

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES



ACTIVITY REPORT 2022



OIDEL



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ABOUT OIDEL:

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OIDEL

This Activity Report aims to give you insight into OIDEL's work in 2022. It is not exhaustive, but rather gives an account of our main achievements in the promotion of a full realization of the right to education.

For almost 40 years now, OIDEL has worked for the promotion of education as a fundamental human right. OIDEL seeks to achieve this promotion through its participation in discussions on this issue before international organizations, the development of research, and the organization of various training events.

OIDEL is an NGO specializing in the right to education and freedom of education with consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Council of Europe.



Consultative status
at the United
Nations Economic
and Social Council
(ECOSOC)



Consultative status at
the United Nations
Educational,
Scientific and
Cultural Organization
(UNESCO)



Consultative status
at the Council of
Europe

INTRODUCTION:

This activity report is organized according to OIDEI's three pillars of action: Advocacy, Training, and Research.

OIDEI conducted its advocacy work in three international organizations: the United Nations (in particular the Human Rights Council and UNESCO), the Council of Europe and the Community Institutions. These three institutions are the ones that have the greatest impact on the realization of the right to education and in which we have traditionally operated. OIDEI presented more than 20 declarations in International Organizations, many of them to remind the international community that for a full realization of the right to education, parents must be listened to. Furthermore, we have been invited to different forums organized by academic and civil society groups. In most of these forums, OIDEI presented the main international challenges of the right to education, from the effect of COVID on family policies to the acknowledgment of diversity within educational systems.

The main objective of our training courses is to educate civil servants, members of civil society or researchers about the nature and work of international organizations. The training for civil servants of the Government of La Rioja in June on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was a highlight.

OIDEI's research builds the basis for our advocacy work and helps us to be the NGO of reference in the field of Freedom of Education. In 2022, we published the 6th update of the Bibliography on the right to education and education policies and the Report on Educational Pluralism in 10 education systems.

Ignasi Grau
OIDEI General Director

1. ADVOCACY

Since its foundation in 1985, OIDEI's objective has been the promotion of the right to education as a fundamental human right in all its dimensions. OIDEI's vocation is international, for this reason, OIDEI is an NGO with consultative status with the United Nations (Economic and Social Council), UNESCO, and the Council of Europe.

1.1 Activities in International Organizations:

1.1.1. United Nations

The main forum for OIDEI's external relations is the United Nations, specifically the Human Rights Council and UNESCO. These two institutions have the greatest impact on the configuration of the right to education. We collaborate with them through participation, contribution, or in parallel events, depending on the needs and opportunities of each institution.

In this section, you will see the main work that OIDEI has carried out, sometimes with these organizations, sometimes before them, sometimes in collaboration and sometimes in parallel.

- **Human Rights Council (HRC):**

The HRC is the principal intergovernmental body of the United Nations with the capacity to discuss the various issues relating to human rights and situations requiring special attention. It meets 3 times a year in the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Among the discussed subject related to the right to education are thematic reports (right to education, rights in the field of cultural rights, human rights education...), as well as country reports.

The following is a summary of the work carried out by OIDEI at these meetings.



49th session of the Human Rights Council:

The 49th session of the Human Rights Council was held in March 2022. After two years of COVID, all meetings were held in hybrid format. OIDEL participated in several oral statements, which are summarized below:



Room XIX, where the HRC was held in hybrid format

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, March 9:

In her first report to the Human Rights Council, the newly appointed Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, Alexandra Xanthaki, presented an overview of her mandate, highlighting the positive and fundamental nature of culture for the individual, communities, and societies, and recalling the legally binding obligations that States have undertaken to ensure the realization of cultural rights.

In his oral statement, Ignasi Grau of OIDEL proposed that the Rapporteur consider education as a cultural right. This approach to education is essential to ensure the full development of the human personality, and implies recognition of communities and parents as pillars to guarantee the right to education.

Nine other NGOs signed our statement.

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, March 10:

Ahmed Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief provided an overview and practical recommendations for States and other stakeholders to protect and promote the rights of religious or belief minorities in situations of war or crisis. He shared valuable insight into inclusive conflict resolution and peacebuilding with a human rights approach.

OIDEL emphasized the connection between freedom of education and freedom of religion by reaffirming UNESCO's new global report on the futures of education. The transmission of values and beliefs is an essential dimension of religious freedom. Without recognition of the freedom of education that allows parents to transmit their beliefs, freedom of religion is incomplete. We stated that considering this interconnectedness of the two rights is vital for a more just, equitable and sustainable future.

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, March 22:

The Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues laments that the groundbreaking 2018 joint UN-World Bank study "Pathways to Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Prevent Violent Conflict" omits that the root causes of most violent conflicts today are often intimately linked to violations of the human rights of minority communities. Therefore, for violent conflict prevention international community has to incorporate a human and minority rights framework as an early warning tool.

Recalling that many conflicts arise from a sense of grievance due to exclusion, inequality and lack of recognition of different cultural groups, OIDEL pointed to the need for ensuring an education system in which different educational options coexist. In that way, all communities can participate in the realization of the right to education.

