



# PERSISTENCE

of Frontline Human Rights Educators



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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.

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Human rights are a testament to our deep-rooted belief that dignity, equality, and justice should be the fundament of our societies. In a world marked by shifting landscapes of conflict, technological disruptions, and environmental crises, the resilience of the very concept of human rights remains a cornerstone of hope. This Annual Report 2024, "Persistence of Frontline Human Rights Educators," captures our belief in the transformative power of rights-based approaches to create meaningful change in lives and communities.

Our vision is grounded in the understanding that human rights are not static declarations but dynamic principles that evolve with time and challenges. From digital innovation to ecological preservation, from empowering youth to amplifying the voices of the marginalised, our mission is to stand firm at the intersection of education and advocacy. It is here, on the frontline, where we support

new generations to confront the barriers to justice and develop pathways for sustainable and inclusive progress.

This year, our work is strongly guided by a spirit of collaboration and creativity. Through education, storytelling, and capacity building, we continue to push boundaries and challenge the status quo. We honour the determination of individuals and communities who, in the face of adversity, continue their fight for a fairer and more equitable world.

As you explore this report, we invite you to join us in reflecting on our journey throughout the year 2024. Let it be a call to action and a reminder that defending human rights is not just a duty but an expression of our collective humanity. Together, we can ensure that human rights remain at the frontline — steadfast, unyielding, and ever more relevant in the years to come.

### The Global Campus and the SDGs

Our work focuses primarily on the achievement of



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**Global Campus of Human Rights ETS**  
Annual Report 2024

March 2025

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This publication is the result of the work of many members of the wide GC network. For all these diverse voices to come together in a coherent report, we have been supported by AI tools for editing and translation purposes. Despite our best efforts, it may contain inaccuracies, for which we apologise.



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# Welcome



Verónica Gómez — President

Why choose multi-focused learning experiences held or designed in varied contexts, with participants from different national and professional backgrounds? The answer relates to the very idea of knowledge as multifaceted. Understanding can be (1) factual, based on information and data; (2) procedural, “knowing-how” to do something by following steps; (3) performative, derived from practical training; or (4) experiential, acquired through trial and error. This idea of learning can also be presented as the distinction between explicit knowledge –easily documented and therefore easily transferable– and tacit knowledge, derived from skills and intuitions acquired through interaction, and therefore more complex to attain, and therefore more valuable.

Indeed, explicit knowledge can be transmitted through documents, data bases and seminars. It can be rapidly streamlined via Artificial Intelligence. On the contrary, tacit knowledge is interwoven in the lore and memories of experts with relevant experience. This kind of knowledge, laden with intuition and appraisal, is organic in nature (not engineered) and thus essential to understanding why the

same (human or public policy) intervention is effective in one context and a resounding failure in another context.

This annual report provides data and materials on how during the 2023-2024 cycle the Global Campus has produced and exchanged multifaceted knowledge with students, alumni and strategic partners all over the world through its 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 of nearly a hundred participating universities and its Council– it is an honour for me to share this Annual Report with our readers.

# Foreword



**Manfred Nowak — Secretary General**

On 27 September 2024, the Global Campus of Human Rights was preparing to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Arab Master's in Democracy and Human Rights in Beirut. We had invited Volker Türk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and other high-level speakers to join us for this celebration. I planned to stay a few days in Beirut to discuss with our colleagues from the Arab Master's how the Global Campus could assist their staff, students, and alumni in times of war and crisis in Gaza, the West Bank (where Birzeit University, member of the Global Campus, is located), Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. When the war between Israel and Hezbollah intensified in Lebanon, we decided for security reasons to hold this celebration in a hybrid manner but in the presence of our most recent cohort of graduating students. However, even our online presence had to be cancelled at the last moment because an Israeli airstrike in Beirut had just killed on that very day Hassan Nasrallah, the political and religious leader of Hezbollah. When I finally reached Jihad Nammour, Director of the Arab Master's, and asked him how to continue our human rights education under these circumstances, he told me of their “stubbornness”, not just “resilience”, to continue despite the horrific war, and insisted that the next cohort of students will continue to be hosted by the University of Saint Joseph in Beirut.

In recent years, not only “frontline human rights defenders” in all world regions have come under attack but also human rights educators. Although all states have a legal obligation under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the UN

Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training to provide human rights education at all levels of the education system, we are far away from the goal that all children and adults, from kindergarten to universities, can enjoy their right to human rights education. It is increasingly difficult to integrate human rights education into school curricula and to secure the necessary funds to provide proper human rights education and training. In times when the basic values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are openly challenged, even those who provide human rights education come under attack.

That is why we decided to dedicate our Annual Report 2024 to the “Persistence of Frontline Human Rights Educators”. The recent experiences of the Global Campus of Human Rights as the world's largest network on postgraduate human rights education give testimony to the many difficulties we are confronted with and our stubbornness to nevertheless continue our eight Master's programmes and other activities. Despite the wars in the Middle East, our colleagues in Lebanon, Palestine, and other universities of the Arab world even expanded their teaching activities in the fields of children's rights and human rights in times of armed conflict. Similarly, our colleagues in the Caucasus region, coordinated by the Yerevan State University, continued their Master's programme and other activities despite the wars between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the Russian war against Ukraine, the arrests and persecution of our teachers and students in Belarus, and the threats to academic freedom during the recent events in Georgia.

So-called “foreign agents laws” based on the Russian model in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan make it increasingly difficult to secure the necessary funds and to deal with censorship, bureaucratic hurdles, stigmatisation, and state interference with academic freedom. Our Central Asia Master's in Human Rights and Sustainability, which was only established in 2023 in a region with a tense geopolitical environment, has emerged as a beacon of persistence despite rising authoritarianism and political restrictions. Our colleagues at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek even organised a Global Classroom on “Just Transition” in June 2024 at the beautiful mountain lake Issyk-Kul, where students and alumni from all eight regions of the Global Campus presented their research and discussed issues like transitional justice, democratic resilience, climate-induced conflict, and human rights in illiberal contexts. The next Global Classroom will be hosted in October 2025 by Mahidol University in Bangkok, the regional hub of the Asia-Pacific Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation. Many students in this region, particularly those from Myanmar, face uncertain futures due to threats from their governments or oppressive policies like

forced conscription. A particular challenge is to explore how universities can better support displaced and at-risk students by fostering inclusion and expanding education for refugees. The Human Rights Centre at the University of Pretoria celebrated its 25th year of successful completion and graduation of cohorts of the African Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation in June 2024, which is a testament to the programme's resilience and persistent commitment to human rights education amid evolving global challenges. A similar persistence is shown by the National University of San Martin in Buenos Aires, which organises the Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Persistence is, however, also required in Europe. The Master's in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe, based in Sarajevo, is still confronted with significant political challenges in the Balkans, including countries like Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia, dating back to the wars of the 1990s and continued ethnic and political tensions. The Prime Minister of Kosovo, Albin Kurti,



GC President Verónica Gómez and GC Secretary General Manfred Nowak at the prestigious North-South Prize ceremony in May 2024 in Lisbon in the presence of the President of Portugal, where Amina Bouayach and the Global Campus of Human Rights were officially recognised as winners of the North-South Prize. In previous years the other laureates were esteemed figures such as Kofi Annan, Simone Veil, Mary Robinson, Emma Bonino, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Xanana Gusmão, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, and Louise Arbour.

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attended the Graduation Ceremony of the European Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation in Venice as a keynote speaker. We have brought our European Master's students on a field trip to Kosovo for 20 years, which is still considered as a post-conflict society supported by many international organisations, including the UN, NATO, OSCE, and EU. While the European Master's was originally established in 1997 as a joint initiative by European universities and the European Commission to train future human rights professionals for peace operations outside of Europe, our focus shifted to addressing critical issues within Europe itself, such as armed conflicts, rising populism, right-wing extremism, and growing threats of democratic backsliding.

The same is true for our other activities at the Global Campus Headquarters in Venice. The 4th Venice High-Level Conference on the Global State of Human Rights, organised in partnership with Right Livelihood in May 2024, spotlighted the persistence of human rights defenders amidst political, social and environmental crises. It focused on human rights defenders forced into exile, operating during wars, and confronting the triple planetary crisis. In our joint project on "Reconceptualising Exile", we support frontline human rights defenders and human rights educators who continue their human rights advocacy work in exile. This project supplements our more specialised Afghanistan scholarship programme, which

started with the Taliban takeover in 2021 and continues until today. Our Human Rights Lab on Academic Freedom in March addressed the importance of academic freedom in human rights education. The 2024 Venice School for Human Rights Defenders included a keynote speech by Patrick Zaki and a roundtable with representatives of the Iranian women's protest movement. Our E-learning Department featured, inter alia, MOOCs on "Children's Right to Education in Armed Conflict" and "Women at the Forefront of Democratic Change". The winner of the second annual Joint Engaged Activist Award presented during the EMA Graduation Ceremony, the Indonesian LGBTQI+ activist and musician Kai Mata, proudly announced: "I highlight celebration as rebellion, pride as protest, and joy as resistance". And UN High Commissioner Volker Türk, in his message to the Arab Master's, paid tribute to our activities as follows: "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." With the present Annual Report, the universal community of human rights educators united in the Global Campus of Human Rights conveys the message that in times of crises and challenges, our stubbornness and persistence is needed more than ever to effect change through education and awareness raising.



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## Mary Robinson

Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,  
first woman President of Ireland and Honorary President  
of the Global Campus of Human Rights

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A rights-based approach is basically a people-centred approach. Caring about the impacts of policy on people, and caring about it because you are a leader, because you serve the people who elected you to lead them. Especially in politics, there has to be a sense of a servant leader. And far too many politicians do not see it that way; they see it as a way of exercising a kind of power over people, rather than service of people, which I think is important, but you also have to bring people with you.

Podcast Series  
"Reimagining Politics  
through Human Rights"



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## Marcelo Rebelo De Sousa

President of Portugal

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Human rights can never be taken for granted. We must cherish them to ensure that they are not eroded and, above all, we must work together and with the younger generations and strengthen their role in the consolidation of free and democratic societies. And that is the work done by the Global Campus of Human Rights, which is present in eight regions. This network of universities, including two Portuguese universities, transforms young people from all over the world into defenders and activists for human rights in the future.

Ceremony awarding the  
Council of Europe North  
South Prize to the Global  
Campus on 21 May  
2024 in the Portuguese  
Parliament in Lisbon



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## Albin Kurti

Prime Minister of Kosovo

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This year was also the 20th time that students from the EMA programme embarked on a field trip to Kosovo — the country I lead — to learn firsthand about what it means to promote human rights and democratisation in a real-world setting. I have had the pleasure of welcoming them to Kosovo every year.

GC Europe Graduation  
Ceremony 2024





## Volker Türk

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

GC Arab World  
Graduation Ceremony  
2024

Education is the most powerful medicine of all. It promotes equality. It fosters inclusion, strengthens social cohesion. It empowers people to engage in decision-making processes or take up leadership roles themselves, and it raises awareness and understanding of rights leading to dignity and respect. It helps us to keep our heads when those around us are losing theirs. 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. Human rights education is a light that guides us through the storm.



## Olof Skoog

EU Special Representative for Human Rights

Fourth High-Level  
Venice Conference  
on the Global State  
of Human Rights

The EU has been a proud partner and supporter of the Global Campus since its conception. Investing in future human rights practitioners – be they academics, civil society advocates, or public officials – is an investment in resilience against growing attacks on international human rights law and multilateral institutions underpinning it. It is also an investment in peace, security, and development for human rights as the best prevention and the safest road to prosperity. During my visit to Venice, I was impressed by Global Campus students and alumni, by the faculty, and by the pace of growth of your academic network. And I must add that my own office benefits from this growing and vibrant community in a very concrete way. We offer one internship post every year to a fresh Global Campus graduate. I am looking forward to welcoming another alumna or alumnus in my team early next year!

# Words from 2024 Right Livelihood Laureates



## Forensic Architecture

Pioneering research agency

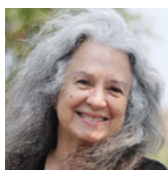
Political conditions all around the world make it clear: there is a long and challenging struggle ahead, for all of us invested in the struggle for human rights, accountability, justice, and public truth. Without the work of programmes like the Global Campus of Human Rights, the field will be starved of one of its most valuable resources: well-trained, motivated, talented new allies! So please, continue your vital work in building the future cohorts of human rights defenders.

But — do so while being alert to the ways in which the landscape around us is rapidly changing. When Forensic Architecture grew to prominence in the late 2010s, it

was a time in which open source investigation was booming; organisations like ourselves, Airwars, Bellingcat, were breaking new ground. The major news outlets followed, and now those revolutionary practices – digital modelling, 3D reconstruction, video analysis – are mainstreamed. Many of those successes were founded on the possibilities afforded by social media, by the ubiquity of open source visual evidence. For a moment, it felt like this revolutionary potential was boundless. But as Twitter/X has collapsed as a source of reliable information, the early promise of that ‘open source revolution’ has,

within just a few short years, begun to fade, into today’s extremely troubling information-sharing environment.

While we all work out how to navigate in this new space, perhaps the wider lesson is: the ground we are standing on is not fixed, in fact it may never have been so unstable. The human rights defenders of the future must be ready to adapt and navigate through rapidly shifting terrain, and be proactive in finding the opportunities among those changes. We wish you all strength, solidarity, and good fortune in that task!



## Anabela Lemos

Mozambican environmental activist

Education programmes should start from an early age, deepening the knowledge as you grow. People will be more aware of human rights, and will have better tools to fight against violations, but only education will not be able to stop these violations. In the field of human rights and democracy, we need to understand that human rights violations are happening at the hand of powerful

transnational corporations, in collusion with corrupted government elites. Without binding laws to regulate these entities, human rights violations will continue to happen systemically. Just like all across my country, Mozambique, companies from France, Portugal, Italy, Japan, China, USA, and many other countries are wrecking our climate and people's

lives. We need binding legislation to regulate transnational corporations and stop this pattern of impunity. This is a critical loophole in international law that urgently needs to be addressed.

Do not be afraid to support and raise radical ideas. Fight against human rights violations and defend the universality of human rights.





