



# Global Campus of Human Rights

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## Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives 2021-2024

### I. Who We Are

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The Global Campus of Human Rights is the **most extensive human rights education network** in the world. Building on more than two decades of excellence in education, training and research within the fields of human rights and democratisation, it consists of about 100 leading universities. The network is coordinated by seven regional hubs, based in Venice (for Europe), Sarajevo/Bologna (for South East Europe), Pretoria (for Africa), Bangkok (for the Asia Pacific), Yerevan (for the Caucasus), Buenos Aires (for Latin America and the Caribbean) and Beirut (for the Arab World) – each offering a Master’s Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation.

Beyond these programmes, the Global Campus engages in a wide range of **additional activities to build capacity and raise awareness of human rights and democratisation**. The Global Campus partners have trained and supported generations of human rights experts now active in various capacities in almost every corner of the world – thereby establishing a wide-reaching network of highly skilled human rights defenders working in passionate service of humanity. The Global Campus experience is distinguished by interdisciplinary insights, innovative thinking, cross-cultural exchanges, a wide range of participants and partners, international sustainable mobility, ‘glocal’ network opportunities, and the unwavering determination to shape a worldwide culture of human rights.

Since its inception, the Global Campus has been supported by and has been working closely with the **European Union** in order to assist, advance and protect the work of human rights defenders around the world. It has also developed further strategic partnerships, including with the **Right Livelihood Foundation (RLF)**, to enhance its impact in areas such as children’s rights, and to advance movement-building and sustainability.

The activities of the Global Campus are consistent with and take guidance from the values and general principles underpinning international human rights, as laid down in a diverse range of **universal and regional human rights instruments** as well as the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the EU legal and policy framework, including the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024. Motivated by these partnerships and human rights standards, the Global Campus is particularly committed to the **empowerment of women, youth and children**. By promoting the rights of the most vulnerable and marginalised sections of society, the Global Campus works to help forge change-makers for a sustainable future based upon human rights, democracy, a healthy environment, as well as resilient and inclusive societies.

The Global Campus is committed to conduct all activities in line with the values of equality, non-discrimination, diversity, inclusiveness, respect, empathy, solidarity, social responsibility, academic freedom, transparency, accountability, honesty, fairness, responsiveness and adaptability. We uphold an approach of zero tolerance to all forms of exploitation and harassment.

## II. Vision

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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.

## III. Mission

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The mission of the Global Campus of Human Rights is to:

- **build human rights awareness**

The Global Campus **builds human rights awareness by engaging in network-building, advocacy and outreach efforts** while informing policy and providing specialised advice. Through awareness-raising activities, the Global Campus network supports global efforts towards sustainable peace, social justice and development. By advancing awareness in these human rights areas, the intention is to inspire new generations of highly-qualified human rights defenders to strive continuously for positive and progressive social change.

- **support the implementation of international human rights, democracy and the rule of law in national contexts**

As a bridge connecting academia, civil society and the development sector, the Global Campus is strategically positioned to positively influence the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. As such, the Global Campus **translates international human rights to national contexts through educational programmes, research and community service** that are not only relevant and useful, but also suited to local realities. The cross-regional structure of the Global Campus is ideal for strengthening human rights education, ensures multi-regional understanding and supports academic freedom.

- **address challenges facing human rights and democracy**

As a global actor, the Global Campus **actively contributes to the social, cultural and political development of an increasingly globalised society**. Over the last decade, the human rights discourse has been characterised by increased concern about the human rights movement's viability amidst contemporary challenges that are multifaceted, transnational and highly controversial in nature. Universities provide an ideal setting to inform these debates to shape multilayered solutions.

- **educate human rights defenders**

The Global Campus supports the development of human rights education, in particular higher education, of committed, skilled and well-educated human rights professionals and activists, to equip them to work in the non-governmental, governmental and inter-governmental spheres.

- **advance, connect and coordinate cross-regional as well as interdisciplinary collaboration**

The Global Campus serves as a strategic network to **advance, connect and coordinate, in all regions of the world, key human resources and expertise in the area of human rights**. This includes working with stakeholders at governmental, inter-governmental and civil society levels. By strengthening the regional and global dimensions of human rights and democracy, the Global Campus aims to facilitate accessible university education, life-long learning, research and capacity-building (with the latter also including specialised training of state officials and practitioners).

- **provide innovative knowledge and technical expertise**

A major contribution of the Global Campus universities is to **provide innovative knowledge and technical expertise guided by ethical, human rights-based perspectives**. A lack of understanding of what human rights actually entail remains a significant challenge in most regions of the world and at all levels of society. The regional Master's programmes of the Global Campus are uniquely equipped to face this challenge, since they encourage a variety of communities to become change-makers, actively promoting human rights values and contributing to social justice and greater equality wherever they are in the world. The Global Campus universities provide this encouragement by instilling practical and theoretical skills needed for the realisation of human rights in all sectors of society.