50th session of the Human Rights Council:

From June 13 to July 8, 2022, the 50th session of the Human Rights Council took place. As in the previous period, the sessions were held in a hybrid format, with significant face-to-face participation, which allowed for a more agile exchange. OIDEL participated by making several oral statements and attending meetings and side events while re-establishing contacts that were laying dormant during the pandemic. All of OIDEL's interventions are summarized below:

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, June 23:

The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Kombou Bolly Barry, devoted her last report to the impact of the Digitization of Education on the Right to Education, addressing both risks and opportunities. She requested "that the discussions (...) be framed around the right of everyone to free, quality public education".

In response, OIDEL expressed its concern about the use of the term "right to public education", arguing that it could be used to impede educational pluralism and could lead to confusion in the international community about the essential content of this right. Our statement was signed by nine NGOs.



Room XX where the HRC is held in in-person format

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, June 17:

Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, highlighted the need for access to financial resources for civil society to fulfill its role. The report made brief references to educational actors and activities.

OIDEL recalled the close relationship between freedom of association and freedom of education. We proposed as good practice the exercise of freedom of association in the 2018 European Parliament resolution on the modernization of education, paragraph 76. It recommends, "(...) the provision of adequate financial support for schools of all categories and levels, both state schools and not-for-profit private schools (...)".

OIDEL also actively participated in several informal negotiations to discuss the draft resolution on the rights of peaceful assembly and association. These meetings consist of the reading of the draft that will later be proposed for a vote at the Human Rights Council. At these meetings, the Permanent Missions and Civil Society can contribute proposals to the proposed draft text. Finally, the freedom of free and peaceful association has been included in the final version of the resolution as essential for the development of educational activities. This resolution was adopted by the Human Rights Council by consensus.

Roundtable on good governance in the protection of human rights during COVID-19, June 22:

The aim of the roundtable was to identify good practices for the efficient use of technologies in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Josyane Zingg from OIDEI highlighted the crucial role of non-state actors such as parents, families, and civil society organizations in the realization of the right to education. She also pointed out that these actors, who stand between the child and the state, cannot be called upon only in times of crisis. Rather they must be considered cornerstones of the realization of the right to education, now and in the future.



Josyane Zingg, taking the floor on behalf of OIDEI

Support for Greek Catholic schools in Ukraine:

OIDEI collaborated with the OIEC (International Office of Catholic Education) and the Educational Commission of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church so that, with the help of Liliya Kuzmiak, they could explain the situation of education and these schools in Ukraine during the war period.

Side event: A humanist approach to digitization on the right to education, June 24:

The event was organized by the NGO Norrag (Network of Research, Review, and Advisory Group) with the aim of deepening the content of the report on digitization by the current Special Rapporteur on the right to education Koumbou Bolly Barry.

Ignasi Grau, director of OIDEI, spoke of the importance of civil society to ensure that digitization in education becomes an ally to guarantee the humanistic approach to the right to education.

51st session of the Human Rights Council:

From September 12th to October 7th, the 51st session of the Human Rights Council took place, with increasing face-to-face participation by both States and civil society. OIDEI participated in several discussions by making oral statements and attended the side events summarized below:

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, September 15:

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, Tomoya Obokata, presented his report emphasizing that lack of access to quality education can lead to contemporary forms of slavery, particularly affecting people belonging to minority communities.

Mayca San Andrés of OIDEI pointed out that "quality education" allows children not only to learn work-related skills but to develop fully as human beings, recognizing their cultural and spiritual identity.



Ignasi Grau, taking the floor on behalf of OIDEI

Round-table on the Rights of indigenous peoples, September 28:

In this roundtable, Ignasi Grau from OIDEI stressed that the education of indigenous peoples must allow them to be autonomous, but also make them deeply aware of their roots so that they can take responsibility for the challenges of their communities. He pointed out that education cannot go beyond the dimension of learning to be if it is reduced to rude folkloric knowledge. Instead, education must help indigenous peoples to understand their history, anthropology, beliefs, and culture. This oral statement was signed by OIEC.

In turn, OIDEI signed the oral declarations on the right to development and human rights education. The latter underlines that human rights education in non-formal settings plays an important role and significantly complements human rights learning in formal education, broadening access in particular to young people in situations of exclusion and vulnerability.

Meeting of the NGO Platform on the Right to Education with the new Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, September 15:

The meeting of members of the NGO Platform on the Right to Education with the newly elected Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Farida Shaheed, took place at the High Commissioner's Motta Building. This Platform is coordinated by OIDEI and serves to give voice to civil society organizations sensitive to the right to education. The Platform presented its work and its members to the new Rapporteur and learned about the Special Rapporteur's priorities for the coming years.

Follow-up to several resolutions:

Throughout the three-week session of the Human Rights Council, OIDEI followed the resolutions on "Youth and Human Rights" and "the World Program for Human Rights Education".

- **Subsidiary Bodies: Fourth session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, 24-25 November**

The Human Rights Council has established a number of expert relationship mechanisms to provide the Council with thematic expertise and to facilitate a platform for dialogue and cooperation. These bodies focus on studies and advice based on research or best practices. They meet on dates other than the Human Rights Council. One of these subsidiary bodies is the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.

