reminds you that you are part of something bigger, something meaningful. Once an ERMA graduate, always an ERMA!"

GC South East Europe alum*, 2022–2023 cohort

CURRICULUM EVOLUTION

ERMA's curriculum provides in-depth knowledge of democracy and human rights grounded in the political and social dynamics of the Western Balkans. With a strong focus on European Union integration processes, the Programme prepares graduates to engage with **reforms shaping democratic transformation in the region**. Academic coursework, field research and internships encourage the application of theory in practical settings beyond the classroom.

In 2025, a comprehensive **curriculum revision** was completed following consultations with students, partner universities and Global Campus and EU strategic priorities. The new study programme will be implemented in the 2025–26 academic year to ensure teaching remains aligned with evolving regional challenges and international standards. New content includes the course *Peace and Human Rights* and thematic units on social justice and equality, politics of identity, artificial intelligence and human rights, EU integration, media freedom and disinformation, and peacebuilding in South East Europe. Students may also choose among three electives: children's rights, migration and human rights, and environmental rights and global challenges.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 – 2025

| | |
|----|--|
| 17 | graduates |
| 4 | nationalities |
| 17 | curricular internship host organisations |
| 38 | lecturers (11 ERMA alumni) |



The Centre for Development Evaluation and Social Science Research (CREDI), an independent, non-profit, non-partisan think tank promoting evidence-based policymaking in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans through high-quality evaluations and social science research, was one of the 17 organisations that hosted an ERMA student for a six-week internship in 2025. Internships remain a cornerstone of the programme, significantly contributing to students' professional readiness and long-term employability, and often lead to future employment, with several organisations recruiting ERMA graduates based on their performance during placement.

"The internship deepened my understanding of migration data and theories in a policy-relevant context. I received support in connecting with key state and international actors and guidance on methodological approaches that strengthened the analytical dimension of my research. I also worked on collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative migration data, learned about NGO coordination in the region, and attended a workshop on AI and modern technologies in migration. Overall, the experience helped me realise the applied dimension of the ERMA programme and expand my professional network."

GC South East Europe alum*, 2024–25 cohort



The Digital Self-Defence workshop in Sarajevo brought together 26 children to learn how to identify online risks, recognise misinformation, use privacy settings safely, and understand digital rights and responsible online behaviour.



CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE DIGITAL AND CLIMATE ERA

In 2025, children's rights were explored through artificial intelligence, digital safety and environmental justice. An online workshop on AI and Children showed how AI shapes everyday digital environments such as social media and educational platforms. The session explained how these systems function, highlighted risks including profiling, surveillance and harmful content, and discussed opportunities for ethical, rights-respecting technology use. By directly involving young participants, the initiative strengthened digital literacy and encouraged participation in debates on privacy and child protection. This focus was reinforced through a **Digital Self-Defence Workshop** held in Sarajevo. Through practical exercises, children and youth learned to recognise manipulation and misinformation, manage privacy settings and navigate online environments safely. Participants reported increased confidence in protecting their rights online, demonstrating the workshop's contribution to empowerment and digital resilience.

Children's rights were also addressed in relation to environmental change. An online **panel on the Rights of Future Generations** brought together alumni working on climate justice and human rights to examine how environmental degradation disproportionately affects children today and in the future, and how technological development can both support and undermine environmental goals. The discussion deepened understanding of emerging legal frameworks and highlighted the connection between climate governance, technology and the protection of children's rights.

ERMA ALUMNI NETWORK: ENGAGEMENT AND GROWTH

In 2025, the ERMA Alumni Network (EAN) strengthened coordination and engagement across its community. Communication and outreach expanded through events, thematic campaigns and sharing of professional opportunities, involving more than 150 alumni. Preparations also began for the Programme's **25th anniversary**, including a **commemorative monograph**, alongside the adoption of a new Strategic Plan for 2025–2028 to guide governance and long-term development in line with the GC vision.

EAN organised several discussions and networking initiatives. Online sessions included *PhD Day: Stories, Tips and Tricks*, presenting doctoral opportunities and experiences, and a discussion on protests in Serbia and their implications for democracy and human rights. The network also supported the promotion of an alumna's publication and facilitated in-person meetings in Sarajevo, as well as smaller gatherings in Skopje, Belgrade, Tirana and Brussels. Alumni continued contributing to the programme's academic dimension, delivering lectures and workshops. These activities strengthened knowledge exchange and reinforced the EAN's role in supporting professional development, peer connection and academic collaboration.

"It turned out to be one of the most transformative experiences of my academic career—so many doors opened to me thanks to ERMA. [...] I never received so much support and mentorship during my studies before—I felt seen, heard and guided throughout the programme."

GC South East Europe alum*, 2024–2025 cohort



Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) – Students of the ERMA programme visited the Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUDELBiH) in Sarajevo to discuss EU accession, political reforms and the Union's role in the country. The EU Delegation remains a close partner and supporter of the programme. 11 December 2025



Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) – Graduation ceremony of the 2024-25 cohort, 25 October 2025



LEVERAGING MULTI-REGIONAL SYNERGIES FOR RESEARCH

Chiara Altafin, Stefania Saccarola, Cristina Moras
Research Department

Cross- and inter-regional cooperation continued to mobilise expertise from multiple regions to address issues such as artificial intelligence, academic freedom, climate justice and democratic resilience. In 2025, this approach supported several joint research initiatives.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (AI4HR)

This five-year research project began in September 2024 under the leadership of the Global Campus Research Department, in collaboration with GC Europe (Venice) and GC Africa (Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria), and supported through the Right Livelihood partnership. The project also brings together partners from universities and research institutes across Europe, the Caucasus, Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, including Queen's University Belfast, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute at Lund University, University College Dublin, Adam Mickiewicz University, the Centre for European Studies at Yerevan State University and Kathmandu Law School.

The project aims to create an **AI for Human Rights Toolkit, focused on the positive potential** of AI for human rights rather than solely its risks. Designed with and for young people, the Toolkit is structured across three interconnected layers: the workplace, the higher education classroom and the high school setting, supporting rights-based engagement with AI in everyday contexts.



GLOBAL CAMPUS HUMAN RIGHTS JOURNAL (GCHRJ), VOL. 8, 2024

The volume includes two issues and 16 articles examining how human rights are contested and applied across contexts such as **migration, memory, power and resistance** in a fragmented global landscape.

“Volume 8 reflects the shifting landscape of human rights in a world marked by turbulence, contestation and resilience, showing how human rights discourse operates across diverse geographies and themes—from courts and constitutions to prisons, classrooms and borderlands. Human rights are always shaped by power, yet continually invoked by those demanding justice.”

Co-editors — Ravi Prakash Vyas, Chiara Altafin, Mariana Nicuta Hadzijušufovic

GLOBAL CAMPUS PREPAREDNESS BLOG

In 2025, the blog featured 50 posts across twelve thematic areas by contributors from all eight GC regions. It provides a space for ongoing reflection on how human rights frameworks respond to crises and emergencies. **Alumni regional correspondents** contributed new content following specialised online training delivered during the scheme's fourth edition.