## Joan Carling

Filipino Indigenous activist

“Human rights education is fundamental to achieving environmental justice and protecting Indigenous rights. It builds awareness, empowers communities, and equips individuals with the tools to challenge injustices and advocate for systemic change. For Indigenous Peoples, environmental justice is deeply intertwined with human rights, as our survival is directly connected to the health of our lands and ecosystems.

By integrating Indigenous perspectives into human rights education, we can emphasise the interconnectedness of human rights, cultural diversity, environmental sustainability, and social justice. This approach not only fosters empathy and respect but also strengthens the global movement for equitable and sustainable futures.

The challenges to human rights and democracy are immense. Shrinking civic spaces, the rise of authoritarianism, and the criminalisation of human rights defenders are pervasive. For Indigenous Peoples, these

challenges are compounded by land dispossession, resource exploitation, and violence against defenders. Educational programmes like those at the Global Campus of Human Rights are vital in addressing these issues. They create safe spaces for critical dialogue, foster international solidarity, and equip future leaders with the knowledge and tools to confront these challenges. By prioritising intersectionality and the protection of marginalised sectors, such programmes can inspire real solutions and transformative action. To all of you at the Global Campus of Human Rights: your dedication to advancing human rights education and fostering global justice is a beacon of hope in these challenging times. You are fostering intergenerational understanding, commitment, and actions in advancing human rights. You are building a community that values equality, dignity, and sustainability — principles that are essential for a just future.

I encourage you to centre the voices of marginalised communities as rights holders, especially Indigenous Peoples, in your work. Approach

your advocacy in the spirit of partnership and solidarity, humility, and a commitment to listening and learning. Together, we can create a world where human rights are not just ideals but living realities for all. Your work has the power to inspire change and transform lives — thank you for your unwavering commitment. Let us continue to walk this path of hope and courage, fostering solidarity and action for a better world.”

Joan Carling is a Filipino Indigenous activist who has been defending the rights of Indigenous Peoples for more than 30 years. Her work

spans grassroots and international levels, focusing on human rights, sustainable development, climate justice, and the fight against land exploitation.



## Issa Amro

Palestinian human rights activist

I have three choices: to use violence and be the hero of Palestine for one month; to accept to live under occupation and accept to be a slave; or to fight occupation using non-violent resistance. So you choose: everybody would choose to fight using non-violence.

# The Global Network



Elisabetta Noli,  
Administrative  
Director

With a composition of 107 member universities at the end of 2024, the Global Campus network has further developed geographically. Visualising the Global Campus of Human Rights on the world map, however, only gives a partial view of the human rights expertise which makes up our network and the key role that the eight Global Campus regional hubs play in disseminating

human rights values and continuously mainstreaming them in postgraduate education amidst evolving global challenges.

On many occasions, stakeholders from donor institutions, civil society organisations, governments, or academic partner institutions have referred to the Global Campus network by



saying that if it was not for the Global Campus, there would be no specialised human rights education available in that region. This in turn means that without our programmes there would be a loss of human rights approaches to public policies, upholding of individual and collective rights and the rule of law, and assurance of defence of democratic mechanisms. These reactions demonstrate that human rights education is not merely an academic pursuit but a vital mechanism for empowerment, inclusion, and systemic change.

The programmes developed by the Global Campus worldwide, together, highlight the unyielding resolve of individuals and communities striving for justice, equality, and dignity — a testament to the enduring spirit of persistence which is at the core of human rights education.



### Global Campus Caucasus

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

Yerevan State University



### Global Campus Central Asia

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

OSCE Academy in Bishkek



### Global Campus Arab World

Arab Master's Programme  
in Democracy and Human Rights  
**ARMA**

Saint Joseph University in Beirut



### Global Campus Asia-Pacific

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

Mahidol University in Bangkok

# A Year of Inspiration: Peer-Learning Across and Beyond our Network

Manuela Pegoraro  
Adriano Remiddi  
Hazem Mizyed  
Tijana Bauer

True to its identity as a cross-regional network, the Global Campus demonstrates the transformative power of inclusive, shared knowledge through its peer-learning initiatives. This section celebrates a year of collaboration, where faculty, students, alumni, and institutions from diverse regions and backgrounds united to exchange ideas, challenge norms, and develop innovative approaches to human rights education. By fostering global connections, this network of universities, NGOs, and local and international institutions continues to strengthen the foundations of human rights advocacy.

## Climate Justice and Alumni Engagement

The Global Campus Alumni network (4,600+ members) was highly active in 2024, with a key focus on climate justice and future generations. This bottom-up initiative engaged over 50 alumni from around the world, organised into regional teams. They launched diverse projects, including podcasts, educational materials for school advocacy, and advocacy research, expanding the network's impact on environmental and social issues. The initiative culminated in a landmark alumni gathering in Athens, which addressed climate action and inspired future cross-regional collaborations.

“Climate justice is a moral imperative, essential for making the world a better place for all its inhabitants, and embodies the principle of equity, requiring everyone to contribute according to their abilities.”

Spring School Participant



Group photo by photographer Dina Botsa of the Global Campus Alumni gathering in Athens in April 2024.





New Publication on Practical Skills for Human Rights Experts: Lessons Learned from an Exchange Between Right Livelihood Laureates and Global Campus Alumni.

## Highlights

### • Research Skills and Faculty Exchange

The fourth edition of the Research Skills Programme empowered students with critical academic tools, while faculty exchanges enriched learning experiences across hubs like Buenos Aires, Sarajevo, Bishkek and Pretoria.

### • Human Rights Lab on Academic Freedom

Organised by EEAS (the diplomatic service of the European Union), the lab addressed the importance of academic freedom in human rights education, featuring diverse speakers and active participation from Global Campus faculty, staff, and alumni.

### • Skills Exchange Series with Right Livelihood Laureates

Alumni and Laureates came together to share expertise, strategies, and experiences on critical themes, including environmental advocacy, LGBTQI+ rights in hostile environments, community empowerment through cooperation, and confronting anti-gender movements.

### • Development of Child Rights Education at the National University of Timor-Leste (UNTL)

This project introduced child rights subjects in two BA programmes across the law, education, and medicine faculties, empowering university students and educators with multidisciplinary knowledge to advocate for child rights in Timor-Leste.

Global Campus students at the 2024 Global Classroom in Kyrgyzstan (photo by Rizky Ashar Murdiono, GC Asia-Pacific alumnus)



- **Tetum Translation and Publication of “Women’s Access to Transitional Justice in Timor-Leste: The Blind Letters”**  
The translation of this groundbreaking human rights text, the first of its kind, promotes increasing public accessibility and collective awareness around the discriminatory practices of transitional justice mechanisms faced by Timorese women.
- **32<sup>nd</sup> Human Rights and People’s Diplomacy Training Programme (Timor-Leste)**  
This programme empowered 30 emerging activists from the Asia-Pacific region with advocacy skills, fostering cross-regional networks for human rights defenders.
- **Development of Human and Child Rights Education at Moldova State University (MSU)**  
The revamped curriculum, now incorporating courses on child rights, has reinforced human rights education in the country’s main public university and facilitated integration with the GC Caucasus programme.
- **Development of Climate Justice Education at Moldova State University (MSU)**  
A specialised Lab is being established between the Faculties of Law and Biology, with the curriculum revised to include a Spring School on climate justice, linking environmental protection to human rights in Moldova, with support from the EU Delegation.
- **Global Internships for the best graduates**  
This programme continued to be a launchpad for aspiring human rights professionals, offering a unique and transformative experience for recent graduates from the regional Master’s who embarked on a paid six-month internship with leading organisations around the world.
- **Alumni Dance Performance at the 4th Global State of Human Rights Conference**  
Blending arts and human rights advocacy, alumnus Kosta Karakashyan choreographed a moving dance by Iskra Daskalova, using graceful but expressive movements to depict the struggle, resilience, and solidarity of human rights defenders.

“With the sharing, exchanging of ideas, and support from other participants, I feel a strong commitment in myself to take action against discrimination and fight for women’s rights as human rights.”

Training programme participant



**Above.** Students of the 1st European Cross-Regional Spring School on Climate Justice and Human Rights attend the diploma ceremony organized in the Orhei forest near Chisinau, Moldova.

**Left.** Human rights defenders from Southeast Asia and Pacific islands during the 32nd Annual Human Rights and People’s Diplomacy Training programme organized in Timor-Leste



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## Academic Partnerships Department

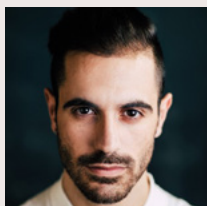
### Key Achievements

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**01. Global Classroom 2024:** Focused on "Just Transition", the programme brought together students from all regional Master's programmes to explore case studies on transitional justice. At the conference in Kyrgyzstan, they examined truth, justice, and reconciliation across geopolitical contexts, fostering optimism despite global challenges to democracy.

**02. Capacity Development:** Initiatives in underrepresented regions, such as Timor-Leste and Moldova, expanded human rights education, benefitting over 1,800 students through curriculum reforms, innovative courses and knowledge production. Future projects aim to extend these efforts to Pakistan and Belize.

**03. Mentoring and Career Programmes for Alumni:** These programmes revamped dual initiatives connecting generations of graduates worldwide, providing practical tools and fostering mutual enrichment, with senior alumni inspired by the growth and achievements of their junior counterparts.



**Above.** GC Europe (EMA) alumnus Kosta Karakashyan—Bulgarian-Armenian dancer, choreographer, film director, and writer—was named to the Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe list in the Art & Culture category for 2024.

**Right.** Dancer Iskra Daskalova from Karakashyan & Artists performs a powerful piece choreographed by GC Alumnus Kosta Karakashyan, capturing the emotions and experiences of human rights defenders in today's world (fourth annual High-level Conference on the Global State of Human Rights, 24–25 May 2024, Venice).



# The Lived Experiences of Human Rights Defenders: Fourth High-Level Venice Conference on the Global State of Human Rights

Imke Steimann  
Giada Ferrarese  
Julia Runte

At the core of human rights advocacy lies the courage of defenders who confront oppression daily. This section highlights the persistence of human rights defenders in the current political climate, which was at the heart of the fourth high-level Venice Conference on the Global State of Human Rights held on 24-25 May 2024. The conference zoomed in on situations where human rights defenders are forced into exile, pursue their work during war and armed conflict, or fight the environmental disasters of the triple planetary crisis. At its centre were the lived experiences of human rights defenders who form part of a new programme

jointly implemented by the Global Campus and Right Livelihood called 'Reconceptualising Exile'. They shared their perspectives with the many high-level participants from the United Nations, European Union, Council of Europe, and OSCE, academics from Global Campus member universities, Laureates of the Right Livelihood Award, as well as alumni, students, and other guests. The conference also gave space to voices from the artistic community, helping us to reformulate and re-envision human rights concepts and ideas in order to instil new energy, enthusiasm, creativity and a sense of connectedness.



The High-Level Conference on the Global State of Human Rights convened in Venice at the Monastery of San Nicolò and at the UNESCO Venice Office.





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## Highlights of the Conference

- **Opening Event:** The conference opening hosted by UNESCO Venice featured prominent figures like Mary Lawlor, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, who emphasised optimism as a strategic imperative, and Matteo Mecacci, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, who highlighted the importance of providing institutional support to youth activists. The discussion was further joined by Chiara Adamo from the European Commission and Olof Skoog, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, and moderated in an engaging and creative way by GC Europe Chair Thérèse Murphy.
- **Defender-Centred Discussions:** On the second conference day at the Global Campus Headquarters, we engaged in a series of dynamic roundtable discussions exploring topics ranging from redefining exile for human rights defenders to strategies for protecting human rights during periods of conflict. Voices from countries like Nicaragua, Sudan, Russia, Guatemala, Cambodia and Iran illustrated the profound challenges and persistence of human rights defenders. Notable speakers further included Heidi Hautala, Vice-President of the European Parliament, Michael O'Flaherty, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, and Aoife Nolan, President of the European Committee of Social Rights.
- **Youth Advocacy:** A presentation by members of the Child Leadership Team from the Global Campus South East Europe reflected on the importance of intergenerational efforts in human rights education.
- **Artistic Integration:** Poetry and music by the wonderful Lisette Ma Neza and an inspiring speech by our long-term partner Koen Vanmechelen infused the conference with creativity, emphasising the role of art in reimagining human rights concepts and fostering collective energy. We also hosted a beautiful dance performance in our Monastery's cloister choreographed by GC alumnus Kosta Karakashyan.
- **Venice Statement:** The Venice Statement: Reconceptualising Exile for Human Rights Defenders captures the conference's discussions with human rights experts and defenders, artists and academics, taking inspiration from the resilience and persistence with which many of them face today's enormous challenges. In a call for radical collaboration, the Venice Statement asks us to place the work and lived realities of human rights defenders at the centre of our efforts to protect civic space and promote human rights.



Neshan Gunasekera

Human Rights Expert

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The polycrisis which is facing the 100+ armed conflicts which are going on in the world taken together with the challenges of climate and environmental protection puts humanity at the center stage of a transition period of time. I think the key message is that we need to come together in cooperation and solidarity for human rights, international humanitarian law, to fight for the just institutions, International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court at the international level, but also those at the regional, national and local levels. Human rights need to pave the way for a just and sustainable future.

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# Office of the Secretary General

## Key Achievements

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### 01. Afghanistan Scholarship Programme:

We continued our work supporting Afghan students and academics through scholarships at various Global Campus member universities. Through this EU- and Right Livelihood-funded programme, we ensured safe access to human rights education and research for Afghan students and scholars at risk and built a support for the Afghan diaspora. Through a webinar series bringing together our scholarship recipients and Afghan experts, we advocated for and raised awareness about the status of human rights in Afghanistan.

b. Instead of allowing repressive governments to silence the voices of human rights defenders, the programme creates transnational support structures and mechanisms for our Fellows to have a continued impact, both in their home and host communities.

c. We engage in research in order to extract and disseminate the learnings from the project experience and its network of experts, as well as to promote the best practices in support of exiled human rights experts and defenders.

