



OIDEL

2025

ACTIVITY REPORT



**RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND
FREEDOM OF EDUCATION**



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ABOUT OI DEL

This activity report aims to provide an overview of OI DEL's work during the year 2025. Although it is not exhaustive, it presents the main achievements accomplished in promoting the full realization of the right to education.

For 40 years now, OI DEL has been working to promote education as a fundamental human right. This work is carried out through its participation in debates on this issue within international bodies, the development of research, and the organization of various training activities.

OI DEL is a non-governmental organization specialized in the right to education and freedom of education, with consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Council of Europe.



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



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



Consultative status with the Council of Europe



INTRODUCTION

Dear friends and collaborators,

OIDEL is an NGO specialized in the right to education and freedom of education, with consultative status with ECOSOC, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe. We work for the full recognition of educational rights and freedoms as fundamental rights in all countries and promote the participation of civil society and families in education. Our publications reflect our core areas of interest: the right to education, freedom of education, educational policies, the quality of education, and educational pluralism.

With the publication of the 2025 Activity Report, we wish to share with you the most significant highlights of a year in which we celebrated our 40th anniversary and saw our membership base consolidated and expanded, with notable growth in Africa and Latin America, strengthening our international outreach and the diversity of our network.

Among the many achievements of 2025, we would like to highlight several particularly significant milestones:

- The dissemination of the “2023 Freedom of Education Index” and the joint OIDEL-CEU-CEFAS report, “Trends in Freedom of Education Worldwide,” presented at the Dutch Parliament, the Norwegian Parliament, the Parliament of Catalonia, events organized by two of the main European party think tanks (Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies and New Direction), as well as at the Rimini Meeting.
- The third edition of the Summer University “Human Rights and Education,” organized in collaboration with the Human Rights Clinic of the Notre Dame University Law School and the ERDIE department of the University of Geneva.

In the following pages, you will find a detailed overview of our activities, including our work in international forums, publications, and training programs, reflecting our commitment to freedom of education and educational rights worldwide.

Thank you all for accompanying us.

Ignasi Grau Callizo

Director of OIDEL



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ADVOCACY

1.1. United Nations

1.1.1. Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is the main intergovernmental body of the United Nations responsible for addressing issues related to human rights. It meets regularly three times a year at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

With regard to the right to education, the Human Rights Council discusses thematic reports (such as the right to education, cultural rights, and human rights education), country reports, and adopts resolutions of significant political relevance.

Below is a summary of the work carried out by OIDEL within the framework of these sessions.

1.1.1.1. 58th session of the Human Rights Council

Geneva (Switzerland), March–April 2025



Josyane Zingg
Advocacy and Training Officer OIDEL

During the 58th session of the Human Rights Council, OIDEL took part in the debates on the rights of the child and advocated for the involvement of parents in the realization of these rights, especially in the field of education. In addition, the organization accompanied and supported the participation of one of its Norwegian members in Norway's Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

-Oral statement during the interactive dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

OIDEL emphasized that many of the problems faced by children in conflict settings do not affect them in isolation, but together with their families. It also noted that many solutions are more effective when the child is considered an integral part of the family unit, recognizing the family's key role in the child's safety and development. The organization expressed concern about rights violations when, in situations of armed conflict, education is denied or essential infrastructure—such as schools and hospitals—is attacked.

Intervention here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XK0XbUJANTw>

-Oral statement during the Annual Day on the Rights of the Child

In the annual debate, focused on early childhood development, OIDEL highlighted the importance of including parents' perspectives in discussions on education at this stage. It also emphasized the need to support adaptable non-governmental educational options for families, especially to protect the right to education of cultural minorities.

Intervention here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQ7acnPpzes>



-Oral statement during the debate on the outcomes of Norway's UPR

As part of the 4th cycle of the UPR, a Norwegian representative, Audun Raen, spoke on behalf of OI DEL in response to Norway's rejection of a recommendation to review the Independent Schools Act, urging the government to align it with a human rights-based approach.

Intervention here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwURNCh5VQE>

-Informal consultations on draft resolutions

During the six-week session, OI DEL closely followed resolutions and informal consultations, particularly those related to economic, social, and cultural rights.