Curated Series

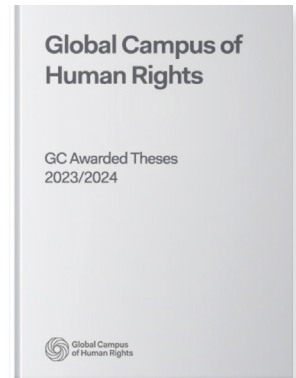


↑ One of the 2025 Curated Blog Series focused on safeguarding the mental health of human rights professionals, featuring seven posts written by EMA alumnae.

GLOBAL CAMPUS AWARDED THESES 2023–2024

The publication, developed across the Global Campus' eight regional master's programmes, highlights academic excellence and a strong commitment to critical inquiry. The selected theses addressed a wide range of pressing issues. Topics included generative AI and freedom of expression in Mexican elections; the human rights impact of plastic pollution in Kathmandu's riverside settlements; EU conflict-resolution strategies in Eastern Partnership countries; inheritance practices and women's socio-economic rights in Burundi; the securitisation of EU border policies in the Western Balkans; parental mediation and adolescents' opinion formation in Beirut; community participation in renewable energy policy in Central Asia; and the bureaucratic barriers faced by rural women affected by armed conflict in Colombia.

In September 2025, the **7th edition of the Global Campus Policy Observatory** was launched, involving eight policy analysts selected from the alumni community. In 2026, the Observatory will examine strategies used to curtail **academic freedom** across different contexts, while advancing a rights-based understanding of the concept at international, regional, national and institutional levels. The aim is to identify practical responses and policy-relevant recommendations.



Hebe Bourne · 1st
Business and Human Rights Senior Analyst
3mo · 🌐

Feels great to mark a milestone of graduating from my master's at the **Global Campus of Human Rights** a month ago in Venice! What an incredible year and a truly unique opportunity to study under leading professors and practitioners from around the world, each an expert in their field.

I am also very grateful to have had my thesis recognised as one of the Five Awarded Theses, titled: "Between the Lines: Subtle Media Discourse and the Normalisation of Anti-Migrant Sentiment in the Run Up to the United Kingdom 2024 Riots." This is a topic I feel very strongly about, and believe that critical awareness of how the most vulnerable in our society are depicted by the press is more important than ever. I analyse the feedback loop between the media, politics and far-right mobilisation, and attempt to underscore the societal consequences of normalised hostility, even in its more subtle or coded forms. Ultimately, it calls for greater accountability and ethical responsibility in the discourse on migration. It will be published in the coming months!

DIALOGUE ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN THE EU MIGRATION AND ASYLUM PACT

As a **member of the Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights of Frontex** (the European Border and Coast Guard Agency), the Global Campus hosted in Venice on 15 October 2025 a seminar on "Ensuring Fundamental Rights-Compliant Screening in the Context of the Implementation of the EU Migration and Asylum Pact." The event brought together representatives of EU institutions, Member States, National Human Rights Institutions, civil society organisations and Frontex to discuss how the new EU Screening Regulation can be implemented in line with international human rights standards. Discussions focused in particular on safeguards for vulnerable persons, independent monitoring mechanisms and the role of fundamental rights expertise in migration governance.

"Human rights education is essential to ensure that standards are embedded in real-world procedures and governance. This requires an interdisciplinary approach that encourages students—as the Global Campus does—to apply a human rights framework across areas such as budgeting, sustainability and technological development."

Jonas Grimheden — Fundamental Rights Officer (FRO), Frontex

STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES IN HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Adriano Remiddi, Vukašin Pajović, Larisa Barbu
Capacity Development Department

At the Global Campus, human rights education is viewed as both **a right and a catalyst for transformation**. Through the Capacity Development Programme, it is strengthened in key areas—focusing on universities in emerging democracies and challenged contexts—to build sustainable hubs for education, rights and inclusive development. In 2025, the programme expanded its thematic focus and geographic reach.

CLIMATE JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN MOLDOVA

A two-year EU-supported project with Moldova State University (USM) was concluded, strengthening the University's capacity in climate justice and human rights education through new curricula, targeted faculty training and enhanced interdisciplinary collaboration. Key achievements included two editions of the **European Cross-Regional Spring School on Climate Justice and Human Rights** and the establishment of the **JURIS Lab Research and Education on Human Rights and Sustainable Development**—a new platform for research and education on human rights and sustainable development—positioning USM as an emerging regional reference in this field.

“This project has shown how much can be achieved when academia, civil society and the EU work together around shared priorities. By connecting human rights and climate action, the team at Global Campus of Human Rights and Moldova State University has helped bring a fresh and much-needed perspective to Moldova’s green transition.”

Franciska Kirkegaard Flugt — Programme Officer for Green Transition and Environment, EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova



↑
Orhei (Chisinau, Moldova) – 2nd Cross-Regional Spring School on Climate Justice and Human Rights, 7 May 2025



↑
Chisinau, Moldova – GC Caucasus coordinator Kristine Gevorgyan (second from left) with USM Law Faculty scholars Rodica Ciobanu, Olga Baciu and Natalia Creciun, 28 June 2025

“This transformative programme allowed me to build connections across countries, expand my network, and discover how I can advocate more effectively for human rights – including my own.”

Joaquina — Participant of the Human Rights and People Diplomacy Training (DTP)

→

Dili (Timor Leste) – Proud graduates of the Diplomacy Training Program, affiliated to the University of New South Wales in Sydney and developed in collaboration with the Global Campus and National University of Timor-Leste (UNTL), 5 September 2025



HUQOOQ-E-PAKISTAN II PROGRAMME

In partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a consortium of Pakistani universities, the Global Campus supports a nationwide EU-funded initiative to advance human rights education. The programme provides technical support for establishing a **Human Rights Education Centre** in Lahore, developing curricula and teaching tools, and creating international mobility schemes for students and scholars.

→

Lahore, Pakistan – Academic Members of the project Academic Task Force (ATF) convene for the first time and elect co-chairs, 7 October 2025. The ATF advises on key educational programming for the nascent Centre and fosters inter-university cooperation



LOOKING AHEAD: ENGAGING WITH THE CARIBBEAN

While consolidating ongoing work in Pakistan, Moldova and Timor-Leste, the Global Campus will further expand its engagement in the Caribbean. **A new partnership with the University of Belize and the Delegation of the European Union to Jamaica, Belize, and The Bahamas**, supports the development of human rights education as a specialised academic area within one of the region's youngest universities. Through training-of-trainers activities, peer-to-peer exchange and the sharing of good practices, the collaboration aims to strengthen institutional capacity, contribute to more just and inclusive societies, and support the University's prospective membership in the GC network.