The theme of this year's session was "Strengthening democracies for building back better: challenges and opportunities", in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 46/4, adopted on March 23, 2021. The event was organized by the UN Human Rights Council and held at the Palais des Nations. OIDEI participated in two round tables.

The first session was entitled "Learning through adversity: mapping pandemic-related democratic erosion" and was opened by HRC President Federico Villegas and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk. Arja Krauchenberg of the OIDEI Executive Committee took the floor to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on the right to education, specifically on children's right to quality education.

The second roundtable focused on "The Pillars of Reconstruction: Developing Stronger Institutions and Building Trust in Government" to explore concrete ways to increase public confidence. Josyane Zingg of OIDEI proposed that restoring trust in the area of education starts with guaranteeing parents the freedom to choose their children's education and continues with creating frameworks for parents to participate in decision-making processes.

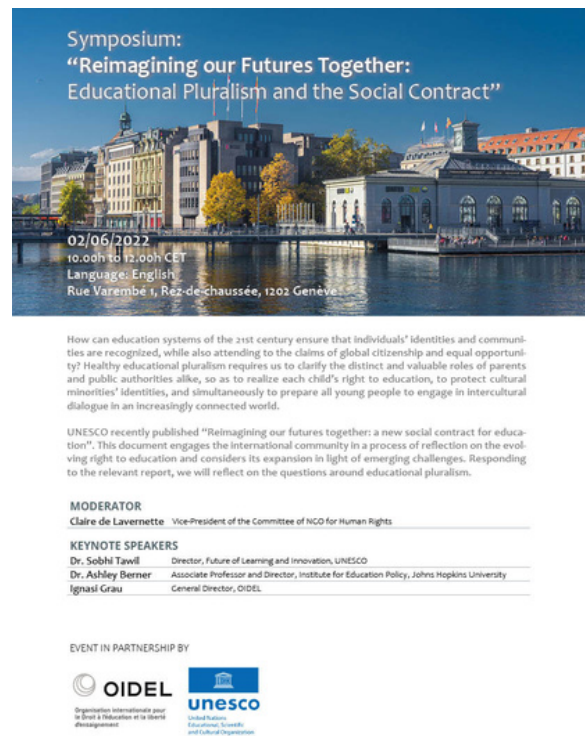
- **UNESCO**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, known as UNESCO, is the specialized agency of the United Nations in the areas indicated by its name. It has 195 member states and 10 associate members. OIDEI participates in its meetings thanks to its consultative status. During 2022, the activities that OIDEI carried out with this organization are explained below. OIDEI also participated in other events such as the regional technical consultation for the Revision of the UNESCO 1974 Recommendation for Understanding, Cooperation.

Conference: "Reimagining our Futures Together: Educational Pluralism and the Social Contract", 2 June

In Geneva, OIDEI organized with UNESCO a symposium entitled "Reimagining our Futures Together: Educational Pluralism and the Social Contract" attended by representatives of civil society, delegates from permanent missions and academics from the University of Geneva. Its objective was to reflect on the role of pluralism in the context of UNESCO's new document "Reimagining our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education".

Sobhi Tawil, Director of "Future of Learning and Innovation" (UNESCO) opened the symposium by posing questions about the document to the educational community. He also presented lessons learned from the past and challenges for the future to analyze the current state of education. Mr. Tawil emphasized that the new social contract for education must unite us around the challenges of our time, such as the deep inequalities, democratic regression, climate change, transformations that are not oriented towards equity, inclusion or democratic participation.



Flyer of the event

Next, Dr. Ashely Berner, Associate Professor and Director of the Institute for Education Policy, (Johns Hopkins University) provided a philosophical justification for educational pluralism. Educational pluralism (1) recognizes that education is never value-neutral, (2) assumes that education is a common good, and (3) takes into account parents and civil society. She showed how policies of educational pluralism will lead to the human flourishing that we aim for and that the aforementioned publication "Reimagining our Future Together" requires.

Ignasi Grau, Director of OIDEL, then related the pluralism framework presented by Dr. Berner to the UNESCO document "Reimagining our Future Together". His presentation emphasized the validity of the main objective of the right to education, as described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "the full development of the human personality". [UDHR Art. 26]. On this basis, Grau insisted on the cultural dimension, the social dimension and the identity of the person, which must be taken into account when rethinking the future of education.



From left to right: Ignasi Grau (OIDEL), Claire de Lavernette (OIDEL), Sobhi Tawil (UNESCO), Ashley Berner (Johns Hopkins University) and Diego Barroso (OIDEL)

International NGO Conference at UNESCO, 14-16 December

The International Conference of NGOs to UNESCO met in December 2022 under the theme "Breaking Barriers - The Role of Civil Society Organizations towards a Sustainable Future". The conference consisted of a dialogue on the work program of the UNESCO NGO Liaison Committee for 2023-2024 in which Josyane Zingg of OIDEL participated.