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02. Reconceptualising Exile Programme: This partnership programme between the Global Campus and Right Livelihood continued to work towards its key mission:

a. Through a Fellowship, it supports human rights experts and defenders who are unable to carry out their human rights-related work in their countries of origin because of a repressive environment and, therefore, have decided to leave with the intention to continue advancing their causes in exile.

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03. Global Coordination: Beyond the organisation of the conference and the implementation of these two human rights defenders programmes, the Office of the Secretary General supported the successful coordination of the wide Global Campus network. We organised many meetings of our governing bodies, including an annual Assembly of all member universities and various meetings of our Council, ensuring a regular cross-regional exchange on the organisation's strategic and operational running.



Michael O'Flaherty

Council of Europe Commissioner  
for Human Rights

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The convenings organised by the Global Campus, such as the High-Level Human Rights Conference, provide invaluable opportunities to meet with a wide range of human rights actors and with human rights defenders from around the globe. Participating gives me the opportunity to listen to their stories. I have left this year's edition re-energised and with a reinvigorated sense of purpose. Together, as a human rights community, we can make a difference.

# Resilience and Inclusion: Bridging the Gaps in Human Rights Advocacy

Alberta Rocca  
Elena Battaglia  
Sara Brogliato  
Larisa Barbu

Advancing human rights requires an inclusive approach that empowers the most marginalised voices. The activities carried out by the Training and Project Department explore how resilience and innovation have bridged gaps in human rights advocacy, from financial support for underrepresented groups to creative learning formats that address emerging challenges. These initiatives exemplify the Global Campus' commitment to fostering a more equitable world.

## Highlights

- **Promoting Inclusion:** Through financial support and strategic partnerships, the Global Campus Training and Project Department secured tuition waivers, enabling 10 international participants to attend the Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights, and Advocacy. Additionally, 4 participants benefitted from the International Electoral Observers programme through a scheme for youth aged 18-25. Collaboration with the Open Society Foundations further enabled two Ukrainian climate activists to join our Summer School programme, emphasising the importance of international collaboration in human rights education.
- **Integrating Innovative Learning Approaches:** To overcome financial barriers and broaden access, the in-person formats of our trainings were integrated with online tools and activities which allowed for tailored learning experiences. Online tools facilitated both synchronous and asynchronous education, enabling a flexible and inclusive approach, but still maintaining its skill-oriented and practical methodology.
- **Engaging Current Challenges:** In response to the global decline in democracy, the department addressed pressing human rights issues through targeted initiatives. For example, the Venice School for Human Rights Defenders included a roundtable discussion on the situation in Iran with prominent Iranian women representatives of the Woman, Life, Freedom movement such as Aida Ghajar, Mansoureh Shojaei and Pegah Moshir Pour. Additionally, a training on electoral technical assistance was attended by a delegation from the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala, including its president Ms Blanca Alfaro. Furthermore, the urgent need of training on the implications of artificial intelligence was met through the inclusion of a session on biometrics and AI within the training for International Electoral Observers. Finally, environmental justice took centre stage during the Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights, and Advocacy, offering a programme with a focus on climate strategic litigation, environmental and climate rights and sustainable development.



“I am currently attending the Venice School for Human Rights Defenders, and I am proud and honoured to be here. This opportunity is the result of support and networking I have experienced. Networking is crucial, and we should always create spaces for it. We are much stronger when we speak with one voice, even from different corners of the world.” Patrick Zaki

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• **Fostering Community:** The department's strength lies in the networking built by participants over days of training spent together. This sense of community and belonging is one of the key assets and takeaways of our alumni. Most activities have a long history, creating a strong and tight alumni group. In 2024 we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the training for Italian lawyers on the European Convention on Human Rights, expanding the alumni network to 900, fostering a robust support system and allowing coordinated judicial action. The Venice School for Human Rights Defenders marked its 15th edition, growing a community of around 650

human rights defenders who find in Venice a safe environment where to amplify their voices and resilience. Finally, the Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights, and Advocacy is about to celebrate its 20th anniversary, marking two decades of advocating for social change.

Looking ahead, the Global Campus Training and Project Department reaffirms its dedication to turning aspirations into action, ensuring that human rights education remains accessible and impactful. By bridging gaps, fostering innovation, and building community, it empowers individuals to drive justice and equality globally, one student at a time.



**Top.** President Magistrate of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala Blanca Alfaro and the participants of the Training on Strengthening Political Processes Through Technical Assistance.

**Bottom.** Scientific coordinator of the training on the European Convention on Human Rights Roberto Chenal and former President of the European Court of Human Rights Guido Raimondi.





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# Training and Project Department

## Key Achievements

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### 01. European Convention on Human Rights Trainings (11-14 April and 8-10 November 2024)

The Global Campus continued its tradition of educating professionals on the European Convention on Human Rights through its annual courses for both general and advanced Italian lawyers, judges and legal professionals. In 2024, the training celebrated its 10th anniversary, involving keynote speakers from the European Court of Human Rights, including Judges Gilberto Felici and Ivana Jelić, Vice-President Marko Bošnjak and former President Guido Raimondi.

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### 02. Venice School for Human Rights Defenders (9-16 March 2024)

The 2024 edition addressed the challenges faced by human rights activists, including an opening keynote by Patrick Zaki and a roundtable on the Iranian women's protest movement, "Woman, Life, Freedom," with Mansoureh Shojaee, Pegah Moshir Pour and Aida Ghajar. The programme also included a theatre performance by Raizes Theatre on disabilities and inclusivity, highlighting the intersection of arts and human rights. The school enrolled 27 participants, including 14 Sakharov Fellows, reflecting the Global Campus' commitment to defending human rights at the forefront.

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### 03. Electoral Technical Assistance Training (13-16 June 2024)

The programme was attended by 13 participants, out of which a delegation of 8 Guatemalan lawyers, magistrates of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala and Congressmen of the Republic of Guatemala. Among them was Blanca Alfaro, President of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Guatemala, who served as the keynote speaker during the opening session of the training course.

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### 04. Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights, and Advocacy (26 August-4 September 2024)

The 19th edition in Venice brought together 29 participants to explore the intersection of human rights, films, and digital media. Among them, 10 young environmental rights advocates were awarded tuition waivers, contributing to a diverse national representation. The programme included participation in the 81st Venice International Film Festival and meetings with filmmakers, including Zhanna Orzina, a young Ukrainian director of *Honeymoon*, which was included in the annual selection of emerging talents by the Biennale College Cinema academy.

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### 05. Online Training for International Electoral Observers (7-11 October 2024)

The course took place online with asynchronous material and live sessions, and counted 27 participants, including 4 deserving candidates aged 18-25 who were granted a tuition waiver. The programme was enriched with a session on biometrics and AI in elections delivered by expert Ronan McDermott and it concluded with an online roundtable featuring representatives from four sending authorities: FPI, ODIHR, The Carter Center and the African Union.

# Education is a Human Right: Mobilising Public Support

Angela Melchiorre  
Weronika Grelow  
Daniela La Mattina  
Giacomo Ottonello

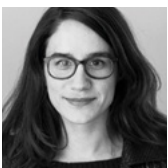
Education is both a fundamental right and a multiplier of rights: it empowers individuals and creates networks of support that nurture the persistence needed in times of crisis. This section sheds light on e-learning initiatives designed to protect and advocate for the right to education everywhere and, especially, in fragile contexts.

In times of conflicts and humanitarian crises, education is an essential right for rebuilding societies. Yet, people – and in particular children – in such situations face immense barriers to accessing it. The global crisis of attacks on education in conflict zones — from Afghanistan to Ukraine — poses a grave threat to children's physical and psychosocial well-being, as well as to post-conflict recovery and sustainable peace. Despite the existence of robust legal frameworks safeguarding the right to education, these protections are often ignored due to political motives, leaving children vulnerable to violence, abductions, and recruitment.

To bridge this gap in implementation and mobilise global action to defend the right to education where it is most under threat, the Global Campus of Human Rights launched the MOOC “Children’s Right to Education in Armed Conflict”. The course, supported by Right Livelihood and developed in partnership with the Right to Education Initiative, emphasised the importance of steadfast advocacy and practical action while inspiring participants to explore ways to contribute to lasting change in child protection.

## Highlights of the Course

- **Content and Expertise:** The course featured insights from prominent organisations such as the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, Human Rights Watch, and the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, alongside testimonies from individuals directly affected by conflict, including Global Campus faculty, alumni, and members of the Child Leadership Team.
- **Interdisciplinary and Community-Centred Approach:** The curriculum integrated perspectives from various disciplines, fostering a collaborative environment for participants, including human rights professionals and activists, to learn and share strategies for protecting education in conflict-affected areas.
- **Empowerment through Solidarity:** By facilitating interactions among participants, the course built a network of committed individuals, inspiring collective action. As a spin-off, a social media solidarity campaign was also launched on the occasion of the International Day of the African Child expressly dedicated to raising awareness of threats to education in Cameroon, Sudan, and Somalia.



“Many congrats again. I will print and laminate the following sentence from one of the participants:  
*One can never go wrong protecting the right to education.*”

Elin Martinez, Senior Researcher, Children's Rights Division, Human Rights Watch

## E-learning Department Key Achievements

**01. Online Course Authoring Justice:** This course, led by award-winning author Andrew Leon Hanna, focused on non-fiction narrative and human-centred storytelling, featuring acclaimed authors such as Albie Sachs, Kao Kalia Yang, and Casey Gerald together with Joel Rickett from Ebury-Penguin Random House. Aimed to inspire a new generation of authors to leverage writing as a tool for meaningful social transformation, the course successfully managed to enhance the confidence as writers and advocates of 13 participants whose Capstone Projects were featured in Global Campus publications.

**02. Podcast Series 3 on Reimagining Politics Through Human Rights:** Hosted by EMA National Director of Ireland Graham Finlay and Global Campus Academic Director George Ulrich, this podcast series included guests of the calibre of Mary Robinson, Alexandra Xanthaki, Morten Kjaerum, and Debbie Kohner in addition to representatives of

Global Campus regional programmes. Upon invitation by the organisers, some episodes were recorded at the EU's Fundamental Rights Forum and later shared on their website, confirming how synergies among human rights actors are key in promoting change and resilience in the face of political backlash against human rights.

**03. MOOC on Women at the Forefront of Democratic Change:** Reaching out to more than one thousand participants globally, this course offered a very timely opportunity to reflect and raise further awareness on the role of women in political movements, waves of democratisation, and resistance against dictatorships and autocratic regimes. Drawing attention from various groups, including students and women's rights activists, the course confirmed the Global Campus of Human Rights' effort to promote both human rights education and advocacy.

Images of the animated teasers of the MOOCs "Children's Right to Education in Armed Conflict" and "Women at the Forefront of Democratic Change".



# Developing Research-Based Knowledge through Cross-Regional Cooperation

Chiara Altafin  
Stefania Saccarola  
Cristina Moras

## Global Campus Policy Observatory 2024

As digitalisation reshapes education systems worldwide, its impact on human rights has become a critical area of inquiry. This section highlights the research and advocacy of the Global Campus Policy Observatory, which examined how technological advances intersect with education and rights. The findings offer actionable recommendations to navigate these complexities while safeguarding equity and access.

The 6th edition of the Global Campus Policy Observatory focused on the research project titled "The digitalisation of education systems and its impact on human rights, with particular attention to the right to education", funded by the European Union and the Italian Foreign Ministry. A team of seven policy analysts, selected from the alumni of the Global Campus regional programmes, contributed to the research. These analysts represented seven Global Campus regions: Asia-Pacific, South East Europe, Caucasus, Latin America, Europe, Africa, and the Arab World.

The project resulted in several outputs, including eight policy briefs (available in English and Italian), workshop presentations, advocacy plans, and digital tools, such as infographics and webinars. Notably, the international workshop held in March 2024 and the Webinar Series in June-August 2024 provided platforms for policy analysts to present their research findings, engage with international experts, and propose policy recommendations. These events served as opportunities for reflection and advocacy on the impact of digitalisation on education and human rights.

## Relaunching the Global Campus Human Rights Journal

The newly launched website for the Global Campus Human Rights Journal (GCHRJ) <https://www.gchrj.net/> offers a comprehensive and user-friendly platform dedicated to scholarly analysis and critical commentary in the fields of human rights and democratisation. As an open-access, peer-reviewed, bi-annual publication, the GCHRJ encourages interdisciplinary dialogue among academics, activists, NGOs, and civil society, fostering collaboration across various sectors. The e-journal charges no fees for submission, article processing, or publication, ensuring accessibility for a diverse range of contributors. It accepts long and short manuscripts and review essays, accommodating a wide range of scholarly works.

The new website design allows users to efficiently access information about the journal's mission, explore published volumes, understand submission guidelines, and stay informed about current calls for papers, also actively soliciting contributions that align with the Global Campus Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives for 2024-2028.





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## Research Department Key Achievements

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**01. Global Campus Human Rights Preparedness Blog:** We published 57 new blog posts, including three curated series and the third scheme of regional correspondents, exploring how human rights can address challenges from crises and emergencies broadly defined

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**02. Global Campus Human Rights Journal Volumes 7.1 and 7.2:** Releasing an online issue with 14 e-journal articles, we covered a wide range of topics from climate change and gender equality to digital rights and global citizenship, through the newly launched Global Campus Human Rights Journal website.

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**03. Global Campus Best Master's Theses 2022-2023:** The department edited and published 12 outstanding theses (7 GC and 5 EMA awarded) on a variety of international human rights topics.

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**04. Global Campus Policy Observatory:** Focused on the impact of digitalisation on education systems and human rights, and supported by the EU and MAECI, the 6th edition of the GC Policy Observatory involved 7 GC Alumni and included 1 international workshop, the publication of 8 policy briefs in both English and Italian, 7 infographics, and 7 international webinars attracting 490 registrants.

GC Policy Observatory experts at the international workshop held in 26 March 2024 at the GC Headquarters.



# Sports and Arts Media Campaigns to Promote Education on Human Rights and Peace in our Communities

Elisa Aquino  
Isotta Esposito  
Samuele Schiavon  
Gaia Balbo  
Francesca Sante

Creativity often serves as a powerful bridge to connect diverse communities. This section explores how sports and the arts have been harnessed to advance human rights education and promote peace. From award campaigns, partnerships with new audiences, and innovative events, these initiatives demonstrate the unique role of culture in fostering unity and inspiring action among diversity.