CO-CREATING THE FUTURE WITH CHILDREN IN A CONNECTED WORLD

Barbara Strasser, John Paul Amah, Manu Krishan
Children's Rights Department*

In January 2022, children from nine countries across five regions gathered for the first Global Campus child-led conference on mental health. On the final day, Christofer (12), a participant from Colombia, made a plea for 'more opportunities for children around the world to come together, discuss freely among ourselves and with adults, and share what we think.' The conference led to the creation of the Global Campus Child Leadership Team (CLT). Now involving **over 120 children from 24 countries**, the CLT contributes to research, co-designs learning materials and leads dialogues on topics including **climate justice, violence prevention, drug policy impacts on children and digital wellbeing**. Their participation has also shaped new initiatives across the network, particularly on AI and children's rights.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

The **AI4HR** project (see page 44) comprises a high-school component—created with and for children—that aims to equip young people to use AI tools in ways that enhance, rather than compromise, their rights. In South East Europe, a CLT-initiated project on cyberbullying has led to regional training activities for university students and children, alongside research on gender-based digital violence.

Across the Asia-Pacific region, researchers in eight countries are completing a study on AI's impact on human rights education. Their forthcoming publication examines opportunities and risks in classrooms shaped by digital technologies. In the Arab World, a regional project on AI and the right to education is advancing despite contextual challenges. Work is also underway to develop child-friendly Arabic-language materials on AI to improve accessibility for non-English speakers. Latin America's AI Observatory is building a repository of rules, practices and information for policymakers, academics, the private sector and civil society. One objective promotes child participation through national human rights institutions and schools, engaging children in examining how AI systems are governed.



At the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, GC Central Asia launched the 'My Rights' Reels Contest to engage teenagers in children's rights awareness.

* The Children's Rights Department—through a long-term partnership between the Global Campus and Right Livelihood—supports children's rights activities within the GC network. It works in close collaboration with Child Rights experts and focal points across the Global Campus, amplifying regional expertise and perspectives to advance children's rights.

“Human Rights Education is supremely important. Among other things, what the International Court of Justice made crystal clear is that the climate crisis is also a human rights crisis. Several of the core human rights have of course already been violated as a result of man-made climate disruption. Thus, human rights education must form one of the central components of any contemporary climate justice curriculum.”

Julian Agoun — Guam. 2025 Right Livelihood Laureate



SHAPING GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUES: THE 5TH WORLD CONGRESS ON JUSTICE WITH CHILDREN

As part of the steering committee, the Global Campus hosted the international plenary on digital justice in Madrid, moderated by a child. The GC also contributed to discussions on **AI and children's rights** at the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The initiative further examines how digital tools can both support and hinder children's meaningful participation in decisions affecting them.



ONLINE LEARNING TOOLS

This work is supported by global learning tools. Nearly 1,500 participants enrolled in the **GC MOOC on a Human Rights-Based Approach to AI**, accompanied by micro-learning modules and a podcast series on participation, accountability and non-discrimination. Youth testimonies in the MOOC underline the urgency of addressing AI and social media impacts.



“It’s extremely difficult to differentiate your own thoughts from the ones of the computers or the biased misinformation circulated through the AI algorithms. And the teens’ activities on social media platforms are fed into the AI algorithms, they’re regenerated and spread everywhere without the correct consent or awareness of the teens.”

Chloe Seoyeon Lee — speaker in the MOOC *A Human Rights-Based Approach to AI, Encode Justice* (South Korea), on the impact of AI-driven social media on the rights of children and youth.

Beyond the topic of AI, child rights initiatives across the Global Campus network address climate justice, child-centred justice, violence prevention, children’s mental health, access to education and more.

The Global Campus aims to **develop each initiative not only for children, but with them**—a commitment that reflects the vision guiding our partnership with Right Livelihood: to create a **‘network in action’** which

connects scholars and educators with children and youth-led movements, translating schools of thought into schools of action. In this network, children’s perspectives continue to challenge assumptions, reveal blind spots and inspire solutions that uphold dignity and rights for all.

AMPLIFYING IMPACT: PARTNERING WITH RIGHT LIVELIHOOD LAUREATES

EDUCATION WITH RIGHT LIVELIHOOD LAUREATES: CONNECTING ACTIVISM, ACADEMIA AND ACTION

Education is understood as a **shared process of learning, inspiration and empowerment**—one that connects academic knowledge with lived experience and supports meaningful social change. Through the long-term partnership between the Global Campus and Right Livelihood on children's rights, launched in 2019, this approach has been strengthened by **placing human rights education in direct dialogue with the work of Right Livelihood Laureates**, with particular attention to children's rights and other pressing global challenges.

By linking Laureates with the GC network of universities, scholars, practitioners, students and graduates, the collaboration—facilitated by the GC Children's Rights Department—creates spaces where activism and academia inform one another. Laureates share their insights through a wide range of educational formats, including **lectures, seminars, webinars, MOOCs and training activities**. These exchanges help translate grassroots struggles, community-based solutions and long-term advocacy into accessible learning experiences for diverse audiences.

Beyond formal teaching, the Global Campus–Right Livelihood partnership has also led to the co-creation of **toolkits, publications and educational resources** developed together with Laureates and GC alumni from different regions and disciplines. Students play an active role in this ecosystem, engaging with Laureates' work through their **master's theses**, receiving **mentorship** during their studies and, in some cases, continuing their learning through **internships** or collaboration after graduation. In this way, the partnership not only disseminates knowledge but also nurtures a new generation of human rights professionals able to connect research, practice and advocacy.

Right Livelihood



Right Livelihood, a key Global Campus partner, has for over 40 years supported and honoured individuals and initiatives worldwide working on practical solutions to human rights, environmental and social justice challenges through the Right Livelihood Award.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ROOMS | SUDAN 2025 RIGHT LIVELIHOOD LAUREATE

“I want to extend my deepest gratitude for the commitment the Global Campus brings to the struggle for justice, dignity, and human rights. Your work reminds us that even in the most difficult moments whether in Sudan or in any part of the world there are communities of people who refuse to accept silence, indifference, or oppression as the final word. The knowledge you build, the debates you host, and the solidarity you foster all contribute to protecting those whose voices are at risk of being erased by conflict or authoritarian power. Your dedication gives strength to frontline actors like us. When you amplify our stories, challenge harmful narratives, and hold space for honest reflection, you help create a global ecosystem where human rights defenders are not isolated but supported.”

Alsanosi Adam — External Communications Officer

“Human rights education in technology centers on a crucial shift from digital literacy to digital competence. In Taiwan, where broadband access is a human right, we believe that education must go beyond teaching citizens to be passive, literate consumers of content—mere readers of the internet. Instead, we focus on competence, which empowers individuals to become producers, fact-checkers, and co-creators of the digital landscape. True human rights education in this field means giving people the tools to access information and shape it, ensuring that technology serves as a space for civic participation rather than algorithmic consumption.”

Audrey Tang | Taiwan — 2025 Right Livelihood Laureate



↑ Recent GC Europe (EMA) graduate Vitória Viana Assis, from Brazil, recipient of the 2024–25 Global Campus–Right Livelihood Fellowship, conducted her thesis research with Right Livelihood Laureate Marthe Wandou and her organisation ALDEPA. Vitória explored how art and inclusive education can empower children and persons with disabilities, drawing on her experience with creative and human rights-focused initiatives. Guided by the CRC and CRPD, her thesis examined how artistic inclusion fosters participation and expression. During this period, she also benefited from the guidance of ShareMusic & Performing Arts in Sweden and academic supervision from Dr. Ajda Hedžet (University of Ljubljana).