1.1.1.2. 59th session of the Human Rights Council

Geneva (Switzerland), 16th June–9th July 2025

The 59th session of the Human Rights Council was of particular relevance for OI DEL, as it was the occasion on which the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education presented her reports to the Council. During this session, negotiations also took place regarding a new resolution on the right to education.

-Oral statement during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education

During the interactive dialogue on 19th June, OI DEL followed the presentation of the reports by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Farida Shaheed, focusing on the right to safety in education and on the findings from her visit to the United States. In its statement, OI DEL stressed that framing the right to education solely as a right to public education can invert the proper hierarchy of rights, restricting parental freedom and educational diversity. It recalled that the main international instruments recognize a broad right to education that protects pluralism and parental choice, and therefore recommended an inclusive approach that respects diverse forms of provision and the rights of families and minority communities.

Intervention here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCwdoAjZAMA>

-Other events and resolutions

In addition, OI DEL took part in the informal consultations on the draft resolution on the right to education, proposed by the Permanent Mission of Portugal. The negotiations placed particular emphasis on safety and artificial intelligence (AI), in line with the themes addressed in the Special Rapporteur's reports.

1.1.1.3. 60th session of the Human Rights Council

Geneva (Switzerland), 8th September – 8th October 2025

As part of the 60th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, held in Geneva, OI DEL co-organized on 16th September 2025 the side event entitled "The Family as a Cornerstone: Preserving the Role of Parents in Ensuring the Right to Education." The event took place at the Palais des Nations and brought together more than 80 participants.



Side event "The Family as a Cornerstone: Preserving the Role of Parents in Ensuring the Right to Education"



The event was co-organized with the Permanent Observer Mission of the Sovereign Order of Malta, the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See, the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations, and the Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE).

The dialogue was moderated by Ambassador Michel Veuthey (Sovereign Order of Malta) and featured interventions by Monsignor Ettore Balestrero (Holy See), Ambassador Zsófia Havasi (Hungary), Vincenzo Bassi (FAFCE), Ignasi Grau (Director of OIDEL), and Ana Vega (University of La Rioja). The speakers agreed in emphasizing that parents are the primary responsible parties for their children's education and that States must create conditions that strengthen and empower families, rather than replace them.

Likewise, during this final session of the year of the Human Rights Council (HRC), OIDEL actively participated in consultations on draft resolutions and attended side events.



From left to right: Vincenzo Bassi (President, FAFCE), Ambassador Zsófia Havasi (Permanent Representative, Hungary), Ambassador Michel Veuthey (Sovereign Order of Malta), Monsignor Ettore Balestrero (Permanent Observer, Holy See), Ana Vega (Director, Chair of Democratic Citizenship and Cultural Freedom, University of La Rioja), and Ignasi Grau Callizo (Director, OIDEL).

1.1.1.4. OIDEL takes part in an expert workshop of the Human Rights Council on the role of the family

Geneva (Switzerland), 28th–29th May 2025

The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) hosted an expert workshop on the role of the family and family-oriented policies in the promotion and protection of human rights and in achieving sustainable development, providing a space for exchange with States, UN bodies, and civil society.

OIDEL participated actively with two interventions. In the first session, on the full enjoyment of human rights by family members, it defended a community-based human rights approach and called for strengthening the family as a key actor for the full realization of human rights. In the second session, focused on lifelong learning and early childhood development, it highlighted the child's cultural rights in education and the role of families as the primary transmitters of cultural and moral values, which are essential for the formation of cultural identity from an early age.

Held two weeks before the start of the 59th session of the UNHRC, the workshop enabled OIDEL to reaffirm the importance of the family unit and its central role in education and in the transmission of cultural rights.

1.1.1.5 First session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on an Optional Protocol to the Right to Education

Geneva (Switzerland), 1st–3rd September 2025

At the United Nations Palais des Nations, the first session of the open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group was held to explore an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the right to education in early childhood, as well as free pre-primary education and free secondary education.



First session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on an Optional Protocol to the Right to Education



OIDEL took part in the discussions by sharing its expertise and stressed that the right to education must guarantee not only availability and access, but also adaptability and acceptability, especially for children from minorities. It highlighted the essential role of parents and the contribution of non-governmental, non-profit schools (founded by parents, faith-based organizations, or NGOs) in providing education that respects cultural identity. OIDEL called for distinguishing these from for-profit schools and warned that excluding them from public funding can create disproportionate burdens for families and weaken the protection of minority rights, proposing funding models that support all schools that provide education as a public good. The session concluded with a commitment to continue consultations and convene a second session in the second half of 2026.