The year 2024 was marked by conflicts, wars, and human rights violations, testing the Global Campus of Human Rights' commitment to fostering peace and justice. Despite these difficulties, the organisation channelled its energy into creating projects that promote human rights and democracy. A key focus was on media campaigns and awards that connected sports, arts, and culture with human rights education, aiming to unify communities through shared activities.

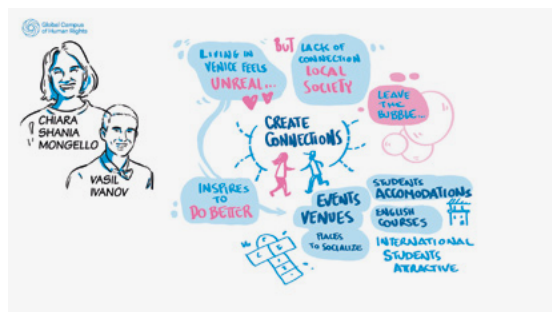
We successfully completed the second Joint Annual Engaged Artist Award. The #Art4HumanRights initiative hosted a concert lecture titled "Joy as Resistance: Queer Liberation through Celebration" by Indonesian singer-songwriter Kai Mata, followed by the "World of Potential" art exhibition at the Human Safety Net Generali Auditorium in October 2024.

In addition, the organisation launched the first #Sport4HumanRights Awards, linking sports, peace, and human rights. This initiative included a solidarity run at the Venice Marathon, where 25 runners participated in a programme that also featured the Global Campus at the event's Sport Expo. With 50,000 visitors and media coverage, this initiative helped promote human rights awareness through sports. The organisation is now preparing further online discussions and articles related to the intersection of sports and human rights, ahead of major Olympic Games events.

**"In my six years as a musician, I'm proud to have gained a reputation for turning trials into triumphs, venom into vitality, and death threats into love notes. To counteract current cultural waves of discrimination – from targeted legislation to societal stigma towards sexual minorities – I highlight celebration as rebellion, pride as protest, and joy as resistance."**

Kai Mata, Winner of the second annual Joint Engaged Artist Award #Art4HumanRights

The Biennale Arte 2024 was another highlight, with the Global Campus supporting Belgian artist Koen Vanmechelen's participation. His "Noah's Ark" installation at the Arsénale, created in collaboration with Berengo Studio and Foundation, as well as his work in the Venice Pavilion at Giardini, connected art with human rights issues.



Live illustrations of the 7th online Global Campus of Human Rights Conversation.

## Communications Department Key Achievements

01. The department published three new editions of the Global Campus of Human Rights Magazine during 2024.

02. The Web Unit concluded the launch of the new Global Campus website.

03. The seventh edition of the online Global Campus Conversation was organised on the theme of sustainability and human rights education.

*“Looking for the Ark stands as a beacon of reflection in the city of water and wonder, beckoning artists, thinkers, and viewers alike to embark on a journey through art and the very core of what it means to be human. In Venice, a city perpetually on the brink of yesterday and tomorrow, the artworks offer a journey into the soul of humanity – a voyage across the seas of time, consciousness, and collective memory.”*

Koen Vanmechelen, partner artist



GC solidarity community runners group at the 2024 10K Venice Marathon charity programme.

Arts and Human Rights linked in two events: Biennale Arte 2024 with artist Koen Vanmechelen in Venice and the second joint artist award given to artist Kai Mata at the Venetian Scuola Grande San Giovanni Evangelista.





# Stronger Together: Advancing Children's Rights in Challenging Times

Barbara Strasser  
John Paul Amah  
Manu Krishan

## Regional GC Child Rights Experts:

Fahmina Karim Bangkok  
Sara Makki Beirut  
Mariam Muradyan Yerevan  
Chiara Altafin Venice

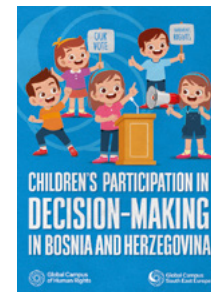
Nejira Pašić Sarajevo  
Elvis Fokala Pretoria  
Rocio Comas Buenos Aires  
Karlygach Nurmanbetova  
Bishkek

2024 marked an important moment in the partnership between the Global Campus of Human Rights and Right Livelihood, as it concluded the first five-year cycle of our collaboration on children's rights. Over these years, children's rights have been strengthened as a cross-cutting theme across many Global Campus activities, as reflected throughout this Annual Report.

The Children's Rights Department is closely connected with all the regional hubs of the Global Campus, the different departments within the Global Campus, as well as the Right Livelihood partners, fostering collective action to advance children's rights through research, education, and advocacy. This interconnected approach ensures that children's rights remain central to the work of the Global Campus while amplifying regional expertise and perspectives.

As we enter the next five-year cycle of our cooperation with Right Livelihood, we look forward to deepening our impact through focusing on three thematic priority areas: Artificial Intelligence, Climate Justice, and the Deprivation of Liberty of Children, highlighting their critical connection to children's rights. Importantly, children will continue to implement their own projects, with our support, demonstrating the power of youth leadership in driving real change.

The Global Campus will continue to explore innovative ways to strengthen advocacy and collaboration, including expanding partnerships, engaging in new research, and bringing children's rights discussions to the global stage. With the commitment of our regional hubs, Right Livelihood, and the young changemakers we work with, we enter this new chapter with resilience, determination, and a shared vision of a world where children's rights are fully realised.



Important achievements on children's participation were made this year.



**Left.** Members of the GC Child Leadership Team (GC Caucasus) giving a presentation during an international conference on "Inclusion through the Arts" in March 2024 in Yerevan, Armenia.



**Right.** Una and Marta, members of the GC Child Leadership Team (GC South-East Europe), who participated in the Venice Conference on the Global State of Human Rights and the Steering Group Meeting in May 2024 as representatives of the GC CLT.

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## Children's Rights Department

### Key Achievements

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**01.** This year saw the wrap-up of numerous impactful projects from the initial cycle, alongside preparations for the next phase of partnership. A new project selection process was established, new project proposals were received and evaluated, paving the way for a 2024-29 cycle focused on addressing some of the most pressing challenges children are facing today. A defining feature of this process was the wholehearted engagement of actors across the Global Campus network. Every regional hub actively participated by proposing new initiatives and innovative projects for the upcoming cycle, reflecting a shared sense of commitment to children's rights across the network.

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**02.** Important strides were made with regard to child participation: Following a restructuring of the Global Campus Child Leadership Team (CLT) in 2023, children played an active role during 2024 in shaping the next phase of our work. Regional and national Child Leadership Teams presented their own project proposals on issues such as cyberbullying, climate justice, children's right to education, children's mental health, and protection in conflict settings. Children were also actively involved in our Steering Group Meeting, reflecting our unwavering commitment to upholding the right of children to participate in matters affecting their lives.

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**03.** A key partnership was established between the Global Campus and the Global Initiative on Justice with Children: As an academic pillar of the World Congress on Justice with Children, the Global Campus will contribute to collaborative research and the development of specialised academic programmes, shape discussions, and support the implementation of recommendations that improve justice systems for children worldwide. This partnership builds on the Global Campus' intensive follow-up work on the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty, which was the result of a monumental research effort under the leadership of Global Campus Secretary General and UN Independent Expert Manfred Nowak, involving governments, UN agencies, more than 170 civil society organisations, and academia, as well as children themselves.

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**04.** Additionally, our "Network in Action" approach continued to foster collaboration between human rights scholars, educators, and activists. The Global Campus–Right Livelihood Fellowship Programme connected Global Campus students with Right Livelihood Laureates, enabling research and internships focused on children's rights. Other initiatives included, for example, support for the International Conference on Inclusion through the Arts in Armenia, the Earth Trusteeship Dialogues, and the Spring School on Climate Justice in Moldova, all of which engaged experts, students, and activists in critical conversations on children's rights and the rights of future generations.

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“Hope is what motivates me. Growing up in a town where children were meant to be seen, not heard made my dreams feel distant – like a privilege reserved for others. Socio-economic challenges made it hard to imagine a future full of possibilities. But then, everything changed when I attended the Nepal Child-Led Conference, where I was introduced to the Global Campus, and for the first time, I felt heard. I realised that my voice mattered, and that young people like me could make a difference. Since then, my passion for human rights has only grown.” Global Campus Youth Advisory Group Member

FRIENDSHIP THRUSTWORTHY COM  
INSPIRING GROWTH COLLABORATION CRE  
RELIABLE SUSTAINABILITY DEV  
COMPASSION CONNECTION IMPAG  
SOLIDARITY



COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PARTICIPATION  
ACTIVITY  
DEVELOPMENT INCLUSIVITY COURAGE  
POWERMENT UNITY SUSTAINABILITY  
REWARDING EXCELLENCE ADVOCACY  
INNOVATION NETWORKS

# The Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa

HRDA



Global Campus  
Africa

## People

Frans Viljoen  
Michelle Maziwisa  
Magnus Killander  
Rotondwa Mashige  
Emily Laubscher  
Elvis Fokala  
Davina Murden

## Regional Network

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



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### **Celebrating 25 Years of Human Rights Education: A Testament to Resilience**

The Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria celebrated its 25th year of successful completion and graduation of GC Africa cohorts since its inception in 2000, demonstrating commitment to and a long-term vision for human rights education amid evolving regional and global challenges.

### **Academic Programmes and Innovations**

In 2024, the Centre welcomed 28 students from 18 countries, immediately engaging them in activities designed to foster resilience and adaptability. Orientation included teambuilding workshops, psychosocial support, and field research trips to southern African nations such as Zimbabwe and Malawi. This year's curriculum incorporated cutting-edge themes like "Climate Justice" and "Sentient Rights in the Animal Industrial Complex", showcasing the Centre's responsiveness to pressing global issues.

Despite challenges, 27 out of 28 students successfully completed the programme, with 24 graduating on International Human Rights Day, 10 December 2024. Workshops for career preparation and academic publication highlighted the Centre's forward-looking approach.

### **Seminars and Memorial Lectures**

The Centre hosted critical discussions, such as a seminar with the UN Independent Commission of Inquiry on Palestine and the Helen Kanzira Memorial Lecture, addressing the role of digital technologies in reducing maternal mortality. The Christof Heyns Memorial Lecture tackled the abolition of the death penalty in Africa, reinforcing the Centre's dedication to addressing pressing human rights issues.

### **Moot Competitions**

Two significant moot court competitions — the Nelson Mandela World Moot and the Christof Heyns African Human Rights Moot — showcased the Centre's global and regional leadership in practical human rights education. These events brought together students, academics, and legal professionals to tackle complex human rights cases.

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**“The HRDA programme has been a transformative journey that has left an indelible mark on my personal and professional life. Its unique blend of academic excellence, practical learning opportunities, cultural exchange, and community-building experiences has equipped me with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to be an effective human rights advocate, defender, lecturer and practicing attorney. Whether through the intellectually stimulating lectures, the practical exercises that brought human rights law to life, or the enriching international exposure, every aspect of the programme has contributed to my growth as a scholar and practitioner.”** GC Africa student

## Alumni Achievements

GC Africa alumni continued to break new ground, establishing initiatives like the Climate Taskforce and advancing research on climate justice. The Vera Chirwa Award was presented to Lindiwe Khumalo for her contributions to human rights in Africa, while alumni networking events fostered collaboration among recent graduates and seasoned experts.

## Looking Ahead

In alignment with the University of Pretoria's decoloniality and Africanisation agenda, the Centre began a comprehensive curriculum review to ensure relevance and inclusivity. This commitment to innovation ensures that the next generation of human rights leaders is well-equipped to address global challenges.

## Recent Appointments of GC Africa Alumni

Name	HRDA Class	Country	Position
Michael Gyan Nyarko	2014	Ghana	Deputy Executive Director of the Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa (IHRDA)
Sabelo Gumedze	2001	Eswatini	Executive Director of the Africa Institute of South Africa (within Human Sciences Research Council)
Itumeleng Shale	2008	Lesotho	Puisne Judge at the High Court of Lesotho
Chimwemwe Chithope Mwale	2023	Malawi	Deputy Director of the Malawi Legal Aid Bureau
Benyam Dawit Mezmur	2005	Ethiopia	Re-election to sit on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
Solomon Ebobrah	2006	Nigeria	Vice-Chancellor of the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, Nigeria
Sègnonna Horace Adjolohoun	2007	Benin	Head of Legal Division at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights
Azubike Onuora-Oguno	2008	Nigeria	New Professor of Law at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria
Liesl Muller	2021	South Africa	External Expert at the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
Thompson Chengeta	2011	Zimbabwe	Expert Member of the UN International Panel on the Regulation of Autonomous Weapons
Tresor Muhindo Makunya	2018	DRC	Associate Professor of Public and Constitutional Law at the University of Goma, DRC
Ademola Jegede	2008	Nigeria	External Expert on Children and Climate Change at the African Union Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
Joseph Geng Akech	2018	South Sudan	Minister of Youth and Sports in the Government of South Sudan
Nkatha Murungi	2009	Kenya	Acting Director of the University of Pretoria's Centre for Human Rights
Fazili Mihigo	2021	DRC	Civil Magistrate of the Public Ministry in the Government of the DRC

1.

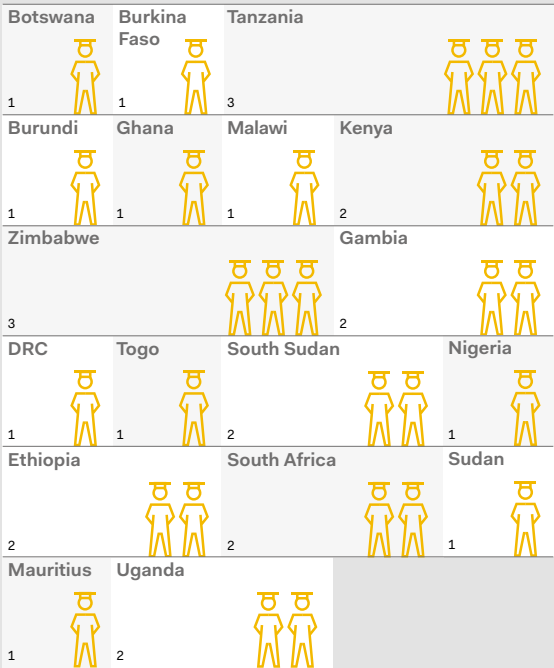


1. Bridging generations of human rights advocates: Class of 2024 with HRDA Council Directors in front of the iconic Aula building at the University of Pretoria.