AFGHAN GIRLS: STORY OF RESILIENCE

Dreams for Education and a Brighter Future



Global Campus alumnae Rosita Sekandari and Rokhsar Sadat launched a 2025 online education programme for Afghan girls affected by Taliban restrictions, attracting hundreds of applicants and offering training, mentorship and university-application support. The initiative opened with a session featuring Right Livelihood Laureate Sima Samar, who encouraged participants and highlighted education as essential for sustaining civil society in Afghanistan.

JUSTICE FOR MYANMAR 2025 RIGHT LIVELIHOOD LAUREATE

“Around the world, we are witnessing the resurgence of authoritarianism, digital repression, transnational organised crime and impunity for grave human rights violations. These challenges are interconnected and urgent. From Palestine to Ukraine, East Turkistan to South Sudan, conflicts are increasingly fuelled by opaque financial networks, disinformation and the complicity of global corporations. One of the greatest challenges ahead is ensuring accountability in a world where perpetrators can operate across borders with ease. For example, Russia, China, India and Belarus are the Myanmar military’s partners in crime, funding and arming its atrocities while supporting its sham election. Educational programmes like yours play a vital role by creating spaces where students and practitioners can amplify people’s voices, learn from each other, share strategies and build solidarity across regions.”

Yadanar Maung — Spokesperson

A YEAR OF EMPOWERING DEFENDERS FOR TODAY'S CHALLENGES

Alberta Rocca, Elena Battaglia, Sara Brogliato, Larisa Barbu
Training and Project Department

“A vision is needed that the world is worth fighting for. We need to rethink the way the world works now. So how do we change minds? A change in feelings changes minds.”


Brian Eno — English musician, composer, record producer and visual artist
at the Grantham Institute Annual Lecture at Imperial College London, 23 November 2022

In 2025, amid rapid technological innovation and escalating global challenges, the Global Campus Training and Project Department strengthened its commitment to preparing human rights defenders to navigate the future through a human rights lens. The diverse training portfolio, including in-person programmes, practical workshops and online modules, offered a **comprehensive learning pathway**, building **advocacy skills** while fostering self-care, protection and a **sense of community**.

In what EU Vice-President Kaja Kallas has called a “geopolitical information battleground,” the trainings provided a space where human rights advocates could both contribute and learn from one another. Central to this mission is safeguarding the networking that naturally arises within the programmes, fostering dialogue, collaboration and peer support. This approach has proven effective, with many participants joining through word of mouth and alumni recommendations. Recognising that a strong community of human rights defenders requires attentive individual support, the programmes emphasise **self-care, empathy and mutual care**. Participants are encouraged to embrace intersectionality, share experiences and reflect on the challenges they face in their work, strengthening self-awareness and resilience.

→

Venice, Italy – Mohammad Shafi Karimi (left), an Afghan journalist focused on defending human rights by amplifying the voices of marginalised communities, with fellow participants at the 2025 Venice School for Human Rights Defenders, 18 June 2025

 **Shafi Karimi** is in Venice · Follow
June 21, 2025 · 🌐

As a Sakharov Fellow, I had the privilege of attending the Venice School of Human Rights at the Global Campus of Human Rights in Venice, Italy, over the past week. Alongside a diverse group of human rights defenders from around the world, we engaged in intensive discussions, workshops, and training sessions focused on the most pressing human rights challenges of our time.

It was an inspiring and enriching experience that deepened our collective understanding of international human rights mechanisms, advocacy strategies, and the importance of solidarity across borders. I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn from both leading experts and my fellow participants, whose courage and commitment continue to motivate my own work.

[Global Campus of Human Rights](#)
[European Parliament](#)

Guided by the themes of **artificial intelligence** and **environmental justice**, the 2025 curricula focused on equipping defenders with digital literacy, media awareness and critical thinking. Participants learned to counter misinformation, disinformation and AI-generated deepfakes—tools essential for defending democracy, transparency and the rule of law in today's information landscape.

The **summer schools** illustrated how creative approaches can support advocacy. EMA alumnus Thomas Coombes (Hope-Based Communications) demonstrated how storytelling can shift engagement **from fear to hope**. Emma Lawrance (Climate Cares Centre, Imperial College London) explored the links between climate change, **mental health** and community resilience. Kelly Matheson (Our Children's Trust) examined **youth-led climate litigation** and video advocacy, while filmmaker Sheena Sumaria, through her documentary *The Fisherman and the Banker*, prompted discussion on community resistance, **global finance** and dignity in confronting injustice.



Trainings for legal practitioners addressed the intersection of technology, environment and human rights. During the 11th CEDU course (a specialised Italian-language training course on the European Convention on Human Rights for legal practitioners), President Mathias Guyomar of the European Court of Human Rights discussed the landmark *Verein Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz v. Switzerland* ruling, recognising climate change as an immediate threat to fundamental rights. Judge Anna Adamska-Gallant further examined the impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, freedom of expression and the rule of law.

The Department also hosted the 5th Online **Training for International Electoral Observers**, focusing on election integrity in the digital era. Experts Armin Rabitsch, Alice Colombi and Ronan McDermott examined challenges such as deepfakes, disinformation and AI-driven manipulation, while representatives from EEAS, FPI, ODIHR and The Carter Center provided insights into observation practice and policy.

Looking ahead to 2026, the Department will further integrate AI ethics, technology literacy, business and human rights, and climate advocacy into its curricula, combining creative storytelling, legal analysis and digital delivery to maintain accessible and impactful training for human rights defenders worldwide.



Venice, Italy – Participants of the training on the European Convention on Human Rights, 5 April 2025. The course brought together 59 Italian legal practitioners, inspired by discussions with the President of the European Court of Human Rights and other judges on the most recent rulings.



Venice, Italy – Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights and Advocacy participants, 3 September 2025.

Marking the course's 20th anniversary, the School continues empowering generations of advocates in visual storytelling through lectures, workshops and Venice International Film Festival screenings. Voices from diverse world regions connected and learned together, showcasing diversity's power and networking impact.



ACTING ON CLIMATE CHANGE BECAUSE YouCARE

Angela Melchiorre, Weronika Grelow, Daniela La Mattina, Giacomo Ottonello
E-learning Department

The future. Children are the future, people say. No, children are here and now. And so are their rights. If navigating the future requires a human rights lens, it all the more requires a children's rights lens. Even better, an inter-generational lens. And where is it more appropriate if not in dealing with the triple planetary crisis, one that builds on the past, grows in the present and threatens the future?

The **impact of climate change** has been discussed from many angles and when it comes to **children's rights** has often taken the form of encouraging environmental education or – equally often, bar some exceptions – tokenistic participation of children in decision-making processes. This is all good, but the reality is that deeper awareness is necessary.

While there is a wealth of knowledge, resources and activities on the educational aspect of climate activism, less attention is devoted to **the consequences of climate change for education** and, in particular, on **education as a human/children's right**. Yet, this link is crucial for a more holistic vision of child participation in these matters: there cannot be any education-based activism on climate change if the right to education itself is negated or violated through climate change.

