

Activity Report 2021



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Introduction

OIDEL's 2021 activity report shows the areas of work in which we have been present, the relationships we have maintained, the events that have been organized, the training given, and the publications generated.

It has once again been a special year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected millions of people around the world and has forced us to redefine many activities. We hope that this new year will allow us to continue working for the right to education with fewer restrictions than in the past.

In the first part of the year 2021, OIDEL has carried out multiple online interventions, which have progressively shifted to in-person interventions towards the end of the year. OIDEL's main activity concentrated on the United Nations, participating in the three Human Rights Councils, which were held during March, July, and October, as usual. We gave special attention to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Ms. Boly Barry, presented at the July Council, under the title: "The right to education as a cultural right".

Thanks to technology, we have been able to organize four online events, related to the right to education, with the participation of leaders in the field of education. In March 2021, we convened professionals specialized in the education of children with special needs, in May, we held a colloquium on education as a cultural right. Also in May, we brought together former ministers of education from the United Kingdom, Italy, and Portugal; and in July, former ministers from Chile, Uruguay, El Salvador, and Honduras.

We would like to acknowledge the OIDEL team for their important daily work. And to the people and entities that support us: We thank you for your collaboration. It helps us to fulfill our mission of promoting the right to education and freedom of education in international forums.

Diego Barroso
President of OIDEL



1. UNITED NATIONS ACTIONS

1.1. SESSIONS AT THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

As in the previous year, the three four-monthly sessions of the Human Rights Council (HRC), held in March, July, and October, were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and most of the interventions were done via video pre-recordings.



1.1.1. 46TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (March)

OIDEL did four oral interventions at the Human Rights Sessions:

- In the annual debate on the rights of the child that took place on March 1, 2021, Arja Krauchenberg, former President of EPA (European Parents Association) and member of OIDEL's Executive Committee, spoke about quality in primary and secondary education, which goes far beyond the simple acquisition of knowledge.
- The next intervention took place during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on cultural rights, Ms. Karima Bennoune, on March 3, 2021. Ignasi Grau, Director of OIDEL, referred to the importance of creating a sense of community and belonging within schools to protect the fundamental rights of the child.
- OIDEL, represented by its director, Ignasi Grau, participated in the discussion of the presentation of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of persons with disabilities on March 3, 2021. Mr. Grau stressed that, for the realization of the rights of the aforementioned persons, it is a priority to listen to all stakeholders, including parents.
- OIDEL, as a member of the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education, signed the oral intervention "COVID-19, Human Rights and Youth" that was read during the General Debate of the Council, which coincided with the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training.

1.1.2. 47th SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (June and July)

At this Council, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Ms. Koumbou Boly Barry, presented her report: "The cultural dimensions of the right to education or the right to education as a cultural right".

1.1.2.1. OI DEL did two oral interventions at these sessions:

- In the discussions on the Right to Education, Ignasi Grau of OI DEL, raised three points regarding the Special Rapporteur's report: a) Guaranteeing cultural resources during the educational process is important b) The existence of non-governmental schools contributes to promoting plurality and educational diversity and c) The need for a common good approach: to achieve a full realization of the right to education, the cultural perspective and the involvement of all actors are taken into account.

This OI DEL oral statement was signed by OIEC (International Catholic Education Office), New Humanity, Learning Without Borders, the International Institute for Industrial Ecology, Green Economy, and the freedom advocacy organization ADF International.

- OI DEL's second oral statement was done at the presentation of the debate on the right to privacy. The intervention was read by Diego Barroso, President of OI DEL, in which he recalled that the notion of the autonomy of the child must be framed within the full development of the person.

1.1.2.2. Side Event: "The cultural approach to the right to education"

- OIDEL organized this online event, during this Regular Session of the Human Rights Council to discuss with experts the content of the report presented by the Special Rapporteur.



ÉVÈNEMENT PARALLÈLE
« L'APPROCHE CULTURELLE DU DROIT À L'ÉDUCATION »
 29 JUIN 2021 DE 13H00 À 15H00 CET

Ouverture de:
EDUARDO PINTO DA SILVA
 Coordinateur de l'équipe des droits de l'homme de la MP Portugal

Animée par:
IGNASI GRAU CALLIZO
 Directeur général de l'OIDEL

Pour rejoindre l'évènement: [voici le lien](#)

Id de l'évènement: 810 6796 0870

La Rapporteuse spéciale sur le droit à l'éducation, Mme Koumbou Boly Barry, présente son nouveau rapport sur l'éducation comme droit culturel. Le but de cet événement est d'approfondir le contenu de ce rapport et voir comment l'approche culturelle peut se réaliser grâce à la collaboration des pays, société civile et ONGs.