Ms. Zingg expressed OIDEL's desire to collaborate with the new leadership, with the committee and with our NGO colleagues for a sustainable future.

1.1.2. Council of Europe:

The Council of Europe is an international organization based in Strasbourg. Its objective is to promote, through the cooperation of the States of Europe, the configuration of a common political and legal space in the continent, sustained on the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. For education, the Council has significant competencies.

The main participatory body for civil society organizations accredited to the Council of Europe is the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO), which meets twice a year in the General Assembly. This Assembly serves as a platform for civil society to interact with the Council of Europe.

We participated online in the first of the two assemblies that took place from April 4th to 6th 2022. The highlight of this meeting was the creation of a Committee on Education and Democracy within the General Assembly. This committee is chaired by Arja Krauchenberg, a member of the OIDELE Executive Committee.

The second session took place from October 4th to 6th 2022 and OIDELE was represented by Claire de Lavernette, OIDELE's representative to the Council of Europe. It was the first face-to-face session after the start of the pandemic and served to update us on the various issues related to education.



Daniel Guéry (MIAMSI), Claire de Lavernette (OIDELE) and Bénédicte Colin (FAFCE)

1.1.3. European Union:

The Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth within the European Commission and the Committee on Culture and Education within the European Parliament generate more and more content on education, even though education is a subsidiary competence of the Union. The main tasks carried out by OIDELE in relation to this international body were as follows:

EMIE – Position Paper on "Pathways to School Success"

EMIE (European Meeting of Independent Education) is an informal platform coordinated by OIDEL and ECNAIS (European Council of National Associations of Independent Schools). It has published the "Position Paper on Pathways to School Success" seeking to influence the future agenda of the European Commission on education in Europe. Its aim is to recall the importance of pluralism in enabling school success in Europe.

The document was signed by 37 organizations, translated into six languages and distributed to key education policy makers.

The position paper consists of five pillars to enable school success in a pluralistic Europe:

1. Education as a common good

As UNESCO has pointed out, the different initiatives implemented in the field of education benefit all citizens. Therefore, from a human rights-based perspective, we cannot limit ourselves to an approach that conceives of education as a state good. Rather, as established in the 2030 Agenda, a common good approach must be adopted.

2. Independent schools are an essential part of the educational ecosystem.

In Europe, more than 50% of independent schools receive financial support from the public administration. It is important that states support independent schools to ensure diversity in their educational ecosystem.

3. Parents as a cornerstone of the realization of children's rights

The successful achievement of educational excellence requires considering parents as key actors, listening to them and protecting their right to choose the education they consider most appropriate for their children.

4. Diversity and quality education as the fundamentals of democracy

The non-governmental school is essential to guarantee diversity. Therefore, in democratic states it must be protected and supported by the administrations.

5. Well-being and school climate

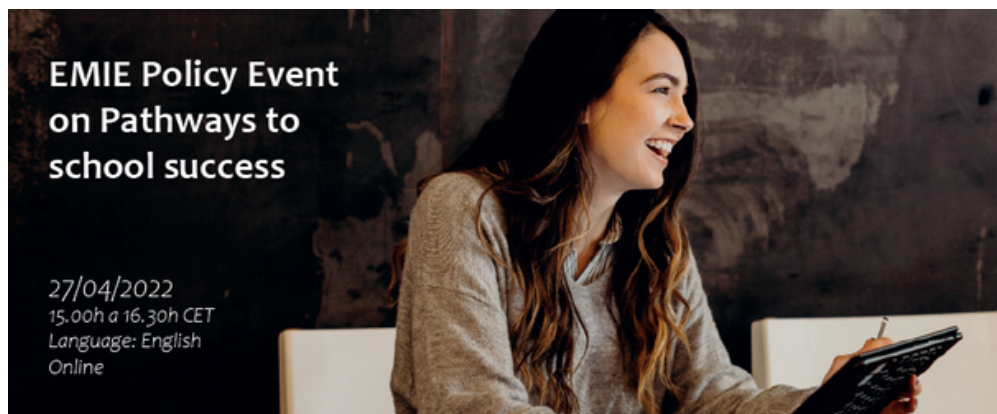
The implementation of school policies that promote individual well-being in schools must be supported by the construction of a healthy school climate as a basis for social learning and for creating integrated school communities of teachers, students, parents and the local community.

EMIE - Policy Event on the Position Paper "Pathways for School Success", 27 April

Following the above-mentioned position paper, EMIE organized a conference to present the document and discuss the relevance of the different actors in the field of education. This event was jointly organized by ECNAIS, ECSWE (European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education) and OIDEI. It consisted of two panels:

The first panel was opened by Annalisa Canonni, policy officer at the European Commission. She recalled that the future plan of the European Union is based on an inclusive and holistic vision of education and thus she acknowledged the importance of the position paper. Ignasi Grau of OIDEI stressed the importance of public funding to ensure that access to non-governmental schools is not a privilege of the few. Similarly, States have positive obligations to support independent schools to ensure the full realization of the right to education.

Georg Jürgens of ECSWE emphasized that this right includes freedom of choice and the existence of independent schools make this diversity possible.