THE YouCARE LAB AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

This is why *Climate Change and the Right to Education Lab for Youth – YouCARE* was created: a series of activities to **empower members of the Child Leadership Team (CLT) and Youth Advisory Group (YAG)** to learn about, document and act on the risks, barriers and impacts of climate change on their right to education. The initiative brought together 20 children and young people—representing peers from Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caucasus, Southeast Europe and the Arab World—and created a space to listen to their perspectives, engage in action-oriented exchanges and support their awareness and motivation to act.

The Lab functioned not only as a platform to reflect on challenges faced by affected communities and possible responses, but also as an opportunity for reciprocal learning about different impacts and shared responsibilities in defending both the planet and human rights, particularly the right to education.

→

Madi, the cost of water

Madi means water in Tshivenda and blood in Setswana, symbolising the struggle to get water many African girls face because of climate change.

By YouCare participant and GC Youth Advisory Group member Azwikonisaho Ramavhuya, South Africa, reflecting how daily water collection keeps girls out of school and learning.

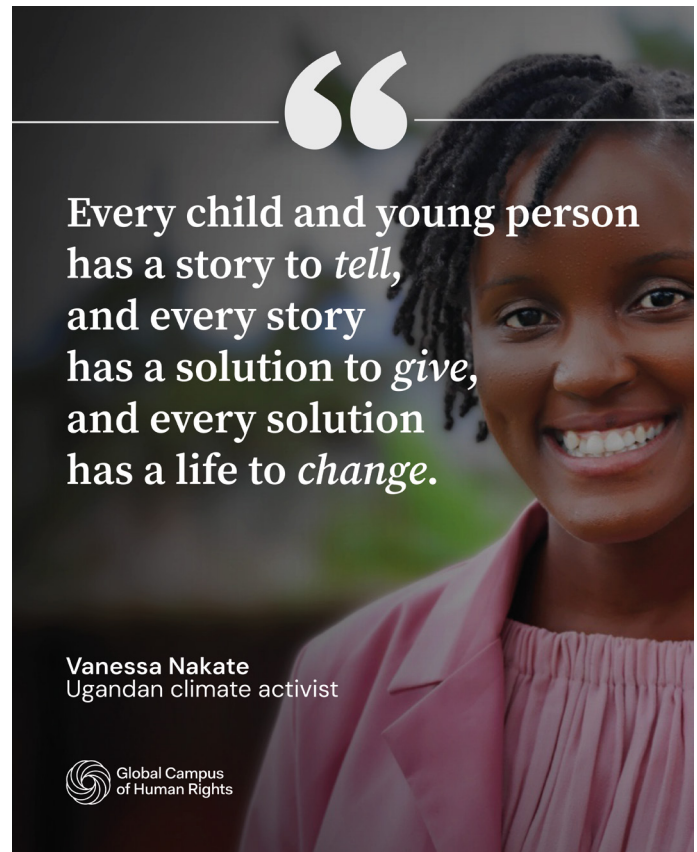


LEARNING THROUGH MENTORSHIP AND COLLABORATION

By sharing knowledge and offering training through 4 online workshops rich in examples and real-life case studies, YouCARE Lab participants learnt about **Information, Documentation, Empowerment and Advocacy**. Throughout this journey they were accompanied by Delphine Dorsi (RTE) and a group of incredible speakers: Laure Abado (Save the Children), Isabelle Kolebinov (CRIN), Vanessa Nakate (climate justice activist), Jonas Schubert (Terre des Hommes) and representatives of Mother Nature Cambodia (Right Livelihood Laureate 2023). The fact that these experts all praised the project for its timing and focus, and were immediately enthusiastic to be part of it, is a source of immense pride, especially as they were all impressed by the Global Campus' decision to develop the project with children by design and not as an afterthought. The very positive feedback by participants is also encouraging for the future, not only in terms of continuation but also change.

The YouCARE Lab will continue in 2026 with participants co-designing a virtual photo exhibition, a digital monitoring guide and a community-based advocacy campaign, all aimed at reinforcing applied learning and local action.

Because children are not just affected by the climate crisis; they are actually **leading the call for justice and action**. They are telling us that a just and equitable future means ensuring that no voice is left behind and recognising children as powerful agents of change.



Vanessa Nakate is an Environmentalist and co-founder of Tard Foundation. She is the author of *A Bigger Picture*, a Unicef Goodwill Ambassador, and a member of the board of Malala Fund and Global Witness. The University of Edinburgh awarded her the Doctor of Science in Social Science honorary degree. She is currently reading for the Master of Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford.

“I plan to bring what I learned into the Children's Parliament in my city by starting conversations about how climate change affects children's right to education, and by pushing for ideas that protect both our environment and our future. I want to make sure young voices are heard when it comes to justice, accountability and change.”

YouCARE participant in the final evaluation

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN EXILE: CONFRONTING LOSS AND ENABLING TRANSFORMATION

Imke Steimann, Julia Runte, Giada Ferrarese
Office of the Secretary General

Across Global Campus regions and activities, we increasingly observe attempts by state actors to undermine human rights education, research and activism. Navigating the future therefore also means operating in increasingly restrictive environments for human rights work. The **Reconceptualising Exile** programme, jointly implemented by the Global Campus and Right Livelihood, has responded to the emerging reality of exile for human rights defenders (HRDs) from different countries and professional backgrounds. The four-year programme (2022–2026) provides individual support to exiled HRDs, builds a transnational network and captures key lessons through research.

Research formed the core focus in 2025. What does exile mean for human rights defenders? How do intersectional factors impact the exile experience? To what extent do current geopolitical trends and a rise in authoritarianism shape exile? How can activism and human rights work effectively be continued in exile? How can narratives of exile be changed to introduce opportunities for transformation?

A research workshop held in Berlin in April with human rights defenders participating in the Fellowship Programme mapped further questions and approaches to the topic of exile at both conceptual and experiential levels.

This workshop also hosted two research consultants from the GC Arab World network who started working on a **report analysing lived experiences of HRDs in exile** and identifying emerging approaches to sustaining activism, including recommendations. In parallel, preparation started on an **edited volume** to be published in 2026 bringing together academic and activist perspectives from different regions and disciplines.

To sustain and amplify the Fellows' work, two additional components were introduced. A documentary by award-winning documentarian and Fellow Askold Kurov captures the journeys, impact and resilience of the Fellows and preserves their experiences as a historical record. **Small project grants for the 2025–2026 academic year support Fellows** in re-establishing their activities in exile—for example, registering an organisation relocated from Afghanistan to the United States, and developing online human rights tutorials for the Myanmar human rights community in exile and in-country. These grants also contribute to the Fellows' long-term strategic planning through sustainable and continued engagement.

The programme will conclude in 2026 with dissemination of findings through the research report and edited volume, offering a comprehensive analysis of the meaning of “reconceptualising exile” and approaches to sustaining activism abroad. The results will also be developed into a micro-learning course, created jointly with the E-learning Department, to provide an accessible resource for human rights defenders facing the possibility or reality of exile. Together, these outputs aim to expand the programme's impact and inform future strategies for supporting HRDs in exile.