		
EDUARDO PINTO DA SILVA Coordinateur de l'équipe des droits de l'homme de la MP Portugal	KOUMBOU BOLY BARRY Rapporteuse spéciale sur le droit à l'éducation	MOHAMED ZINELABIDINE Ancien Ministre des Affaires culturelles de la Tunisie
		
PATRICE MEYER-BISCH Président de l'Observatoire de la Diversité et des Droits Culturels et coordinateur de la Chaire UNESCO Droits Humains et Démocratie de l'Université de Fribourg	ERIKA FLORES DÉLEON Présidente d' IDC Cultura et Professeur- Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos	ANDRESSA PELLANDA General coordinator of the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education

*Interprétation Français-Anglais  

1.1.3. 48th SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (September and October)

In the third Human Rights Council of 2021 civil society organizations again participated virtually.

OIDEL signed, along with other NGOs, two oral statements on the right to development and human rights education. It also intervened in the debate on indigenous peoples, recalling the importance of the cultural approach and of non-state schools managed by indigenous communities for the full exercise of their rights.

1.2. SOCIAL FORUM

Each year, the Human Rights Council opens a space for dialogue between NGOs and UN Member States. The 2021 Social Forum, held on October 11 and 12, focused on good practices, success stories, lessons learned, and challenges in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The emphasis was laid on international cooperation and solidarity from a human rights perspective. It was the first face-to-face event of 2021 at the United Nations.

Mme. Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, opened the session recalling that education was one of the areas most affected by the pandemic.

OIDEL participated in the Social Forum through its director, Ignasi Grau, who emphasized the need to include all intermediate actors and stakeholders. He underlined the relevance of parents in the exercise of their children's educational rights, especially during the pandemic. In the same vein, he recalled the importance of a common good approach achieved through an interactive dialogue between States, parents, and civil society, in order to reach the education goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.



Ignasi Grau during the Oral Statement at the Social Forum 2021

1.3. UNESCO



1.3.1. International Seminar on the Evolution of the Right to Education

The seminar was held on December 7 and 8 of 2021 to promote a better exercise of the right to education. It was attended by representatives of countries, experts, and members of civil society, to discuss the challenges in exercising this universal right and the need to guarantee quality education.

Presentations were held by several education officials from UNESCO and the UN, academics, and members of civil society. The panel of speakers included Gwang-Chol Chang, Chief of UNESCO's Education Policy Section; Stefania Giannini, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education; Borhene Chakroun, Director of UNESCO's Division of Lifelong Learning Policies and Systems; and Ms. Koumbou Boly Barry, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education.

In the debate on "The Right to Education of Vulnerable Groups", OIDEL highlighted three points: the role of families in guaranteeing the exercise of the right to education; the importance of cultural rights; and the difficulties of minorities in exercising the above two rights.

In the discussion on "The Right to Digital Learning," OIDEL recalled the efforts made by families to ensure education during COVID-19, while schools remained closed, and the importance of counting on families in digital reforms in the field of education.

1.3.2. “Guidelines for strengthening the right to education in national frameworks”.

OIDEL has contributed to the drafting of a document published by UNESCO. Taking into account the SDG 4 goal, the document was developed to strengthen national frameworks and to help countries and stakeholders to assess the compatibility of their national legal and policy framework on education with international normative instruments on the right to education.

1.4. NGO PLATFORM ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

On February 19, 2021, OIDEL organized an event with several NGOs and the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Ms. Kombou Boly Barry. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss the report of the Special Rapporteur to be presented at the 47th regular session of the Human Rights Council in June 2021.



NGO representatives of Save the Children and EPA (European Parents Association) participated in the event.

2. ACTIONS PROMOTED BY OIDEL

2.1. 1ST ONLINE CONGRESS OF SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

In March 2021, OIDEL organized the 1st European Digital Congress on the education of children with special needs, to offer a platform for professionals from centers that serve these children. It was attended by participants from eight EU countries.