Flyer of the EMIE Policy Event on Pathways to school success

The second panel gave the floor to various stakeholders in the educational field: parents, students, teachers. Arja Krauchenberg, former president of the EPA (European Parents Association) and member of the OIDEI Executive Committee, questioned the title of the European Commission's initiative arguing that educational outcome is much more than "school success". Education also includes empathy, curiosity and willingness to learn. She suggested that schools should move away from a "success-centered" approach to education to a complete "child-centered" approach. This approach includes parents and communities and so she called EU pathways for the future of education to include greater support for parents.

Markku Moisala, ECNAIS (European Council of National Associations of Independent Schools) expressed concern about the Finnish case. He showed that due to the recent reduction of state financial support to independent schools in Finland, several schools had to close. Educational diversity in this country is at stake.

Rares Voicu, representing the students of OBESSU (Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions), drew attention to the importance of students' welfare and their success as learners. He stressed that the definition of success must be calibrated to the local context to avoid unnecessary pressures. Disadvantaged areas cannot be evaluated with the same criteria as well-developed cities.

The event was concluded with remarks from the EU representatives:

Annalisa Canonni summarized the concerns of the different stakeholders and concluded that education is a relational process that should lead to the growth of the whole person. She stressed the role of all members of the educational community, including parents, teachers, students and public entities.

Victor Negrescu, Member of the European Parliament from the Socialists and Democrats (S&D) group and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education, stressed the importance of relationships between policymakers and stakeholders to develop a European system that is customizable.

"Defending freedom Conference" - Seminar organized by the European Think Tank New Direction, 21-24 September

New Direction organized the conference "Defending Freedom" in Tallinn (Estonia). This Think Tank of the Conservatives and Reformists Group of the European Parliament focuses on the role of freedom in different areas of public policy.



From left to right: Rodrigo Ballester (MCC), Stephen Bartulica (Parlamentario Croata), David Engels (Instytut Zachodni) and Ignasi Grau (OIDEL)

Ignasi Grau of OIDEL participated in a panel on education to highlight the importance of recognizing parents for the full realization of the right to education. He also argued that education should be oriented towards higher goals such as beauty, truth and goodness.

The event provided a networking platform for representatives of Think Tanks, foundations, and academics interested in policies related to freedom.

Seminar "Implementing the Right to Parental School Choice: The role of public funding" within the Lifelong Learning Week 2022, 28 November – 2 December

Each year, the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLP) organizes a Lifelong Learning Week. The LLP is the leading grouping of educational associations and entities in the European Union, which aims to listen to and represent the interests and concerns of all sectors of learning, including formal, non-formal and informal, throughout life.

The theme of this year's LLL week was "Investment in education and training: a public good for all".



Flyer of the event: "Implementing the Right to Parental School Choice: The role of public funding"



From left to right: Arja Krauchenberg (LLLP), Georg Jurgens (ECSWE), Dora S. Simunovic (ECSWE) and Ignasi Grau (OIDEL)

OIDEL, together with ECNAIS, ECSWE and FAFCE (Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe) organized an event on the role of public funding for parents' school choice. Ignasi Grau of OIDEL presented the situation of parental choice funding in EU countries. He showed that, without public funding, school choice is not a right but, rather, a privilege of families of the majority culture or with high income.

Georg Jurgens and Dora Simunovic (ECSWE) explained the importance of public funding for the exercise of parental rights, using the example of the development of Waldorf Steiner schools in Germany and Croatia. In both countries, funding agreements with the public administration have enabled more children to have access to non-governmental schools.

The presentation was followed by a dialogue between the speakers. Arja Krauchenberg, president of LLLP and member of the OIDEL Executive Committee, also reminded us that, without public funding, the right of parents to choose their children's education becomes a privilege.

1.2. Events organized by OIDEL

Dialogue with former African Ministers "Education and pandemic: What are the challenges and lessons learned from this crisis in Africa? 27th April

OIDEL organized an online seminar on "Education and pandemic: What are the challenges and learnings from this crisis in Africa?" in collaboration with OIEC (International Catholic Education Organisation) and the University of Comillas. It consisted of a dialogue with former African ministers of education to listen to lessons learned during the pandemic. After a first edition with ministers from Europe and a second one with ministers from Latin America, this was the third conversation in the series that nurtured reflections on the recent crisis, with the aim of helping international organizations to think about the future.

This event was introduced by OIDEL Director Ignasi Grau and Elise Aimé González (University of Comillas) led the dialogue. Due to the absence of two keynote speakers, the former Minister of Education of the Central African Republic, Charles-Armel Doubane, had time to share the Central African experience in depth.



Flyer of the event

Charles-Armel Doubane identified three pillars that ensured the continuity of education in Central Africa during the pandemic: institutions (the state acting through teachers and school principals), families and logistics (the state guaranteeing a protected space for students). He emphasized the crucial role of the family in education but pointed out that families can only play their role when the state also plays its role. For example, the state should ensure the distribution of books and, in a perspective that goes beyond education, ensure a framework in which families can cover their vital needs, especially during the crisis, so that they can afford to send their children to school. The former leader emphasized the role of Central African mothers who continue to play a key role in the education and welfare of the child and the household. He acknowledged that women have a difficult task and must be supported by the state and the school system.