→
Berlin (Germany) –
Fellows and project team kick off
the research component of the
Reconceptualising Exile Programme,
with documentarian Askold Kurov,
April 2025

THE GLOBAL CAMPUS ALUMNI COMMUNITY

Manuela Pegoraro, Hazem Mizyed Global Campus Alumni (GCA)

In 2025, the Global Campus Alumni (GCA) network continued to support and empower emerging human rights professionals as they build meaningful careers across regions and sectors. Through targeted initiatives—including the Global Internship Programme for outstanding graduates of the 2024–25 cohort, career orientation and mentoring opportunities, and dedicated digital spaces for exchange—we invested in alumni professional development while strengthening connections across our global network.

A new milestone was the launch of **alumni-led cross-regional projects**. A call open to all graduates invited proposals on topics of their choice, resulting in a remarkably high quality of submissions. Many projects addressed pressing issues such as children's rights, digital rights and climate justice. Among the **supported initiatives** were:

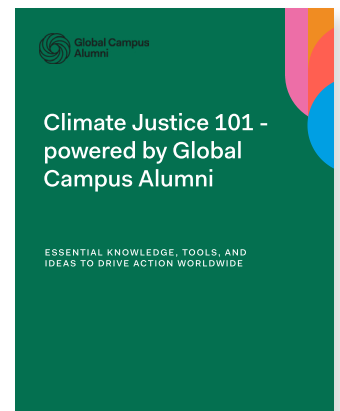
- The *Digital Security Primer for Human Rights Activists*, providing practical guidance on privacy and collective resistance to surveillance.
- A *Policy Report on Children's Rights in Digitalised Societies in Times of Conflict*, examining how digitalisation and conflict in Southeast Asia and the Arab World intersect to endanger children's rights and calling for more inclusive protection frameworks.
- *Speaking Truth to Power: A Testimony-Based Solidarity Toolkit on Palestine*, providing survivor testimonials and advocacy resources developed with Right Livelihood Laureates to support rights-based solidarity and counter anti-Palestinian erasure.
- *Climate Displacement and Human Rights in Kyrgyzstan*, documenting rights violations linked to floods and displacement and recommending participatory disaster planning.
- *Global Traces of Ecofeminism*, connecting women activists across five countries to demonstrate how ecofeminist approaches strengthen resilience and care-based alternatives.
- A Toolkit for Parents, Professionals and Decision-Makers, offering practical guidance on early identification, intervention and educational rights for children with developmental delays and disabilities, and promoting inclusive support pathways in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

Looking ahead to 2026, GCA will launch the **Alumni Upskilling Series**, offering five introductory workshops on cross-cutting skills for human rights professionals. Responding to the growing intersection of human rights with strategy, finance, business operations, media intelligence and evaluation, the series will equip participants with practical tools for today's evolving professional landscape.

Also in 2026, the first edition of *Global Campus Alumni Stories – Many Paths, One Commitment to Human Rights* will be published, presenting a collection of alumni journeys and reflections that highlight the diversity, impact and continued engagement of more than 4,600 graduates worldwide.



Climate Justice 101, a toolkit by Global Campus Alumni, introduces key concepts such as climate justice, intergenerational equity and the rights of nature through an accessible guide, while showcasing alumni-led initiatives across regions. It highlights the links between human rights and climate action, promoting participatory, cross-regional and community-driven approaches.



A photo from **Children of the River**, a photobook capturing the lived realities of children in flood-affected Sirajganj, Bangladesh, based on a research project led by a cross-regional alumni team. Photo by Shobhajit Chowdhury, APMA alumnus



COMPASS FOR CHANGE: ARTS, SPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Elisa Aquino, Isotta Esposito, Carlotta Brunetta, Gaia Balbo, Samuele Schiavon
Communications Department

“It’s thrilling to showcase the Paralympic movement at the Global Campus, where universities unite to promote human rights still trampled in too many places. This moment inspires hope: we must fight to achieve rights where they’re absent and defend them where they exist. It’s a battle of civilization requiring shared enthusiasm and strength.”

Davide Giorgi — President of the Veneto Paralympic Committee

In 2025, the Global Campus continued to develop cross-sector initiatives linking human rights education with arts, sport and strategic partnerships. These activities aimed to expand outreach beyond academic environments, foster inclusive narratives and connect human rights principles with everyday experiences.

DIALOGUE AT THE INTERSECTION OF SPORT AND EDUCATION

On 8 April 2025, the Global Campus hosted the 8th online **GC Conversation**, titled **“The importance of education and sports to embrace peace at the local and international level”**, organised in connection with the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (#IDSDP2025). The discussion brought together representatives from local authorities, EU institutions, academic institutions and international organisations, including the Centre for Sports and Human Rights, the

Milano Cortina 2026 Foundation, UEFA and student representatives from the European Master’s Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA).

The exchange highlighted how **sport and education can contribute to peacebuilding**, inclusion, environmental responsibility and institutional accountability. It also opened avenues for structured cooperation in communication campaigns, research initiatives and joint educational activities, particularly on themes such as environmental sustainability, technology, disability rights and inclusive participation.

Concrete follow-up steps included exploring collaboration with the Centre for Sports and Human Rights in education, research and advocacy; developing joint initiatives on disability rights in engagement with Paralympic institutions at international, European and national levels; and consolidating existing arts and sport recognitions into a unified framework of Annual Joint Awards on Sports, Arts and Human Rights.



Venice, Italy – Global Campus Sports, Arts, Peace & Human Rights Award presented to Paralympic athlete Francesca Tarantello by Davide Giorgi, President of the Veneto Paralympic Committee, 21 September 2025

AWARDS, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Within the **Global Campus–Human Safety Net** (Generali) partnership, the **Awards Ceremony for the winners of the “Sports, Arts and Human Rights”** prize took place on 22 October 2025 at The Human Safety Net Auditorium in St. Mark’s Square, Venice. Awards were presented in the Creativity, Business and Athlete categories, recognising contributions to human rights values across sectors. The ceremony was followed by a screening of the documentary *The Right to Race*, part of the project INVOLVED! InnovationLab for Sustainable ChangeMakers (a civic movie lab promoted by The Human Safety Net), curated by Francesco Della Puppa of Ca’ Foscari University (GC Europe member). The screening also inspired the **Global Campus solidarity runners ahead of the Venice Marathon** on 25 October. The Global Campus was also present at the Sport Expo Village, the official pre-race exhibition of the Venice Marathon 2025, with an information stand and a crowdfunding initiative for scholarships.

Throughout the year, the **#Art4HumanRights** and **#Sport4HumanRights** campaigns were linked to the **United Nations Human Rights Day 2025** theme, **“Everyday Essentials”**. Campaign participants were invited to reflect on what everyday essentials mean in their own lives and how these relate to human rights. The initiative combined physical stands, visual materials, QR-code engagement and digital storytelling, encouraging individuals to share personal reflections and connect lived experience with rights-based frameworks.