2.2. ONLINE COLLOQUIUM: "EDUCATION AS A CULTURAL RIGHT"

On May 31, 2021, OIDEL organized the online colloquium "Education as a Cultural Right". The debate was presented by Ignasi Grau, director of OIDEL and directed by Álvaro José Cifuentes, member of OIDEL. Participants included the Hispanist and essayist Inger Enkvist, the philosopher and pedagogue Gregorio Luri, and the professor of ethics and philosophy Miguel Ángel Quintana Paz.

The central theme of the event, education as a cultural right, was chosen due to the publication of the Special Rapporteur's report to the United Nations Human Rights Council in June 2021. This event was co-sponsored by the CEU Foundation, OIEC, and EPA.



2.3. EUROPEAN DIALOGUE WITH FORMER MINISTERS OF EDUCATION: "ONE YEAR AFTER THE COVID CRISIS, WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?"

On May 11, 2021, OIDEL organized, in collaboration with OIEC, ECNAIS, and EPA, an online colloquium with former education ministers Maria do Carmo Seabra from Portugal, Ruth Kelly from the UK, and Francesco Profumo from Italy.



Maria do Carmo Seabra

Ruth Kelly

Francesco Profumo

The speakers explained the main measures taken by their countries during the confinement in the first period of the pandemic. They agreed on the fact that, during that first phase of the pandemic, the world of education was not prepared to face the consequences of online school, even if the actors (parents, students, and teachers) tried to do their best. After one year, these technical problems are still relevant, even if significant improvements have been seen in these three countries.



2.4. DIALOGUE WITH FORMER MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF LATIN AMERICA: “EDUCATION IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC”.

On July 7, OI DEL organized a webinar to facilitate a colloquium on education during the COVID-19 pandemic with former ministers of education of Latin America. The webinar was presented with Comillas Pontifical University and the Permanent Forum on Foreign Policy (FPPE).

The four former ministers of education present were: Adriana Delpiano of Chile, Evelyn Jacir de Lovo of El Salvador, Carlos Ávila Molina of Honduras and María Julia Muñoz of Uruguay. Pablo Biderbost and Belén Urosa of the Universidad Pontificia de Comillas moderated the event. The session was opened by Ignasi Grau, Director of OI DEL and Enrique Sanz, Rector of Comillas University, and closed by Juan Somavía, President of the FPPE (Permanent Foreign Policy Forum) and former Director General of the ILO (International Labor Organization).

Among other things, the former ministers spoke of the key role played by caregivers, particularly mothers, in ensuring that education continues to function during the pandemic.



Coloquio Virtual:

Educación en tiempos de pandemia

Panel de ex ministros de Educación:

- Adriana Delpiano
Chile
- Evelyn Jacir de Lovo
El Salvador
- Carlos Ávila Molina
Honduras
- Josefina Vázquez Mota
México
- María Julia Muñoz
Uruguay

07/JULIO   **18:00**  **12:00**  **13:00**  **11:00**

Organizan:  **COMILLAS**  **CIHS**  **FORO PERMANENTE DE POLÍTICA EXTERIOR**  **OIDEL**

3. ACTIONS IN WHICH OIDEL HAS PARTICIPATED

3.1. SUMMER UNIVERSITY CIVISMO - NEW DIRECTION: SEMINAR "EDUCATIONAL PLURALISM"

On June 17, 2021, OIDEL participated in the Summer University organized by the independent Spanish think tank Civismo and the European think tank New Direction in El Escorial (Spain). The lecture was presented by Rodrigo Melo, president of ECNAIS, together with Ignasi Grau, director of OIDEL. The role of parents and educational models, heated topics in international educational debates, were addressed.

3.2. ASSEMBLY OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION (ATHENS)

The General Assembly of the CEEC (European Committee for Catholic Education) was held in Athens (Greece) on October 22 and 23, 2021. Ignasi Grau did a session on the functioning of the main international organizations related to the educational world.



Ignasi Grau during his presentation in Athens

4. TRAINING ACTIVITIES


4.1. “THE UNITED NATIONS CLOSER”

In May 2021, OI DEL and the Italian Region of Valle d'Aosta organized a one-morning online training aimed at different schools in that region to explain the functioning of international organizations and human rights. The training was given by the director of OI DEL, Ignasi Grau.

4.2. Online course “Inclusion and Educational Pluralism”

The course "Inclusion and Educational Pluralism", which OI DEL designed in 2020, in collaboration with the UNESCO Chair at the University of La Rioja, is still available on the internet platform, Whetu.