- **focus on contemporary and cutting-edge thematic issues**

The network is placed in a unique position to identify, develop and support emerging trends within the human rights discipline. The Global Campus aims, in its educational programmes, research and outreach activities, to **focus on cutting-edge thematic issues of contemporary concern and relevance**, including: global warming and climate justice; the effects of poverty and widening economic and social inequality; preparedness to respond to pandemics and other emergencies; health inequalities and global health governance; the impact of scientific development and new technologies; the shrinking space for civil society; weakening of the rule of law; growing threats to the integrity of elections and democratic processes; rising intimidation of journalists, threats to independent media and increasing violence and intimidation of human rights defenders; the legitimacy of international institutions and processes; and widespread impunity for human rights violations. We aim to propose solutions to seemingly intractable problems linked to the unravelling of multilateralism, failed states, insecurity, violence, intolerance, populism, radicalism, extremism, terrorism, securitisation, armed conflicts, organised crime, environmental degradation and massive human mobility.

- **prepare and support future change-makers**

The Global Campus and its regional programmes are strengthened by a diverse range of global and regional alliances developed over years of cooperation. By virtue of its global reach, the Global Campus has remarkable access to tools, human resources and field opportunities that promote human rights and democracy worldwide. The Global Campus thus intends to cultivate this culture of cross-regional cooperation so as to **facilitate movement-building** processes aimed at giving agency to future change-makers.

- **contribute to a just and sustainable future**

The Global Campus is committed to **contributing to a just and sustainable future** by increasing its own awareness of the impact the network has on the environment. In order to ensure the sustainable development of our cross-regional work, the Global Campus thus aims to adjust its operational ways where needed – as further explained in our Environmental Policy.

## IV. Strategic Objectives

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**Objective 1** We strengthen our **educational programmes** through cross-regional enrichment and joint practice-led projects.

- Improve and expand human rights education opportunities, including through practical elements such as experiential learning, internships and other skills development, for students, human rights defenders, practitioners and other professionals (particularly from disadvantaged areas, the Global South, emerging democracies and democracies under pressure).
- Treat economic, social and cultural rights in our educational programmes on an equal level with civil and political rights.
- Develop human rights education by cross-regional sharing of core curricula, resources, good practices and capacity through the coordination of the Global Campus Academic Affairs Committee.
- Make human rights more accessible to the broader public, for example by producing and disseminating user-friendly material and translations in local languages.
- Extend the educational and research reach of the Global Campus by developing a Global Campus doctoral programme.

**Objective 2** We bolster the global promotion of human rights and democracy by maximising the **digitalisation** of our activities.

- Invest in and reinforce digitalisation in the content and pedagogy of our existing and future teaching and training programmes, as well as open-access methods to educate larger, global and more diversified audiences.
- Encourage open access to and knowledge transfer of all our outputs, including research findings, publications, project materials and video lectures.
- Communicate our presence and participate in relevant debates in various multimedia channels, including public online forums and initiatives.
- Support research and capacity-building projects that require the development of online and multimedia resources.

**Objective 3** We strengthen the visibility and capacities of the **Global Campus alumni** in all regions of the Global Campus.

- Facilitate a joint Global Campus identity among the alumni of different regional programmes.
- Enhance alumni integration in Global Campus activities in all regions.
- Mobilise alumni to strengthen human rights through a shared database and communication network.

**Objective 4** We ensure the **strategic enlargement** of the Global Campus.

- Open the Global Campus to additional universities willing to develop or strengthen human rights education, particularly from emerging democracies and democracies under pressure.
- Foster the creation of regional Master's Programmes in Human Rights and Democratisation in regions currently underrepresented in the Global Campus.

**Objective 5** We strengthen the link between **academic and grassroots activism** and support global **movement-building** efforts that address emerging human rights crises through teaching, research and capacity-building.

- Recognise human rights defenders such as Sakharov and Right Livelihood Laureates.
- Connect with the lived experiences of marginalised communities, youth initiatives and grassroots organisations by building their capacity and incorporating them into the teaching and research of the Global Campus.
- Merge academia and advocacy by developing research projects that have an advocacy element.
- Implement projects that research and support global movements fighting for human rights and democratic principles around the world.
- Develop in-person and online capacity-building programmes that address gaps in awareness about human rights and democracy movements.

**Objective 6** We mainstream the **empowerment** of women, children and youth across all regions of the Global Campus.

- Emphasise the multilayered aspects of gender equality in our teaching, research activities and internal operations.
- Implement best practices on youth and child participation in research and capacity-building activities.

**Objective 7** We strengthen democratic **resilience**.

- Assist the development of resilient democratic societies via Global Campus training activities, which include electoral assistance and observation, democracy support, conflict management and political inclusivity.
- Inform human rights policy and standard-setting by providing expert advice on a universal, regional and local level.

**Objective 8** We develop educational and research activities to raise awareness about the link between **environmental justice and human rights**.

- Educate students on the links between human rights and the environment and invite sustainability experts (such as RLF laureates) to contribute to teaching and research activities.
- Mainstream the topic of climate justice in educational activities throughout the Global Campus.

**Objective 9** We foreground the **role of the arts** as a key tool for the advancement of human rights and democracy.

- Increase awareness of human rights by connecting the arts and culture to human rights through disciplines such as literature, visual arts, cinema, music, theatre, dance and architecture.
- Invite artists to contribute to teaching, research and capacity-building activities within all regions of the Global Campus.
- Support creatives who use artistic means to raise awareness about human rights challenges.