GC’s global reach drew **Armenian media** coverage. In June 2025, 168.am (an English-language Armenian news site) launched an interview series in partnership with GC, thanks to the collaboration with Razmik Martirosyan, GC Caucasus alumnus. Among the episodes: George Ulrich (GC Academic Director), on **“AI and Human Rights: Are We Losing Our Rights?”** and Michael Hayes (Academic Director of GC Asia-Pacific), on **“The Role of Universities in Human Rights.”**



Venice, Italy – Awards Ceremony jointly organised by the Global Campus and The Human Safety Net (Generali’s global initiative supporting vulnerable families and refugees) as part of the UN Human Rights Day campaign, 22 October 2025



“Climate adaptation is at the top of the list – but it is not just a scientific or technical challenge. It is deeply connected to both human and planetary rights. I believe your global network can play a vital role, especially in protecting the rights of climate refugees, who are among the most vulnerable groups on the planet. There is also a powerful conversation emerging around granting rights to non-human entities: rivers, forests, and entire ecosystems. This raises legal and ethical questions, and it is an area where the insights of human rights scholars could be incredibly valuable.”

Carlo Ratti Associates – Curator of the Venice Biennale of Architecture 2025 and recipient of the Sports, Arts and Human Rights Award in the Creativity category

WHEN HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION MEETS PRACTICE: A HIGH-LEVEL FORUM IN BUDAPEST

The **Forum on Human Rights Education - Unleashing Human Rights**, held in Budapest from 9–11 December 2025, marked a concrete outcome of the renewed strategic collaboration between OHCHR and the Global Campus of Human Rights. Co-organised by the Council of Europe and OHCHR, with involvement from the GC and various partners, the Forum brought together more than 250 educators, practitioners and activists from across regions to reflect on the present and future of human rights education.

GC alumni and members of the GC Youth Advisory Group (YAG) participated actively throughout the three days, contributing regional perspectives in thematic working groups, facilitating exchanges during workshops, and presenting Global Campus initiatives at the Human Rights Education Fair. The programme also featured a multilingual public reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on Human Rights Day (10 December), highlighting education's central role in translating universal principles into lived practice.

The Forum demonstrated how priorities in the renewed OHCHR-GC Memorandum of Understanding are translating into practice. Discussions covered UN Declaration standards, teacher training needs, youth participation strategies, and digital tools for rights education amid shrinking civic space. By creating space for exchange between institutions, educators and young professionals, Budapest illustrated the added value of sustained international cooperation's added value in strengthening human rights education as both strategic field and evolving practice.

The Forum embodied the OHCHR-GC Memorandum of Understanding in action—creating vital exchange spaces between institutions, educators and young professionals. This Budapest gathering proved sustained international cooperation's unique value in advancing human rights both as a strategic field and as a shared, evolving practice, while underscoring GC's pivotal role bridging academia, activism and policy.

(Based on a news story written by Amanda Rossini Martins, Rosita Sekandari, Sai Khun Min (Arthur), Azwikonisaho Gloria Ramavhuya, Yazan Mezher and Ahmat Yakoub).

“As someone looking to advocate for human rights by unleashing the power of storytelling, this event equipped me with so much knowledge that I can’t wait to share within the different spaces I occupy. I attended as part of the #YouthAdvisoryGroup of the Global Campus of Human Rights. I’m so grateful for the opportunity to learn and connect with people from diverse backgrounds. Now it’s time to do my part and mobilize the knowledge gained!”

Azwikonisaho Ramavhuya — GC YAG, South Africa



Budapest (Hungary) – Global Campus representatives across generations, 10 December 2025
Photo by Sai Khun Min (Arthur), GC Asia-Pacific student



“We explored how HRE can contribute to peacebuilding by strengthening dialogue, promoting mutual understanding and addressing root causes of conflict ... HRE is not only theoretical but a practical and transformative tool that empowers youth and communities even in contexts of tension.”

GC representatives at the Forum in Budapest



“Human rights are about how people see the world. This vision determines our actions and decisions. We cannot leave the protection of human rights solely to lawyers and diplomats. It is not enough to adopt quality laws and form democratic institutions. Society’s values always prevail. Their energy enables laws and institutions to protect people and their dignity.”

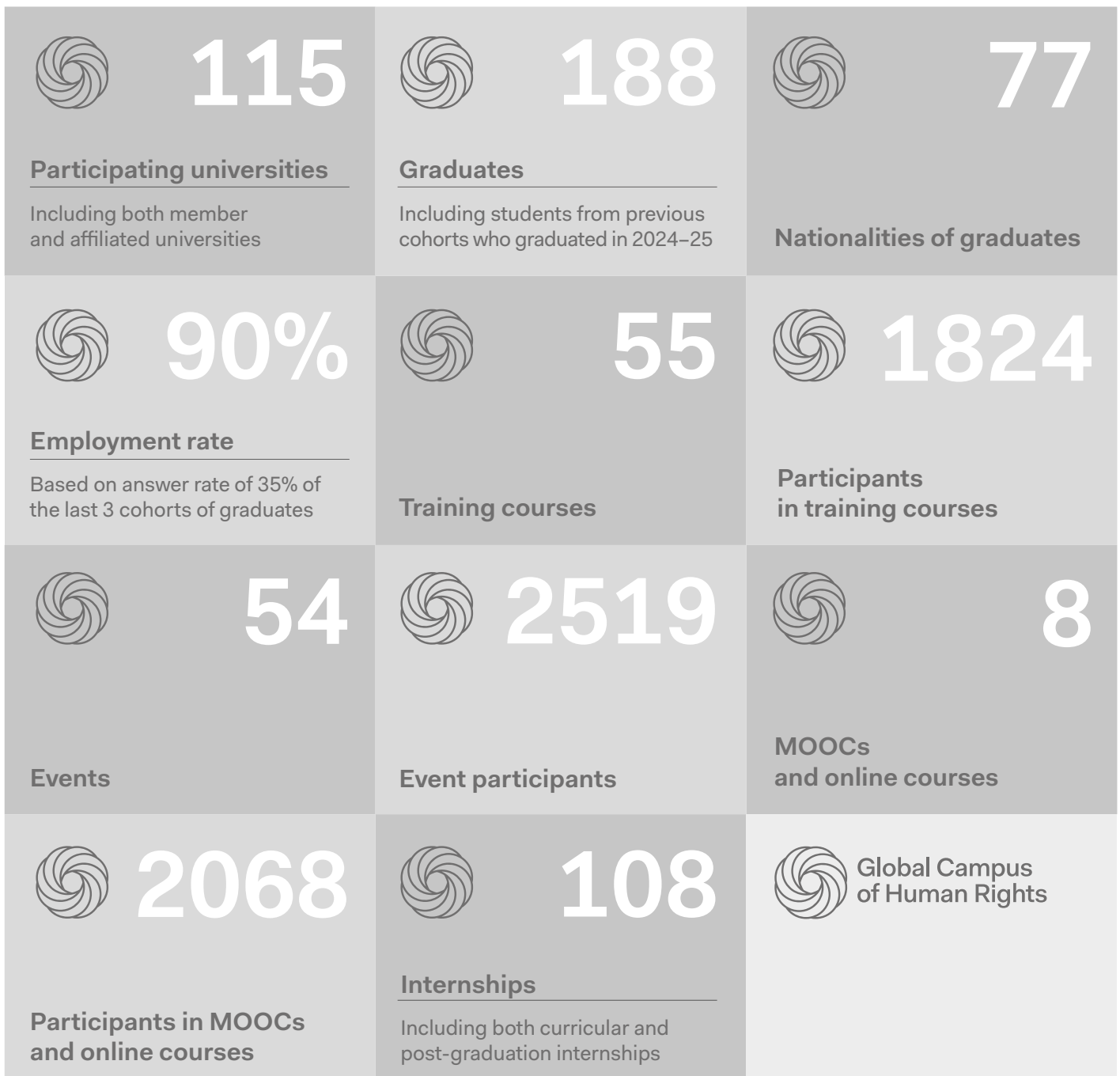
Oleksandra Matviichuk — Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Right Livelihood Laureate and Sakharov Prize