1.3.Events in which OIDEAL has participated:

OIDEAL has participated throughout the year 2022 in several events to inform different audiences about educational pluralism. These events allow us to develop our network of contacts and knowledge, which is essential for our work.

1.3.1. Symposium: 10th International School Choice and Reform Conference - Dublin (Ireland), March 6-8

This event allowed different experts in educational pluralism to share their recent findings, a great opportunity to disseminate OIDEAL's most recent research and to explain the work we do at the international level.

OIDEAL took part in two panels. In the first one, "Three European experiences on educational pluralism" Rodrigo Melo (President of ECNAIS), Tommaso Agasisti (Professor at the Politecnico di Milano) and Miguel Angel Sancho (President of the European Foundation for Education and Society) also participated. Ignasi Grau from OIDEAL led the panel and presented a research project we published earlier this year: 9 experiences on educational pluralism in the EU.

The second panel discussed "Critical Conversations: A new wave in favor of educational pluralism in international organizations", with TJ d'Agostino (University of Notre Dame). The aim of OIDEAL's presentation here was to explain current international challenges and to share plans for an international working group on educational pluralism.

1.3.2. Symposium: V International Congress on Human Rights and Education - Valencia (Spain), February 3-4

This congress took place at the Valencia Bar Association and was supported by the Generalitat Valenciana. Among the speakers were Miguel Ángel Sancho, president of the European Institute for Education and Society, the Hispanist Inger Enkvist, the philosophers Gregorio Luri and José Ignacio Murillo, the former director of the Office of the High Commissioner for the 2030 Agenda in Spain Federico Buyolo and the writer Catherine L'Ecuyer.

Ignasi Grau, director of OIDEL, was invited to give a speech entitled "The challenges of the right to education: an international approach". The presentation recalled that education remains above all an essential human right to guarantee the dignity of the human being. The presentation brought the audience closer to the recent reports of UNESCO and the Special Rapporteur on education as a cultural right and a common good.



Ignasi Grau (OIDEI) and Jorge Sebastián (Mainel)

1.3.3. International Meeting: 98th General Assembly of the CEEC - Vienna (Austria), April 29-30

The CEEC (European Committee for Catholic Education) is an organization that brings together the national associations of Catholic education in Europe. The meeting was preceded by a symposium where we spoke with the then Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Mgr. Zani.

During the General Assembly, OIDEL learned about the new developments and challenges of Catholic Education in Europe. We heard about the challenges the Greek-Catholic school in Ukraine are facing during the war. We also discussed, among other topics, the important decision of the Belgian Constitutional Court on the equal treatment of public and Catholic schools. The Court recognized that at the level of public funding, Catholic schools must be treated equally with state-run schools.

OIDEL presented the main work of the last months, such as the position paper on the Pathways for School Success initiative of the European Commission and the upcoming educational debates at the United Nations and UNESCO.

1.3.4. International Meeting: Meeting of ECSWE - Lisbon (Portugal), 7 May

ECSWE (European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education) is an organization representing 27 members with schools in 28 countries. All these members add up to more than 178,500 students and 124,000 families and 775 schools across Europe.

OIDEL was invited to give a presentation on the legal and political status of the situation of educational freedom in Europe. We took the opportunity to better understand the legal framework for educational freedom in Portugal and the challenges facing Waldorf education across Europe.



Group photo at the end of the day

1.3.5. International Meeting: EPA General Assembly and International Conference on the Well-being of Children, Parents and Teachers - Lyon (France), 11 June

EPA (European Parents Association) is the umbrella association for all parents associations in Europe, representing more than 150 million parents.

OIDEI Director Ignasi Grau gave a session on the human rights protection framework for parents. He explained the tensions concerning parents in international discussions and shared good practices for a better representation of parents' organisations in international bodies. He stressed that the right of parents to choose their children's education is an essential part of the right to education.

Among the other panelists was Corinne Heckmann from the OECD who presented her report on student well-being and explained the indicators developed by the "Education at a Glance".

The session allowed OI DEL to resume direct contact with the EPA, and to discuss with EPA President Victor Petuya the joint challenges in education. A common objective of both associations is that school choice should be supported by the state to make it a realisable right for families without resources.



View of the room during the session by Ignasi Grau

1.3.6 Symposium: "Education Law for the future" Seminar of scientific experts organized by ELA - Budapest (Hungary), 11 October

Twenty international education policy experts met for this event to share reflections, projects and research on the future of education. The event was organized by ELA (European Association for Education Law and Policy), an independent association of professors, researchers and teachers interested in the right to education.

Among the participants were Charles Glenn (Professor Emeritus at Boston University and Vice-President of OI DEL), Jan de Groof (Professor of Law at the College of Europe and President of the European Association for Education Law and Policy), Klaus Beiter (Professor of Human Rights at North-West University (South Africa)), and Lajos Aáry-Tamás (Hungarian Human Rights Commissioner).