The program is designed to raise awareness of the importance of educational pluralism and to show the current challenges it faces. It consists of eight online modules and is aimed at professionals in the world of education.



Cátedra UNESCO de la Universidad de La Rioja, OI DEL

★★★★★

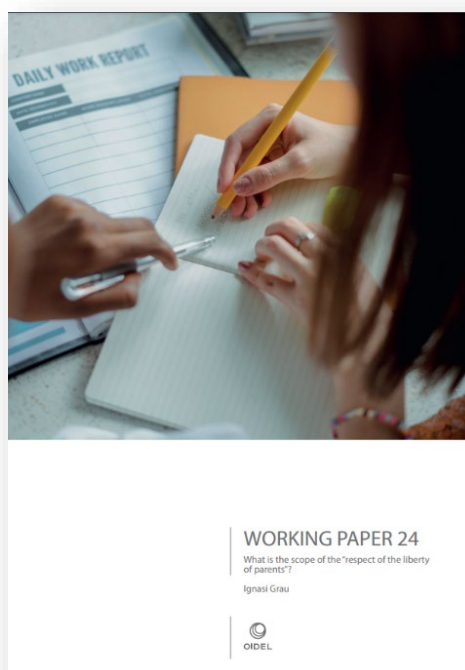
Diplomado en Pluralismo Educativo e Inclusión

Adquiere una perspectiva de conjunto de los principales desafíos, oportunidades, ventajas y mejores métodos de implementación desde un enfoque plural de la enseñanza

5. PUBLICATIONS

5.1. Working Paper 24: FROM A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE, WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THE EXPRESSION "RESPECT OF THE LIBERTY OF PARENTS"?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes freedom of education, recognizing the important role of parents and considering this freedom as an essential part of the right to education. However, the subsequent legal recognition of this freedom in international treaties was made under more ambiguous formulas; in particular, speaking of "respect for parental freedom". Some authors have questioned whether this formulation includes concrete actions on the part of the State. Consequently, the international debates have also commented on the positive obligations of the state to guarantee this parental right.



OIDEL produced Working Paper 24 based on the main human rights treaties and the doctrine of international organizations related to the said controversy. This work aims to show that "respect of the liberty of parents" cannot be limited to negative obligations of the State if the right to education is to be fully protected.

5.2. COVID-19 VIDEO BROADCASTING ON YOUTUBE

The world of education is facing the COVID-19 crisis. To shed some light on the challenges and imaginative solutions to address this crisis, in mid-2020, OIDEL started to offer several videos from experts around the world on "COVID-19 and Education".

In 2021, OIDEL has continued to promote videos on its YouTube channel from people linked to the world of education such as Alessandra Aula, Secretary-General of BICE (Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance), Zacharie Zachariev (UNESCO), or Inger Enkvist (Hispanist).

TEAM OIDEL 2021



Ignasi Grau
General Director



Eva Pérez
Communication Manager



Noemí Goust
Administration Manager

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

Diego Barroso, President of the EPA (European Parents Association) from 2004 to 2009.

VICE PRESIDENTS

Charles L. Glenn, Dean of the School of Education, Boston University.

Rolando Ernesto Marín Coto, former Minister of Education of El Salvador.

SECRETARY OF THE COMMITTEE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

Ángel Sánchez, General Corporate Director, IFE.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Joan Curcó, general director of Fomento de Centros de Enseñanza.

Francis Delpérée, Professor Emeritus at the University of Louvain, and member of the Belgian Chamber of Deputies.

Claire de Lavernette, Vice-President of the NGO Committee before the United Nations.

Bertrand Doncieux, Executive Director of AEFLIB (European Association of Free Universities).

Joan Gallostra, President of the FIP Foundation (Fundació Innovació Profesional).

Paz Gutiérrez Cortina, Former Secretary of the Education Commission of the Mexican Parliament.

Arja Kraunchenberg, Project Coordinator at EPA, and Vice President of LLLP (Life Long Learning Plattform).

Georges Haddad, President of the University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and former Director of Research and Foresight at UNESCO.

Borja Martínez de Bedoya, General Director of the COAS educational group.

Luisa Ribolzi, Professor Emeritus at the University of Genoa, and member of the National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes.

António Sarmento, President of AEEP (Associação de Estabelecimentos de Ensino Particular).