2. Celebrating students and partners celebrating their milestones on graduation day 2025.

3. Regional learning in action: HRDA students standing with HRDA Director of University of Lagos.

Countries of origin of graduates



GC Africa in numbers



Member universities



Graduates

92% satisfaction rate



Scholarships



Professional courses

open to external audience

2.



3.



# The Arab Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights

ARMA



Global Campus  
Arab World

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## People

Sami Nader  
Jihad Nammour  
Mayada Abdallah  
Louise Lagarde  
Rania Salem  
Elias Dahrouge  
Sara Makki  
Carmen Abou Jaoude  
Anthony Nakhle  
Chantal Youssef

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## Regional Network

Saint Joseph University  
of Beirut, Lebanon — *coordinator*

University of Carthage, Tunisia

International University of Rabat,  
Morocco

University of Jordan, Jordan

Birzeit University, Palestine

University of Southern Denmark,  
Denmark

Danish Institute for Human Rights,  
Denmark

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With the participation of academics from:

Cairo University, Egypt



## The Development of a Focus on Human Rights in Armed Conflict

GC Arab World continued to expand and solidify its position as a regional hub for human rights education, despite the outbreak of a regional war just five weeks into the first semester of the 2023/24 academic year. The conflict escalated into a significant military campaign by the Israeli army, culminating in the bombing of the city of Beirut, home of the regional programme.

In 2024, the programme showcased remarkable resilience and innovation by introducing new academic features, broadening its thematic scope, and fostering collaborations with regional and international organisations. Despite the high levels of uncertainty and instability caused by the conflict, GC Arab World remained steadfast in its commitment to empowering individuals and communities through education. Highlights of the year included the expansion of the Beirut Academy of Human Rights, the establishment of a Child Rights Thematic Unit, and the extension of the focus on human rights in armed conflict.

### Beirut Academy of Human Rights

The Beirut Academy of Human Rights emerged as a cornerstone of GC Arab World's outreach efforts, bringing together regional and international experts through innovative

teaching formats. It played a pivotal role in the professional development of emerging human rights advocates.

The Academy hosted its third edition in June and July 2024, offering a range of specialised courses that addressed critical issues in the field. Notable offerings included the second edition of the regional course "Introduction to the International Human Rights System," developed in collaboration with OHCHR's Training and Documentation Centre and supported by the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie.

Additionally, the Academy introduced an advanced course on child justice in partnership with Terre des Hommes. A workshop on "Legal Checking in International Humanitarian Law", conducted in collaboration with Les Surligneurs and Siren Associates and supported by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, was another highlight. This workshop trained lawyers and journalists in legal checking and introduced a new AI tool developed within this partnership.

### Child Rights Unit

GC Arab World made significant progress in institutionalising its focus on child rights with the support of colleagues from GC Africa working at the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria. A dedicated Child Rights Unit was established, doubling the teaching hours on child rights. Beyond its foundational short course "Child Rights in International Law", the unit introduced an advanced course on child justice, which included sessions on children deprived of liberty.

Participants from diverse backgrounds gained theoretical knowledge and practical experience through the "Child Rights Clinic", a hands-on component introduced by Elvis Fokala, the manager of the Child Rights Unit within GC Africa. The clinic emphasised UN Convention on the Rights of the Child alternative reporting and children's digital rights.

The unit also extended its child-centred approach beyond the classroom through collaborations with organisations such as UNICEF and local NGOs. Such as These efforts addressed urgent issues like child justice reform and the protection of children in conflict zones.

Beirut Academy OHCHR Course. Withstanding the escalation of the war, the programme hosted in Beirut the second edition of the "International Human Rights System" with participants from 6 Arab countries. The Director of UN Training and Documentation Center for Southwest Asia and the Arab Region, Dr Abeer Jamal Al-Khraisha and the workshop's coordinating team hand out the certificates in the new ArMA classroom.



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## Human Rights in Armed Conflict

The ongoing regional conflict has had a profound impact on the programme, requiring adaptations in its delivery and content. Some courses transitioned to online formats, while others were updated to address the new human rights challenges posed by the wars in Gaza and Lebanon. The theme of human rights in times of conflict became a central focus across the programme.

A group of students chose to work on the public perceptions of the war on Gaza for their applied research in Human Rights. The programme expanded its work on the issue of enforced disappearance. It ran the

fourth edition of its Human Rights Lab on the Missing in Lebanon. And with the support of the Swiss Embassy, it set up another Human Rights Lab on the issue of enforced disappearance in Syria. It engaged with Syrian organisations, the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances and the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. Through hybrid learning models, students examined the intersection of human rights and humanitarian law, focusing on issues such as the protection of children in armed conflict. The programme emphasised the importance of International Humanitarian Law, International Criminal Law and transitional justice mechanisms to address wartime human rights violations.

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**Volker Türk**  
United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights

Message to the  
Graduates of GC Arab  
World on the  
10th Anniversary  
of the Programme

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“It was once said that education is the knowledge not of facts but of values, the understanding not just of how the world works but of our place in it. These words resonate strongly with me as I look at the state of our world today. Vicious, reckless conflicts led by short-sighted men are stealing lives and futures, are destroying communities, and are laying the foundations for more violence and more victims. Brutal drums of war are drowning out calls for peace. International law is being trampled on. Impunity reigns, and the inequality gap between those who have and those who have not is widening all the time. For those of you in Beirut right now and across Lebanon, you know this better than most. I am both horrified by and fearful of the recent escalation in hostilities, and I want to express my heartfelt solidarity with you.

Education is like a vaccine against violence and human rights violations. Education is the most powerful medicine of all. It promotes equality. It fosters inclusion, strengthens social

cohesion, empowers people to engage in decision-making processes or take up leadership roles themselves, and it raises awareness and understanding of rights leading to dignity and respect. It helps us to keep our heads when those around us are losing theirs.

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. Human rights education is a light that guides us through the storm. And for ten years, the Global Campus of Human Rights in the Arab World has been helping to keep that flame aloft. In the midst of all the turmoil and devastation on your doorstep in Gaza and elsewhere, this is something to treasure.

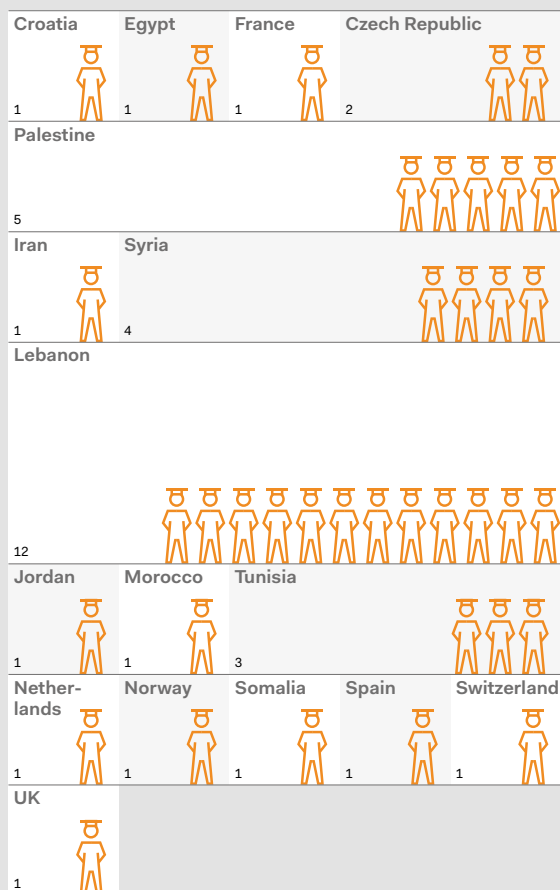
I congratulate you all, the educators, the graduates, the students, the alumni, the leaders and decision-makers of tomorrow. Thank you for the work you do in the most difficult circumstances. You are

continuing long-standing traditions in a region well known for ancient centres of learning, famous human rights organisations, and heroic human rights defenders, but also, unfortunately, for great injustice. Today, your mission is more important and more urgent than ever. It is also a hopeful one despite the chaos that often seems to surround us.

Like Rumi says, do not act small because each individual is the universe in ecstatic motion. Each of you carries an infinite potential to effect positive, lasting change. So I urge you to uphold the values of the Global Campus and of international law, speak up in the face of discrimination, break the violent, vicious cycles of war, help to deliver accountability and justice across the region, and strengthen your societies by promoting human rights, protecting civic space, and fighting for equality. You have my support and my deep respect. Best wishes for your next steps and thank you.”



## Countries of origin of students



## GC Arab World in numbers



Participating universities



Graduates

95% satisfaction rate



Curricular internships



Outreach events



Training programmes



Scholarships

“As an ArMA graduate, my two years of study were a transformative experience, shaping both my academic and professional path. The programme offered a unique blend of rigorous academics and practical learning, providing invaluable hands-on experience. Additionally, the opportunity to engage with students from diverse backgrounds enriched my perspective, fostering meaningful connections.” GC Arab World student

**Left.** Beirut Academy, Child Rights Course. The programme started developing a new feature, a Human Rights Clinic, with the support of GC Africa and Elvis Fokala, the head of the Child Rights thematic unit at the University of Pretoria.

**Right.** Hiking Group Pic Sept 2024: Hiking trip with students at the beginning of the academic year.



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

APMA



Global Campus  
Asia-Pacific

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## People

Mike Hayes  
Suphatmet Yunyasit  
Fahmina Karim  
Arinkorn Kittisirachad  
Thepsuda Boonjue

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## Regional Network

Mahidol University,  
Thailand — *coordinator*

Universitas Gadjah Mada,  
Indonesia

Kathmandu School of Law,  
Nepal

Ateneo de Manila University,  
the Philippines

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Associate member:

Universidade Nacional  
Timor Lorosa'e, Timor-Leste

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## Navigating Challenges in Human Rights Education

Human rights education is a sensitive and, at times, perilous field to teach and research, particularly in regions where governments criticise or suppress such initiatives. For the Asia-Pacific Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation programme (GC Asia-Pacific), this reality underscores the resilience required to prepare the next generation of human rights advocates.

Despite the risks, GC Asia-Pacific remains steadfast in equipping students with the tools to navigate these challenges. Students are trained in managing sensitive topics, conducting research in unstable environments, and utilising protection mechanisms for human rights defenders. While these measures cannot eliminate risks, they ensure students are better prepared for the difficulties they may encounter. The programme also collaborates with universities to emphasise their role in protecting vulnerable students and supporting marginalised communities through education, research, and advocacy.

One example of this resilience is GC Asia-Pacific's annual student-driven human rights campaigns at Mahidol University. These campaigns not only educate the broader student body on pressing human rights issues but also train its students in advocacy, message design, and impact assessment.

In the 2023/24 academic year, one campaign tackled the taboo surrounding menstrual health in the Asia-Pacific region, highlighting the challenges women face in accessing affordable menstrual hygiene products. This effort empowered students to address sensitive issues while raising awareness on a critical topic.

The programme also demonstrates its commitment to creating safer academic environments. In December 2023, the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP) hosted a forum on inclusive higher education for refugees in Thailand. Many GC Asia-Pacific students, particularly those from Myanmar, face uncertain futures due to threats from their governments or oppressive policies like forced conscription. Recognising this, the forum brought together lecturers, administrators,



GC Asia-Pacific students in class and field trips in Bangkok.





civil society organisations, and refugee groups to explore how universities can better support displaced and at-risk students. Key discussions included fostering inclusion, expanding access to education for refugees, and building stronger networks with refugee organisations.

Through its collaboration with the UNHCR's 15x30 programme and the Global Campus network, GC Asia-Pacific has played a vital role in safeguarding students, advocating for inclusive policies, and expanding access to human rights education. These efforts

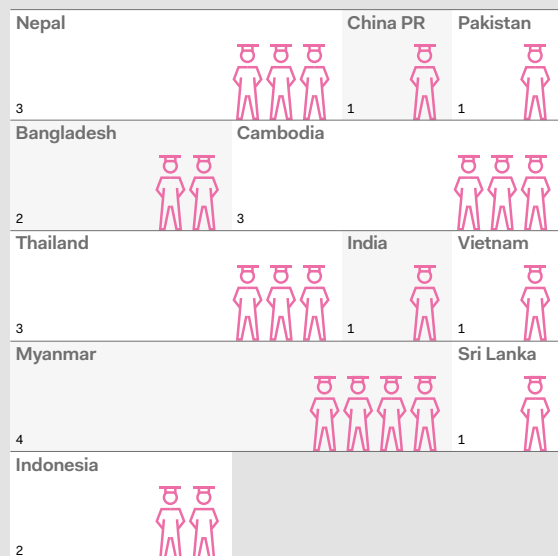
demonstrate the programme's dedication to creating meaningful change and ensuring its graduates are equipped to contribute effectively to their communities.

By combining practical education with institutional advocacy, GC Asia-Pacific embodies the persistence needed to sustain human rights education in the face of adversity. Its resilience not only protects its students but also inspires a broader movement toward justice and equality.