THE GLOBAL CAMPUS IN NUMBERS

Academic year 2024-2025

Valentina Abita
Office of the Secretary General

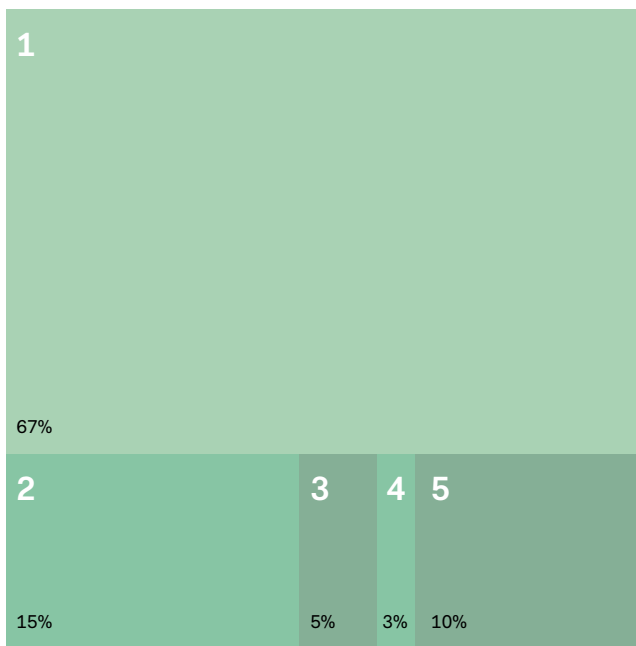


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Paolo Rech, Dania Ferrarese, Isabella Vianello, Giulia Vallata, Sara Lai, Valeria Zanrosso, Francesco Ganeo
Finance & Logistics Department

INCOME

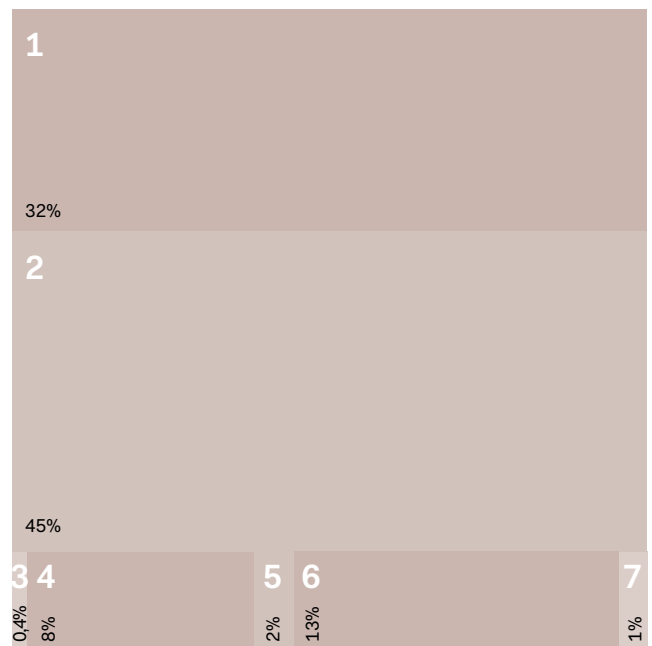
€ 7.747.946



| | | |
|---|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | EU grant | € 5.164.354 |
| 2 | Right Livelihood grant | € 1.195.804 |
| 3 | EMA students' fees | € 392.090 |
| 4 | Other fee-based activities | € 208.307 |
| 5 | Other contributions | € 787.391 |

EXPENSES

€ 8.001.515



| | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Regional master's programmes | € 2.521.336,00 |
| 2 | Activities managed by GCHQ | € 3.576.065,75 |
| 3 | Afghanistan project | € 32.499,04 |
| 4 | Reconceptualising Exile project | € 605.379,96 |
| 5 | Capacity building projects | € 145.446,73 |
| 6 | Children's rights-related activities | € 1.033.333,00 |
| 7 | Training programmes | € 87.454,52 |

VISIT US IN OUR VENICE HEADQUARTERS

Luca Fantinel, Francesco Ganeo, Francesco Rossi, Cristina Moras, Beatrice Dammico
Premises IT Department



Nestled between the lagoon and the beach on the Lido of Venice, the 14th-century Monastery of San Nicolò is home to the Global Campus of Human Rights Headquarters. It was generously provided to us free of charge by the City of Venice over 20 years ago, after its former inhabitants, a small group of Franciscan monks, relocated to another monastery on the idyllic island of San Francesco del Deserto. In our beautiful premises, we host the first semester of the GC Europe Master's programme; our specialised human rights library; the Venice School for Human Rights and Advocacy; the Advocacy Defenders initiative; and the Cinema, Human Rights and Advocacy Summer School—along with many other projects and activities.

Under our Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Venice, and in cooperation with other partners, we also host external events and activities in our classrooms and sun-lit courtyard. The monastery has thus been the setting for classical concerts, art exhibitions, and even features in a 1970s James Bond film. In September 2021, the Global Campus was also invited to host in the cloister of the monastery a special event in memory of the genius of Ennio Morricone, with guests including internationally renowned flautist Andrea Griminelli, as well as Sting and Zucchero.

Today, our charming historic grounds offer office space, meeting rooms and classrooms, and are easily reached by public transport or by a pleasant walk along the lagoon. Should you wish to visit the monastery and meet our staff, please contact us at info@gchumanrights.org or +39 041 2720911.



GCHQ on the island of Lido, Venice (Italy)
– Tribute to late Italian composer and orchestrator Ennio Morricone within the Venice Film Festival (Venezia 78).
Pictured: flautist Andrea Griminelli with his orchestra, 2 September 2021.



Europe
South East Europe
Latin America-Caribbean
Asia-Pacific

Central Asia
Caucasus
Arab World
Africa

The Global Campus of Human Rights is an international association of over 100 universities organised in eight regional hubs and dedicated to the promotion and advancement of human rights education, research, outreach and advocacy. Established on the foundation of the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (founded in 2002), the Global Campus has evolved into a network of academic institutions committed to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect human rights and democratisation across the globe.

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