Ignasi Grau from OIDEL participated in an intervention on the growing importance of the cultural approach in the right to education and the key actors for the realization of this approach. The last report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education as a cultural right was discussed in depth, and the relevant role that public schools play in the realization of the cultural approach was explained. The Special Rapporteur's report states: "Public action, respectful of educational freedoms, can take a wide range of measures, from financing public schools to integrating intercultural and multicultural education reflecting the diversity of pupils into the mainstream education system, depending on demand and situations".



Working meeting of the Education Law Association

1.3.7. Symposium: Séminaire ERDIE organised by the University of Geneva - Geneva (Switzerland), 28 October

OIDEL was invited to ERDIE (Equipe Dimensions Internationales de l'Education), organised by the Faculty of Education of the University of Geneva. The aim of the seminar was to reflect on non-governmental actors in international education policies from different approaches (legal, political, pedagogical and anthropological). It was coordinated by Akkari Abdeljalil, professor at the University of Geneva and holder of the chair "International Dimensions of Education". OIDEL presented the educational challenges of the future, the key role of non-governmental non-profit schools and the tensions in the privatisation debate.

This meeting has helped OIDEL to strengthen contacts with the Department of Education of the University of Geneva.



Interior of the UNIMAIL building at the
Université de Genève

1.3.8 International Meeting: OIEC International Congress - Marseille (France), 1-3 December

OIEC (International Office of Catholic Education) is an international NGO whose objectives are, among others, to be the voice of Catholic Education in the world, to serve as a network of exchange and to promote research on Catholic schools. OIDEL maintains a close relationship with the OIEC, representing it in the Human Rights Council and carrying out consultancy work.

The meeting consisted of speeches, reflections, and discussions. OIDEL had the opportunity to present itself to the various representatives and leaders of Catholic schools. Among the speeches, the one by Pope Francis on video stood out.

This Congress was a great opportunity to learn more about the challenges related to the educational pluralism of Catholic schools.

It was also the occasion to bid farewell to the former President and Director of the OIEC, Paul Barber (UK) and Philippe Richard (France), both great friends of OIDEL. Thereafter, the new President, Tunisian Jawad Alamat, and the new Director, Frenchman Hervé Lecomte, were introduced. The OIDEL Director was able to talk to them and expressed his intention to continue working closely.



Ignasi Grau presenting the work of OIDEL

1.3.9..International Meeting: 99th General Assembly of CEEC - Marseille (France), 5-6 December

The General Assembly of CEEC (European Committee for Catholic Education) took place right after the International Congress of Catholic Schools and was held in the same city. CEEC is an international NGO that serves as a cooperation meeting point for 29 Catholic education networks from 27 countries in Europe. The NGO represents more than 35,000 schools and 8 million pupils. It is a partner of OIDEL and our participation in its General Assemblies has become a tradition. Both CEEC and OIDEL are NGOs dedicated to the realization of the right to education and we hope that this relationship will lead to a better realization of this right in Europe and worldwide.

During the General Assembly, Ignasi Grau from OIDEL gave a presentation on the main international and European developments of the right to education and more specifically on educational pluralism.



Ignasi Grau (OIDEL) presenting the challenges on educational pluralism.

1.3.10. International Meeting: 5th CINGO International Forum - Rome (Italy), 2-3 December

The International Forum of Catholic-inspired Organisations is an informal platform for dialogue and exchange between Catholic-inspired NGOs with consultative status with intergovernmental institutions. It was created in 2007 with the aim of identifying and developing means of collaboration on international issues and achieving more effective presence and action. This year the Forum was inaugurated by the Secretary of State of the Holy See, His Eminence Cardinal Parolin.



Mayca San Andres representing OIDEL

Mayca San Andrés from OIDEL took the floor in the working group on the marginalization of human dignity and shared two good practices when participating in the educational debates of the Human Rights Council or in UNESCO consultations: broadening the notion of vulnerability to realities beyond the material and insisting that vulnerable groups are not crystallized, but that States generate inclusive frameworks for all groups.

1.3.11. Symposium: "Catholic Schools and Religious Liberty: A Global Perspective" - Rome (Italy), 12-14 December

The conference was organised by the Australian Catholic University (Australia) and the Faculty of Law of Notre Dame University (USA) and brought together jurists, educators and diplomats from around the world with two objectives.



From left to right: Paolo Carozza (Notre Dame), Paul Barber (Director de Director of Catholic Education Service de Inglaterra y Gales), Ignasi Grau (OIDEL) and Grégor Puppink (ECLJ)

First, it wants to examine in depth the legal and political framework for educational policy, which is essential for understanding the exercise of educational freedom for Catholic schools. In this regard, the question was raised about the types of restrictions representing acceptable accountability regulations and those representing undue restrictions on religious freedom and school autonomy. Second, the Symposium invited to share the experiences and perspectives of the Catholic Church on the legal restrictions under which Catholic schools operate in order to build constructive responses to threats to religious freedom and school autonomy. Speakers included the US Ambassador to the Holy See, the Australian Ambassador to the Holy See and the Vatican Secretary for Relations with States, Archbishop M. Gallagher.