**“This journey was not always easy. Besides intensive academic studies, internships, thesis, exchange semester, we also navigated severe human rights violations across the globe. We grappled with difficult realities, encountered moments of uncertainty, and at times felt daunted by the magnitude of the challenges before us. Yet, we persevered. And that perseverance is what defines us.”** GC Asia-Pacific student



## Countries of origin of graduates



## GC Asia-Pacific in numbers



Member universities

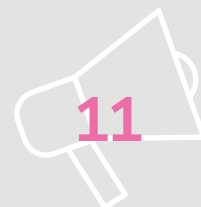


Graduates

90% satisfaction rate



Scholarships



Outreach activities

**Left Page.** GC Asia-Pacific Classroom activities in Bangkok.

**Right.** GC Asia Pacific Steering Committee meeting in Bangkok





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

CES



Global Campus  
Caucasus

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## People

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

Yerevan State  
University

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## Regional Network

Yerevan State University,  
Armenia — *coordinator*

Ivane Javakhishvili  
Tbilisi State University,  
Georgia

American University  
of Central Asia,  
Kyrgyzstan

Moldova State University,  
Moldova

Taras Shevchenko National  
University of Kyiv,  
Ukraine

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Associate partner:

Belarusian State University,  
Belarus

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## Advancing Human Rights Education Amidst Adversity

The Global Campus Caucasus Master's Programme is a one-year interdisciplinary degree implemented by five regional universities in Armenia, Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova. Despite operating under extraordinarily challenging circumstances—including the ongoing war in Ukraine, the post-conflict situation in Armenia, economic and political instability, restrictive foreign agent laws in Kyrgyzstan and Georgia, and tightened visa regulations for international students in Armenia—the GC Caucasus programme has continued to foster resilience and innovation in human rights education.

### Academic Highlights and Student Achievements

During the 2023/24 academic year, GC Caucasus successfully hosted thesis defenses for the 2022/23 cohort and continued teaching for the 2023/24 cohort in a hybrid format. A key milestone was the integration of the Moldova State University as a new partner, which welcomed its first group of exchange students and hosted a vibrant spring school in May 2024. These efforts underscored the programme's adaptability and commitment to academic excellence despite regional challenges.

In January 2024, GC Caucasus organised a specialised crash course on Transitional Justice featuring Anja Mihr (GC Central Asia) and Midhat Izmirliya (GC South East Europe), who led a session on transitional justice in the Balkans. This initiative enriched students' understanding of the complex mechanisms for addressing historical injustices and fostering reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

## Key Events and International Collaboration

**Inclusion Through Arts Conference:** One of the most notable events of the year was the International Conference on "Inclusion Through Arts", held in Yerevan on 6-8 March 2024. Organised as a collaboration between the Centre for European Studies (CES) at Yerevan State University, ShareMusic & Performing Arts, and the Henrik Igityan National Centre of Aesthetics, this unique 2.5-day conference highlighted the transformative power of the arts in promoting inclusion and advancing children's rights.

The event featured Marthe Wandou, a Right Livelihood Laureate, and Nigel Osborne, who shared insights from his work using performing arts to foster inclusion in North Uganda, South India, Sweden, and Ukraine. More than 120 academics, experts, artists, teachers, policymakers, psychologists, and NGO representatives engaged in discussions on topics such as children's rights, democracy, and innovative uses of the arts for inclusion. Prior to the conference, GC Caucasus welcomed the Global Campus regional Child Rights Officers from all eight Global Campus programmes in Yerevan on 4-6 March. This event facilitated cross-regional dialogue on pressing children's rights issues and planning of joint activities and projects between the regional programmes.

Inclusion Through Arts events in Yerevan, Armenia.



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## Professional Trainings and Capacity Building

GC Caucasus further expanded its impact by organising eight non-degree professional trainings tailored to the needs of diverse stakeholders:

- **Trainings for Civil Servants:** Three core and one pilot training session equipped 86 civil servants with practical skills in human rights advocacy and policymaking.
- **Prison Staff Trainings:** A specialised series trained 100 prison staff on human rights principles, contributing to improved standards within correctional facilities.

In June 2024, the programme launched the second iteration of the “Asylum and Human Rights” HELP course, facilitated through a partnership between CES, UNHCR, and the Council of Europe. This course underscores the programme’s dedication to addressing critical issues in refugee protection and asylum law.

## Summer School and Institutional Growth

GC Caucasus, in collaboration with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI), hosted a summer school on “Human Rights, International Law, and Migration” in Yerevan. This event provided an immersive learning experience for students and professionals, focusing on the intersection of migration, law, and human rights in the region.

To formalise and deepen this collaboration, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between CES and RWI was signed in September 2024. This partnership not only strengthens institutional ties but also enables initiatives like hosting an Afghan GC Caucasus student at the RWI Armenia office, exemplifying the programme’s commitment to inclusive education.

## Graduation and Alumni Achievements

Despite the year’s adversities, 34 students graduated from GC Caucasus throughout the 2023/24 academic year, with 15 completing their degrees in November 2023 and 19 in September 2024. These graduates have joined a growing network of human rights professionals who are shaping policies and practices across the region and beyond.

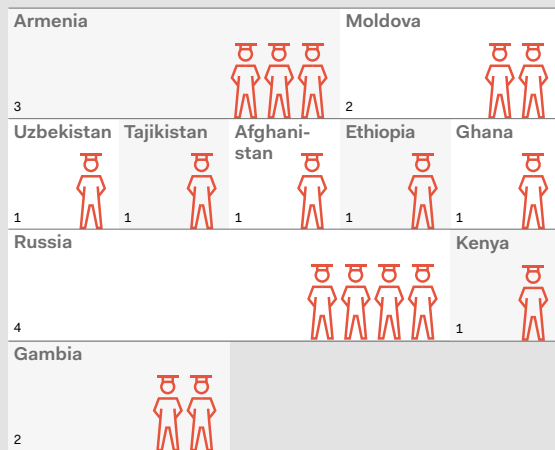
## Looking Ahead

The GC Caucasus Master’s Programme continues to navigate the complexities of a volatile regional landscape with determination and adaptability. By fostering academic excellence and facilitating cross-border collaboration, the programme serves as a beacon of resilience and innovation in the field of human rights education. As it grows, GC Caucasus expands on its mission to empower future leaders committed to justice, inclusion, and sustainable peace.



Pictures taken by GC Caucasus staff.

## Countries of origin of graduates



## GC Caucasus in numbers



Member and partner universities



Graduates

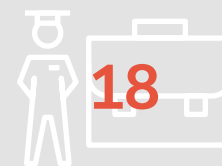
83% satisfaction rate



Outreach events



Vocational courses



Internships

“The programme has broadened my horizons in the field of human rights and democratisation: I have supported the monitoring of four elections in my country to contribute to the electoral system in my community, because choosing the right candidate affects the lives of people and my life too. It has been the best programme to learn about human rights, values, and dignity.” GC Caucasus student

GC Caucasus  
Graduation Ceremony.



# The Master's Programme in Human Rights and Sustainability in Central Asia

MAHRS



Global Campus  
Central Asia

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## People

Anja Mihr  
Karlygach Nurmanbetova  
Victoria Orazova  
Cholpon Osmonalieva  
Aiym Chotoeva

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## Regional Network

OSCE Academy in Bishkek,  
Kyrgyzstan — *coordinator*

American University  
of Central Asia,  
Kyrgyzstan

University of World Economy  
and Diplomacy,  
Uzbekistan

National University of Mongolia,  
Mongolia

KIMEP International University,  
Kazakhstan

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



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## Human Rights Education in the Heart of Central Asia: Challenges and Milestones

The Master's Programme in Human Rights and Sustainability in Central Asia (GC Central Asia) at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek stands at crossroads of opportunity and adversity. As Central Asia bridges China, Russia, and Europe, the programme reflects the region's complexities: a tense geopolitical environment, rising authoritarianism, and the struggle to champion human rights and democracy.

Despite these challenges, GC Central Asia has emerged as a lighthouse, lighting the way and determined to advance human rights education in a politically sensitive context. In 2024, GC Central Asia achieved a significant milestone by becoming the 8th Regional Master's Programme of the Global Campus of Human Rights, further embedding its international and interdisciplinary approach to human rights, sustainability, and governance.

However, even this success highlights the region's challenges. The programme's accreditation process required the strategic omission of the word "democracy" from its official name — a concession made to ensure compliance with political restrictions. This symbolic yet revealing act underscores the growing difficulty of promoting democratic values in an increasingly authoritarian environment.

The tightening grip of regional governments on academic freedom adds another layer of complexity. For instance, the

newly implemented Foreign Agents Law in Kyrgyzstan, which mirrors legislation seen in neighbouring Russia, poses risks to institutions like the OSCE Academy. By targeting organisations perceived as having foreign affiliations, this law creates bureaucratic hurdles, stigmatises programmes with international partnerships, and heightens scrutiny over funding sources. Securing financial stability for GC Central Asia has become a delicate balancing act, requiring diplomatic finesse and innovative strategies to maintain the programme's integrity and independence.

Yet, amid these trials, GC Central Asia has consistently proven its resilience. Its curriculum, blending international human rights law, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and good governance, continues to foster critical thinking and practical skills. Through internships and mobility terms, students are exposed to real-world challenges across Central Asia, Europe, and beyond. These experiences prepare graduates not only to navigate the region's political volatility but to serve as advocates for justice and equity in their communities.

One of GC Central Asia's standout contributions in 2024 was its focus on just transition, explored during the Global Classroom 2024 hosted by the OSCE Academy. This critical theme — addressing the conditions required to transition equitably from one global order to another — resonates deeply in today's climate of shifting political landscapes. The erosion of democratic norms

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GC Central Asia classes taking place in Bishkek.



and the rise of authoritarian regimes worldwide complicate the concept of “just transition”, making it as much a challenge for governance as it is for sustainability. GC Central Asia students presented research on issues like transitional justice, democratic resilience, and human rights in illiberal contexts, reflecting the programme's commitment to tackling these pressing global challenges.

The programme also emphasised regional issues, such as the intersection of climate change and human rights. Through a research project on climate-induced conflict in the Fergana Valley, GC Central Asia showcased its ability to address Central Asia's unique vulnerabilities. This work aligns with its broader commitment to supporting marginalised groups, particularly women, children, and refugees, as highlighted in the first Alumni/Student Summer School at Issyk-Kul. The event, organised in partnership with Right Livelihood and the Global Campus, brought together participants and thought leaders like Afghan Right Livelihood Laureate

Sima Samar and representatives from UN Women to explore innovative solutions to regional human rights challenges. The successful accreditation of the GC Central Asia programme by the Kyrgyz EdNet Agency for Quality Assurance in Education was a further testament to its quality and relevance. The rigorous evaluation process highlighted the young programme's strengths, while also identifying areas for improvement — an opportunity for continued growth.

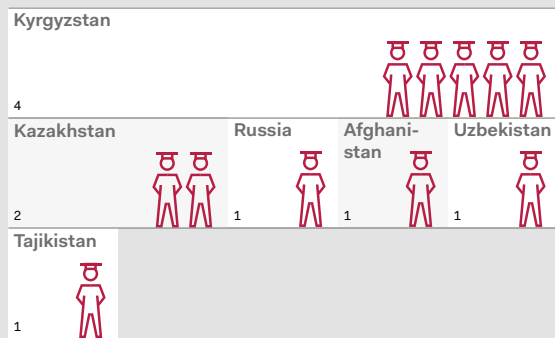
As the OSCE Academy navigates its role in a region fraught with geopolitical tension and political constraints, its achievements exemplify the perseverance required to promote human rights education. By addressing the region's challenges head-on and fostering global collaboration through initiatives like the Global Classroom, GC Central Asia reaffirms its mission: to educate a generation of leaders equipped to drive change in Central Asia and beyond.

**“Back in June, I was extremely lucky to present at the Global Campus of Human Rights Student Conference on ‘Just Transition: Conditions for Change in the Global Order’ in Kyrgyzstan at OSCE Academy in Bishkek and Issyk Kul. This was a group of the most lovely, smart, motivated and inspiring humans, and I feel so grateful to have met you all. I could see how our struggles are both similar and very different and how valuable exchanging ideas and perspectives was for all of us. I will never forget the solidarity and kindness we showed each other that week, and somehow, I felt that we have already known each other a long time.”** GC Europe graduate 2024

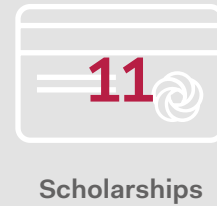


Meeting of the Global Campus Council and the regional university network of GC Central Asia at the OSCE Academy Bishkek in June 2024.

## Countries of origin of graduates



## GC Caucasus in numbers



“The 2024 Global Classroom was an incredible opportunity to learn from participants representing 37 different countries, on the challenges and potential way forward towards Transitional Justice. Thanks to the new and old friends for making this such an engaging, wholesome experience!”

GC Central Asia graduate 2025

GC Central Asia student and alumni summer school at Issyk Kul in June 2024.



# The European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation

EMA



Global Campus  
Europe

## People

**Thérèse Murphy**  
**Orla Ní Cheallacháin**  
**George Ulrich**  
**Inge Zwart**  
**Judit Villena Rodò**  
**Elisabetta Zennaro**  
**Martina Urbinati**  
**Stefania Saccarola**

Global Campus Headquarters

## 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



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## Protecting Democracy and Human Rights in Europe

The European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA) has long been recognized for its standard of excellence in human rights education. Bringing together 43 universities across Europe, it represents a unique example of inter-university cooperation rooted in the intellectual values of collaboration, dialogue and exchange. EMA continues to draw on its diverse and rich network to ensure that our graduates have the necessary skills and knowledge to be change-makers in their own societies and globally.

In the academic year 2023–24, EMA reaffirmed its commitment to equip a new generation of professionals with the necessary tools to address contemporary challenges such as democratic backsliding, discrimination, inequality and disregard for human dignity. It does so by nurturing students' knowledge, creativity and dedication to the values enshrined in the international human rights framework. EMA's academic excellence is also underpinned by the depth of our network's expertise in human rights education and research which is incorporated into the programme's curriculum development and through shared research initiatives on human rights education, such as a two-day research workshop entitled *Advancing Human Rights Education in Higher Education: Research, Practice, Impact* hosted by EMA in 2024.

This focus reflects the urgent need for European human rights professionals to protect the principles of democracy and human rights, which are under threat in Europe, and for human rights education to respond to contemporary developments.

## Academic Highlights

- **First Semester in Venice:** The first semester curriculum was delivered by approximately 70 professors and experts representing our participating universities and key human rights institutions in Europe and beyond.
- **Field Trip to Kosovo:** Marking 20 years of EMA field visits to Kosovo, students engaged in a hands-on learning experience exploring transitional justice, human rights, and democracy in action.
- **Second Semester Across Europe:** In February, students joined 34 universities across the continent for intensive study and research.

## Student-Led Initiatives

- **EMA Film Festival:** Organised by students to mark Human Rights, the film festival showcased children's rights under the theme *Generations of Hope: Childhood on film through time*.
- **FRA Forum in Vienna (March 2024):** EMA students and alumni contributed to this pivotal European human rights event in a variety of ways, including by supporting the work of the Forum's rapporteur and by reporting to the final plenary session of the Forum.
- **GC International Student Conference in Bishkek (June 2024):** Students presented research and collaborated with peers from other GC regional programmes. Four EMA students presented papers on topics including redressing the harms of violent conflict and authoritarianism, colonial legacies in transitional justice and the role of the arts in reconciliation.

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GC Europe Graduation Ceremony 2023–24 and Inauguration 2024–25 at the Scuola Grande San Giovanni Evangelista, Venice, September 2024.





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## Faculty and Curriculum Development

- In April, professors gathered at the University of Padova's Centre for Human Rights to review the EMA curriculum to ensure its continued relevance to contemporary challenges and best practice in pedagogical methods.
- The EMA first semester curriculum underwent an external evaluation by Felisa Tibbitts, UNESCO Chair for Human Rights Education at Utrecht University.
- In July, EMA hosted a research workshop entitled *Advancing Human Rights Education in Higher Education: Research, Practice, Impact* that brought researchers together to address the challenges and opportunities of taught postgraduate human rights education.

## Graduation and Achievements

In September 2024, 82 students graduated, joining a distinguished network of EMA-educated human rights professionals. Exceptional academic achievements included:

- **Best Theses Awards:** Recognized for their research contributions, seven theses were selected for publication in the EMA Best Theses booklet.
- **EMA Alumni Award Winner 2024:** Highlighting the impact of EMA graduates in advancing human rights globally, the EMA Alumni Award was awarded to Andra Matei.

## EMA Alumni

### Online Course: Authoring Justice

This course encouraged storytelling as a tool for social change, emphasizing participatory approaches. Guest speaker Gemma Neville

(EMA 2006), author of *Constitution Street*, shared insights on writing with respect and collaboration, inspiring participants to craft narratives that empower marginalized voices.

### Podcast Series: Reimagining Politics through Human Rights

EMA Alumna Gauri van Gulik (EMA 2006), co-founder of the Multitudes Foundation, Discussed the dynamic nature of democracy and highlighted the need for active participation to build inclusive societies. Gauri's perspective reinforces that democracy is a verb, requiring collective effort to uphold human rights.

### At Protecting Human Rights in a Changing Europe

As Europe confronts challenges to its democratic fabric, EMA's role has never been more critical. By training professionals to tackle contemporary challenges of inequality, discrimination and democratic backsliding, EMA equips its graduates to act as frontline defenders of human rights and democracy and changemakers in their societies. EMA's approach reflects a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of human rights challenges within and beyond Europe and the need to seek local and global solutions.

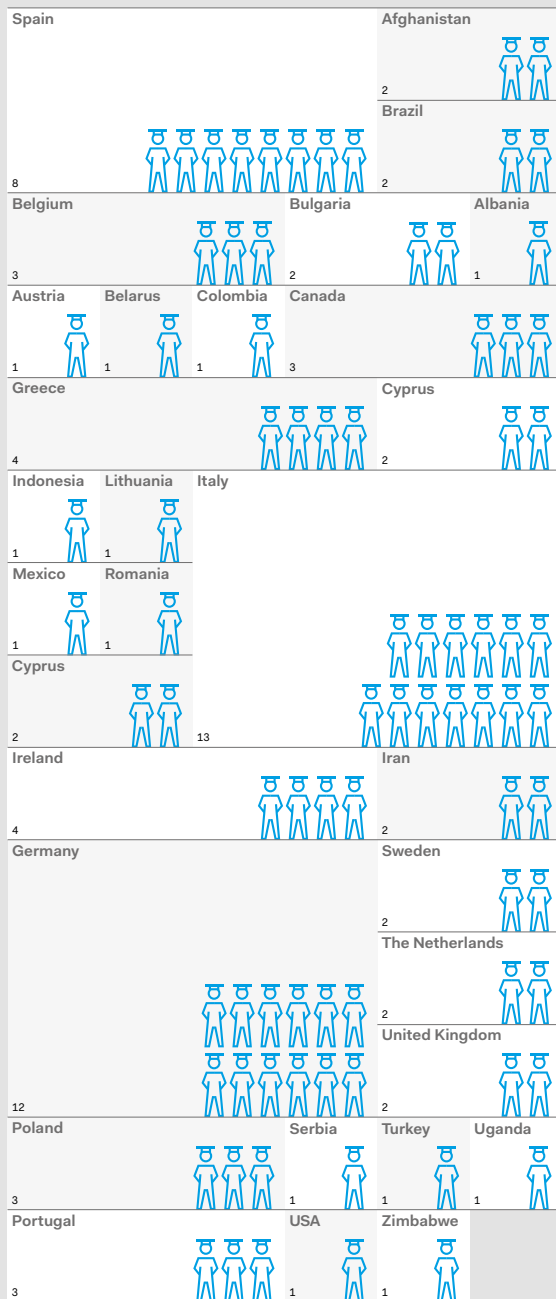
### Looking Ahead

EMA remains committed to fostering a global community of human rights professionals, and equipping graduates with the knowledge and skills to address pressing challenges. From classrooms to the frontlines, EMA continues to inform, to inspire action and to nurture the creativity needed for a more just and equitable world.



Members of the EMA Academic Curriculum Group, the EMA Executive Committee and external experts hosted by the Centre of Human Rights, University of Padova, April 2024

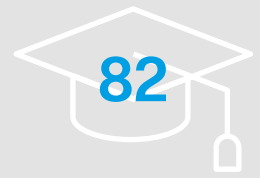
## Countries of origin of graduates



## GC Europe in numbers



**43**  
Member  
universities



**82**  
Graduates

80% satisfaction rate



**17**  
Internships



**82**  
Lecturers

“This Master's surely makes for an unforgettable journey that starts with getting to know 90 new people from all around the world in a monastery on a small island. These people ended up being my closest confidants and biggest help during the last months. But not only the people, also the content and the classes have left an imprint on me and there is no chance I will ever forget the past months.”

GC Europe student

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

LATMA



Global Campus  
Latin America-Caribbean

## People

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

## Regional Network

Universidad Nacional de San  
Martín, Argentina — *coordinator*

Universidad Mayor  
de San Andrés, Bolivia

Universidade Federal  
do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

Universidad Nacional de Chile,  
Chile

Universidad de San Francisco  
de Quito, Ecuador

Universidad Rafael Landívar,  
Guatemala

Facultad Latinoamericana  
de Ciencias Sociales FLACSO,  
Mexico

Universidad del Pacífico, Peru

Universidad de la República, Uruguay

Universidad Nacional  
de Buenos Aires,  
Facultad de Ciencias Sociales,  
Argentina

Universidad Nacional de General  
Sarmiento, Argentina

Universidad Nacional de Lanús,  
Argentina

Universidad Nacional  
de Mar del Plata, Argentina

Universidad Nacional de Quilmes,  
Argentina

Universidad Nacional  
de Villa María, Argentina

Universidad Iberoamericana UNIBE,  
Dominican Republic

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## Advancing Human Rights and Democracy in the Region

In a region marked by social inequality, political instability, and systemic human rights challenges, GC Latin America and the Caribbean stands as a testament to the resilience of frontline human rights educators. Against a backdrop of persistent struggles — ranging from barriers to justice for marginalized groups to institutional hurdles — GC Latin America and the Caribbean continues to drive meaningful change. Through its commitment to education, training, and advocacy, it demonstrates the power of knowledge and collaboration in confronting adversity and advancing human rights.

This determination has allowed GC Latin America and the Caribbean to overcome complex regional dynamics, solidifying its reputation as a vital regional force for promoting democracy and justice. Anchored by its robust academic framework and dynamic partnerships, the programme empowers students, professionals, and communities to navigate and transform the human rights landscape across Latin America and the Caribbean.

### Academic Achievements

In 2023, the Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean achieved a significant milestone. The Argentine National Commission for University Evaluation and Accreditation (CONEAU), under the Ministry of Education, re-evaluated the programme. Following a detailed review of its improved curriculum and performance evaluation, the programme received the top accreditation rating "A", underscoring its excellence in higher education.

Throughout the 2023/24 academic year, GC Latin America and the Caribbean welcomed 23 students from 17 countries to its Master's programme. This year marked a historic milestone as the programme reached a total of 300 graduates from 27 countries. These achievements are a testament to the strength of the curriculum, the dedication of faculty and staff, and the exceptional performance of the students.

### Capacity Building Through Training

Beyond its flagship Master's programme, GC Latin America and the Caribbean conducted four non-degree training courses during the reporting period, engaging approximately 1,000 participants from 16 countries. These courses continue to enhance the programme's reputation as a leader in human rights education and advocacy across the region.

Highlights of these courses include:

- MOOC on "Access to Justice for Persons with Mental Disabilities": Developed in partnership with the National Academy of Sciences in Argentina, this course received recognition from organisations such as the Public Defender of the Province of Neuquén and the Civil Association of Public Defenders of Argentina (ADEPRA).
- Special Classes on Conventionality Control and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights Judgments: Delivered to the Supreme Court of Buenos Aires Province and the Association of Judges in Chaco Province, these classes emphasised the practical application of human rights law.
- Courses Addressing Regional Challenges: Topics included comprehensive care systems, sexual violence against women and girls, cinema and human rights, and more.

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GC Latin America  
& Caribbean student  
campaigning in Buenos  
Aires, Argentina.



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## Thought Leadership

GC Latin America and the Caribbean also advanced human rights discourse through the DiagonalCIEP Blog (<https://diagonalciep.org/>), a platform featuring articles on pressing regional issues such as:

- Political corruption and democracy in Guatemala
- Indigenous language protection in Latin America
- Climate change and education adaptation challenges
- Gender gaps and human rights advocacy

These publications reflect the programme's commitment to fostering informed, critical conversations about the region's most pressing challenges.

## A Vision for the Future

As it builds on these achievements, GC Latin America and the Caribbean remains persistent in its mission to promote justice, democracy, and human rights in the region. By combining academic excellence, innovative training, and impactful partnerships, GC Latin America and the Caribbean empowers a new generation of leaders to address the complex human rights challenges facing the region and beyond.

“Joining the Master's in Human Rights and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean as a student was a transformative experience, both because of the knowledge I gained and because of the community that was built along the way. Sharing classrooms with other students from across Latin America and the Caribbean helped me appreciate geographical differences as well as the similarities of the challenges we face. Also, thanks to faculty members, my perspective on justice, dignity, and the defense of fundamental rights was enriched with each and every class. Every conversation, every case analyzed, and every debate were opportunities to weave networks of solidarity and strengthen a shared commitment to building more just and inclusive societies. It was definitely one of the best experiences of my life, and it has made me a better lawyer and human rights defender.”

GC Latin America & Caribbean Student





Countries of origin of graduates



GC Latin America-Caribbean in numbers



GC Latin America & Caribbean regional hubs activities in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



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

ERMA



Global Campus  
South East Europe

## People

Asim Mujkić  
Marco Borraccetti  
Mariana Hadzijusufović  
Alina Trkulja  
Marija Ivanović  
Mileva Piralić  
Nejira Pasić

University of Sarajevo,  
University of Bologna

## Regional Network

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

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## A Critical Force for Change in a Region of Challenging Political Discourse

The Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe (GC South East Europe) is a cornerstone of human rights education and advocacy in a region marked by political and social complexities. Operating in the Balkans — including Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and North Macedonia — the programme addresses challenges such as delayed EU accession, persistent ethnic tensions, and fragile political landscapes. In this context, GC South East Europe's mission to equip the next generation of human rights professionals is both timely and essential.

### Transforming Human Rights Advocacy in the Balkans

GC South East Europe graduates exemplify the programme's impact on the human rights field. Two distinguished alumnae from the 2022/23 cohort, Lamija Kovačević and Chiara Maria Murgia, are notable for their contributions to democracy and human rights advocacy: Lamija, a researcher at Mediacenter Sarajevo, addresses issues such as disinformation and polarised narratives in regions, such as Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her work underscores the importance of accurate and independent media in fostering democratic resilience. Meanwhile, Chiara's

work with UNICEF emphasises youth participation and advocacy, empowering young voices in decision-making processes critical for the future of post-conflict societies such as Kosovo and North Macedonia.

These examples highlight the programme's ability to train professionals to navigate the intricate realities of human rights in the Balkans. Through a curriculum that integrates theoretical knowledge and practical application, GC South East Europe equips students with the skills needed to address the region's unique challenges, from inter-ethnic relations to stalled progress on EU integration.

### Strengthening Regional Collaboration Through the ERMA Alumni Network (EAN)

The ERMA Alumni Network (EAN) plays a vital role in fostering collaboration among graduates and supporting each other in their professional growth. The network's activities include workshops, advocacy campaigns, and public discussions, which extend the programme's influence beyond academia. For instance, EAN has organised dialogues on the EU's geopolitical role in the Balkans, engaging policymakers, academics, and regional experts in critical conversations about democracy and human rights. These events not only enhance alumni connections but also contribute to shaping policy and advocacy in the region.

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The graduation ceremony of the 23rd generation of GC South East Europe students.



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## Advancing Innovation in Human Rights Education

As the Balkans confront both traditional and emerging challenges, GC South East Europe continues to review and innovate its educational offerings. These programmes reflect the increasing need for interdisciplinary approaches in addressing modern human rights concerns, particularly in the digital age and amidst the political uncertainties of delayed EU integration.

## Global Impact Through Regional Expertise

GC South East Europe graduates are not only shaping the future of human rights advocacy in the region but also influencing global conversations. Supported by a robust alumni network and grounded in a curriculum that balances academic rigour with practical application, they are equipped to tackle complex political and social challenges. As the Balkans continue to navigate their intricate political landscape, GC South East Europe ensures that its graduates are prepared to lead in an ever-evolving regional and global landscape.