OIDEL's presentation was organised around current situation of educational pluralism in Europe. Much of the presentation focused on the anthropological challenges of denominational schools in a secularised society. Ignasi Grau gave a historical review of the arguments against parental rights in order to build a better response. He encouraged the Catholic school community to bring their concerns and worries to International Organisations such as the United Nations.

2. TRAINING

One of OIDEL's strategies to achieve its long-term goals is to provide training in human rights and especially in educational rights to people who will play an important role in society in the future.

2.1. Governance and working methods for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in La Rioja - Geneva (Switzerland)

OIDEL together with the Foundation of the University of La Rioja organised the training "Governance and working methods for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in La Rioja: "no one left behind" - 2022 (27-29 June 2022)". The training was face-to-face and consisted of one part that took place at the University of La Rioja and another part that took place in Geneva.

It was attended by 30 people, most of them from different administrations in La Rioja. The course included speakers from the United Nations, Permanent Missions and Civil Society. This is the third edition of this training.



Visit to the library of the Palais des Nations in Geneva

2.2. Educational Pluralism Training for Irish Catholic Schools Leaders, University of Notre Dame – Kilmore (Ireland)

On the 11th and 12th of November, Ignasi Grau of OIDEL provided training to different leaders of Catholic Irish Schools in the Global Center of Notre Dame University at Kilmore Abbey, in the west of Ireland. We were invited by ACE (Alliance for Catholic Education), Ireland of Notre Dame University, and the Catholic Education Partnership.

The training was divided into two parts. Part one provided an understanding of the main international human rights instrument concerning the right to education. Part two deepened the main theoretical arguments used in international discussions concerning the same right. Both sessions were followed by a discussion on how this affects the Irish reality.



Informal session discussing the challenges of academic freedom in Ireland

PUBLICATIONS

One of the pillars of OIDEL to achieve its objective are the publications, which enable us to better understand the state of the situation of freedom of education and the discussions that concern parental rights.

3.1. OIDEL's Publications

3.1.1. Corpus sur le droit à l'éducation 3: Bibliographie choisie sur le droit à l'éducation et les politiques éducatives – 6th Edition 2022

The “Bibliography on the right to education” is available for free for all different stakeholders interested in the right to education – States, Institutions and Civil Society. This document puts together all the relevant international publications, prioritizing those issued by UNESCO and the United Nations. Like the previous edition, all the selected publications concerned directly or indirectly with the right to education and educational policies.



For many years, OIDEL has published periodically different documents related to the right to education. In 2017, OIDEL completed this work by presenting “The Corpus on the right to education”, consisting of six documents that offer a general international vision and comprehension of the right to education. This document aims to help the different stakeholders of the international community interested in the research.

This new edition of the Bibliography is the result of research and compilation of new references over the past four years by Mr Zacharie Zachariev, co-author of the book, former UNESCO Policy and Planning Officer in Paris and former Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva, and co-ordinated by Mayca San Andrés, Director of Programmes and Projects at OIDEL.

3.1.2. "WP25 - Educational Pluralism in the European Union- Report of 10 Educational Systems"

At the beginning of 2022, OIDEL published the "WP25 - Educational Pluralism in the European Union- Report of 10 Educational Systems". This document assesses the state of the situation of educational pluralism in ten educational systems of the European Union through eight indicators (pupil admissions criteria, public funding, academic freedom...). This research aims to understand the constitutional and legal recognition of this freedom, the governmental support to non-state schools, the nature of this support, the regulation of the admission of pupils, and teachers' appointment.

The research underlines the importance of public funding is critical to enable educational pluralism in each country. More than 20 experts have collaborated in the redaction of this publication.



WORKING PAPER 25

Educational Pluralism in the European Union:
Report of 10 educational systems



OIDEL

3.2. OIDEI's publications in scientific and general journals:

Each year, OIDEI publishes articles in specialized scientific magazines. This research enables us to influence academic and cultural discussions.

In 2022, Ignasi Grau of OIDEI published the following articles:

- "Towards Understanding the Global Landscape of Educational Pluralism" in the Journal of School Choice with TJ D'Agostino (Notre Dame University, USA)
- "Tendencias jurídicas internacionales alrededor del pluralismo educativo: el enfoque cultural del derecho a la educación" in the publication Libertad y responsabilidad educativas: Claves para renovar el diálogo social, with Juan García (UNED, Spain).

In addition, we published an article in the Italian magazine "Il Sussidiario": Suola, quanto vale la qualità dell'educazione.

3.3. Others: Notes published by OIDEL

OIDEL has published two notes on its website on the current discussion on the right to education:

- Is the expression “the right to public education” coherent with human rights instruments? (2022)
- SDG4: The connection between cultural rights and the right to education. (2022).

Our blog (<https://oidel.wordpress.com/>) has been updated with 20 new posts, on different news regarding the right to education.

4. OUR TEAM 2022

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Presidente



Ignasi Grau Callizo
Director General



Mayca San Andrés
Project and Programs Manager



Josyane Zingg
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