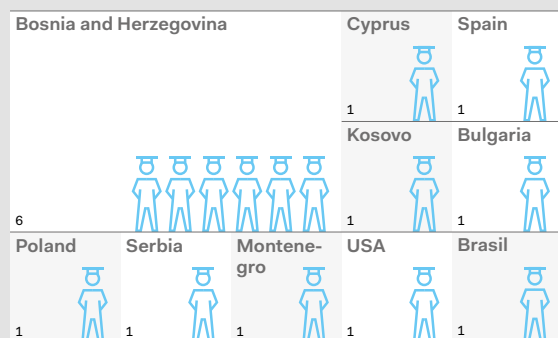
“This rewarding experience immersed me in key processes promoting European integration in my home country, during a historic moment when the European Commission gave the green light to opening negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Working within the European External Action Service allowed me to deepen my understanding of the EU integration process, exploring methodologies and practical dimensions from a unique perspective. As an ERMA Alumna, I was welcomed to the EU Office with a lot of trust. I was involved in the organisation of high-level meetings, in organizing a study visit for fellow trainees from Brussels, in drafting policy proposals, writing reports and more. Particularly, I was happy to support outreach projects on human rights and civil society that draw meaningful engagement.”

GC South East Europe student, about the GC Internship at the EU delegation to BiH.



Pictures taken by Vanja Cerimagić at the GC South East Europe Graduation Ceremony in Sarajevo.

## Countries of origin of graduates



## GC South East Europe in numbers



Member universities



Graduates

90% satisfaction rate



Scholarships



Theses



Internship hosting organisations





# The Global Campus in Numbers

Elisabetta Noli  
Valentina Abita

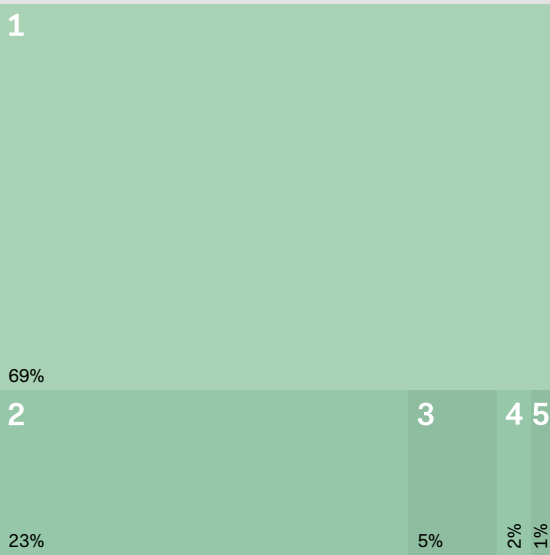


# Finances

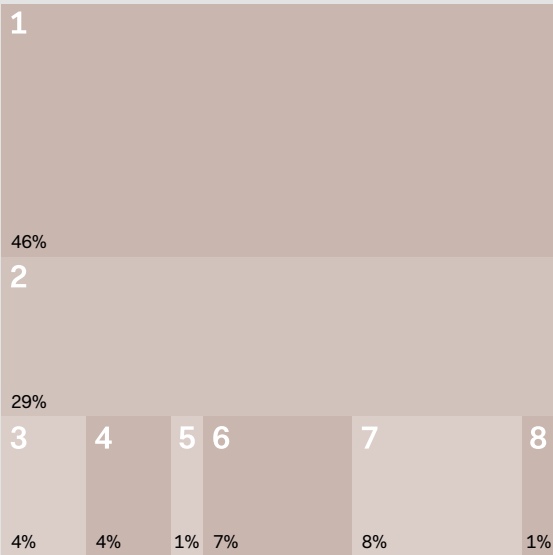
Paolo Rech  
Dania Ferrarese  
Isabella Vianello  
Giulia Vallata  
Sara Lai  
Valeria Zанrosso  
Francesco Ganeo  
Finances & Logistics  
Department

Period of reference: 1 August 2023 — 31 July 2024

Income € 8,320,888 Expenses € 7,998,682



1	EU Grant	€ 5,703,062
2	Right Livelihood Grant	€ 1,881,170
3	Other EMA Student Fees	€ 439,356
4	Fee-Based Activities	€ 219,009
5	Other Contributions	€ 78,291



1	8 Regional Master's Programmes	€ 3,670,394
2	GC Headquarters	€ 2,225,671
3	Afghanistan Scholarship Programme	€ 309,959
4	Reconceptualising Exile Programme	€ 299,034
5	Capacity Development Activities	€ 99,411
6	Children's Rights Projects	€ 570,975
7	Support to Regional Activities with Right Livelihood	€ 723,719
8	Training Seminars	€ 99,519

We wish to thank our generous partners for their in-kind donations: the city of Venice for the rental of our headquarters, the Monastery of San Nicolò in Lido, Venice,

and the member universities that host students during the second semester and put at disposal faculty and staff.

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# A Glimpse into 2025

## Events & Trainings

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### Innovative Education

- A groundbreaking MOOC on *A Human Rights-Based Approach to AI* (February-March 2025) aims to bridge the gap between AI and human rights, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue.
- A Microlearning Course on Human Dignity and Human Rights (from April 2025) delves into the evolving relationship between dignity, democracy, and the rule of law.
- The Authoring Justice Writing Course (May-July 2025) continues to inspire human-centred storytelling.

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### Engaging Media & Arts

- The Sounds of Justice Podcast (from June 2025) explores the intersection of music, human rights, and social justice.
- The #Art4HumanRights and #Sport4HumanRights celebrate advocacy through creative and athletic platforms.

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### Capacity Building & Advocacy for Human Rights Defenders

- Trainings such as Training on the European Convention on Human Rights (April 2025), the Venice School for Human Rights Defenders (June 2025), the Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights and Advocacy (August-September 2025), the Online Training for International Electoral Observers (October 2025), and the Advanced Seminar on European Court of Human Rights Jurisprudence (November 2025)
- The Afghanistan Scholarship Programme highlights Afghan voices and advances human rights research through its online speaker series.
- The Reconceptualising Exile Programme kicks off a research project unpacking the meaning of exile in today's political landscapes and seeks to develop actionable recommendations to create a supportive environment for exiled human rights defenders.

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### Empowering Alumni & Communities

- Various alumni-led grassroots projects, led by teams collaborating across regions, will address a wide range of issues, including education for Afghan female students, a cybersecurity primer for activists, and youth civic engagement initiatives.
- The Action Against Ecocide Diaries photojournalistic contest will focus on environmental destruction and advocate for climate justice.



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#### Bridging Academia and Development Cooperation

- An interdisciplinary lab between the Law and Biology faculties will be inaugurated at Moldova State University.
- GC will support UNDP Pakistan and a coalition of local universities in the creation of a Human Rights Education Centre based in Lahore, and the strengthening of human rights higher education in the country.
- The University of Belize will be assisted in introducing human rights education as a new specialisation in a cooperation project with the local EU Delegation.

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#### Youth & Children's Rights

- Through child rights contests, interviews, and workshops, we amplify young voices to champion rights.
- Expanded regional partnerships ensure more diverse educational and cultural opportunities for students.

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#### Global Engagement

- From faculty exchanges to internships, we foster cross-regional collaboration and practical experiences.
- Events like the World Congress on Justice with Children in Madrid and the Global Classroom on Business & Human Rights in Bangkok tackle urgent issues.

As we celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Global Campus Alumni Network and the 20th Anniversary of the Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights, and Advocacy, 2025 will be a year of milestones, innovation, and solidarity. Together, we remain at the frontline, steadfast in defending human rights and envisioning a future rooted in justice.

And many more new projects, events, and activities... so stay tuned!



It was with shock and profound sadness that we at the Global Campus of Human Rights have received news of the sudden, untimely death of our friend and colleague Koen De Feyter.

Koen loved Venice. He loved the programmes and institutions that we have jointly established in the Monastery of San Nicolò: the European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA), the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC) and the Global Campus of Human Rights. And motivated by this devotion, for a quarter of a century, he has contributed to and left an indelible imprint on EMA, EIUC and Global Campus endeavours in countless different ways.

Koen was a regular teacher in the EMA programme from the very beginning. Representing the Maastricht University Faculty of Law, he was responsible in the late 1990s for organising an EMA teaching week on human rights and development titled 'Globalisation and Inequality'. This early engagement was emblematic of Koen's lifelong commitment to human rights as a vehicle for global social justice (see, for example, *Human Rights: Social Justice in the Age of the Market*, Zed Books 2005). Being loaded with interactive exercises, discussion fora, and an elaborate simulation event (the 'Agani village conference'), the teaching week, moreover, provided a venue for his equally profound dedication to student-oriented learning.

In the academic year 2004/05, Koen stepped up his involvement and assumed the role of resident EMA Academic Coordinator & Programme Director. The EMA curriculum, at the time, was benefitting from an amazing diversity of inputs; its characteristic structure was beginning to crystallise but was not yet clearly defined. Koen, therefore, initiated a

comprehensive curriculum review that led to the distinction between a 'first stream' of mandatory and mostly plenary curriculum components organised in five thematic sections and a 'second stream' of elective course components conducted in smaller interactive groups. Rolling seminars, master classes, clusters, and skills seminars, which remain hallmarks of EMA to this day, are all outcomes of this curriculum development effort, which served both to define and consolidate a common programme core and facilitate a differentiated, personalised learning experience for the participating students. Being a staunch supporter of student-led initiatives, Koen established a 'lounge' in the monastery, envisioned as a student-controlled space to which visiting lecturers and experts could be invited at the end of a teaching day to further explore aspects of their teaching or any current issues in a relaxed, interactive atmosphere.

Towards the end of his year in Venice, Koen pursued another personal passion and took initiative to establish an EIUC (since Global Campus) Summer School on Cinema, Human Rights, and Advocacy. He engaged filmmaker and photographer Nick Danziger and EMA graduate Claudia Modonesi in the initiative, and, 19 years later, they still remain responsible for the scientific coordination of this annual event organised by the Global Campus Projects and Training department in the Monastery of San Nicolò at the time of the Venice International Film Festival. Koen's own teaching in the summer school tended to focus on exploring the importance of, and possible limits to, freedom of expression in the arts. This is a theme that he has also elaborated in a more recent pioneering Global Campus undertaking, namely the music and human rights project leading to publication of the *Routledge Companion to Music and Human Rights*, Routledge 2022, to which he



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contributed a chapter.

Following a remarkably intense year in Venice, Koen assumed the position of Chair and Professor of International Law at his alma mater, the University of Antwerp. This position provided a platform for him to further deepen the academic interests characterising his EMA involvement. As convenor of the Law and Development Research Group at the University of Antwerp, he remained a principal voice in this field leading, *inter alia*, to assuming editorial responsibility for the *Encyclopedia of Law and Development*, Edward Elgar 2021.

Soon after his return to Belgium, Koen launched an innovative inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional research initiative on 'localising human rights' that engaged scholars and PhD researchers in an exploration of how the international and national/regional human rights frameworks respond, or fail to respond, to local aspirations for social justice and change. The contours of this visionary research agenda were traced in a jointly edited publication *The Local Relevance of Human Rights*, Cambridge University Press 2011, and Koen was since able to support doctoral students to conduct comparative research in this area in different countries worldwide, including Bolivia, China, DRC, and India.

In the course of his years at the University of Antwerp, being no longer directly affiliated with an EMA-participating university, Koen nevertheless remained a regular teacher in the Master's programme, almost always on topics related to human rights and development and in many instances also on human rights and economic globalisation, intersections between business and human rights, and responsibilities under international law of transnational corporations and international financial institutions.

The right to development was a central theme of Koen's doctoral dissertation and remained a life-long focus of his work. In the lead-up to the 25th anniversary of the 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development, Koen contributed to the work of the High-Level Task Force mandated by the UN to examine and clarify the normative content and operational implications of this challenging and potentially groundbreaking right (*The Right to Development: A Treaty and its Discontents*, Asser Press 2016). In 2019, he was appointed to serve as a member of an Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development established by the UN Human Rights Council expressly with the aim of drafting a would-be binding treaty on the right to development. In his final teaching sessions in Venice, Koen shared his experience of this engagement with EMA students both in plenary sessions and in interactive 'second stream' master classes – thus coming full circle to the curricular framework, which he helped to put into place almost two decades earlier.

Koen was a dear friend and source of inspiration to many of us in the Global Campus of Human Rights. His unwavering dedication to students and lifelong pursuit of social justice from below was coupled with a remarkable intellectual rigour and visionary intuition. Koen leaves behind his wife Han Verleyen and children Moya, Nathan, Stan, and Jules. Our hearts go out to all of them for this unfathomable loss. We join them in celebration of a life of accomplishments and of Koen's characteristic unimposing leadership in so many areas, both professional and private. As once stated about Koen, almost in passing, by the EMA founder Antonio Papisca – 'that is a person of the highest moral integrity'.

*George Ulrich, Academic Director, on behalf of the Global Campus of Human Rights, Venice*

# 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 14<sup>th</sup> century Monastery of San Nicolò is home to the Global Campus of Human Rights Headquarters. It was generously provided to us for free 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 Defenders; and the Cinema, Human Rights and Advocacy Summer School — along with many other projects and activities. With our Memorandum of Understanding with the city of Venice, as well as with other partners, we host additional external events and activities within our classrooms and sun-lit courtyard. The monastery has thus also been the location of beautiful classical concerts, art exhibitions, and even features in a 1970s James Bond movie!



Nowadays, our charming historic grounds have office space, meeting rooms and classrooms, and are easily accessed by public transportation or by walking along the lagoon. Should you want to visit us to see the monastery and meet with our staff, please contact us at [info@gchumanrights.org](mailto:info@gchumanrights.org) or +39 041 2720911.







# Global Campus of Human Rights

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Europe	Central Asia
South East Europe	Caucasus
Latin America-Caribbean	Arab World
Asia-Pacific	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.

## **Global Campus of Human Rights ETS**

### **Headquarters**

Monastery of San Nicolò  
Riviera San Nicolò, 26  
I-30126 Venice Lido (Italy)

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[www.gchumanrights.org](http://www.gchumanrights.org)