1.1.2. Subsidiary bodies of the Human Rights Council

1.1.2.1. Social Forum

Geneva (Switzerland), 30th–31st October 2025

Within the framework of the United Nations, the Human Rights Council held the 2025 Social Forum under the theme: “The contribution of education to the respect, promotion, protection, and realization of all human rights for all people,” in which OIDEL participated actively. Held annually in Geneva, the Social Forum brings together civil society, Member States, and intergovernmental organizations for an open dialogue on key human rights issues.



Sonja Winkler
taking the floor on behalf of OIDEL

-Oral statement during the panel on education for political rights

In this panel, the importance of participation, citizenship, and enabling all people to have a meaningful voice was highlighted as essential to the full enjoyment of political rights. In the interactive dialogue, OIDEL delivered an oral statement recalling that, under Article 13 of the ICESCR, education must prepare individuals to participate in a free and democratic society. In addition, OIDEL underscored that schools should promote cultural diversity and mutual understanding, noting that a single public-school model may struggle to reflect diversity and, in some cases, contribute to the exclusion of minorities.

OIDEL also highlighted parents’ rights recognized in Article 26 of the UDHR, and recalled that respecting them entails positive obligations for States, including supporting a diversity of educational institutions and facilitating conditions—also financial ones—so that families can effectively exercise their freedom of educational choice.

Intervention here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZyia-kJaGA>

1.1.2.2. Forum on Minority Issues

Geneva (Switzerland), 27th–28th November 2025



Elena L'Eplattenier
taking the floor on behalf of OIDEL

At the 18th session of the Human Rights Council’s Forum on Minority Issues, a key platform for dialogue and cooperation on the rights of national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities, OIDEL was present and closely followed the discussions. The session focused on how to better recognize the role of minorities and overcome obstacles to their participation.



Under Agenda Item 1, devoted to trust and social cohesion, structural barriers to inclusion were discussed, and initiatives on dialogue, mediation, multilingualism, and combating stigmatization were highlighted.

-OIDEL oral statement on Agenda Item 1: “Building trust and social cohesion: addressing barriers to peaceful coexistence”

OIDEL stated that social cohesion is strengthened when diversity is recognized as an asset and integrated into education systems. It underscored freedom of education and parents’ right to choose an education consistent with their culture and language, and rejected the idea that diverse educational models imply fragmentation, citing a study carried out jointly with CEU-CEFAS. OIDEL also recalled that educational standards must not undermine cultural or parental rights, and reaffirmed its commitment to an education that values a plurality of identities.

Intervention here : <https://youtu.be/liLBj-iINZI>

1.1.3. UNESCO

1.1.3.1. International Symposium on the Future of the Right to Education: Renewing Global Commitments and Charting the Way Forward

Paris (France), 11th December 2025

UNESCO organized the International Symposium on the Future of the Right to Education: Renewing Global Commitments and Charting the Way Forward. The event commemorated the 65th anniversary of the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education, officially closed the 11th Consultation on the Convention, and included the launch of the 2025 Global Report on the Right to Education. It brought together policymakers, international organizations, academics, and civil society to assess progress, emerging challenges, and renew momentum around the universal right to education.



International Symposium on the Future of the Right to Education

OIDEL spoke about the growing importance of pluralism and trust in education systems being transformed by digitalization, population displacement, and social change. It noted that these changes create opportunities for more plural and relevant systems, but also risks: a potential increase in discrimination against non-majority groups, and the possibility that culturally relevant education becomes reserved for majority communities or those with greater resources.

It also recalled that as early as 2015 UNESCO warned that the public/private distinction was insufficient to address new challenges. It concluded by advocating for frameworks that ensure evolving minimum requirements without stifling initiatives by parents and civil society, placing them at the heart of the education debate.

1.2. Council of Europe

1.2.1 OIDEL at the Council of Europe: Conference of INGOs

Strasbourg (France), 13th–16th October 2025

The Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) serves as the institutional voice of civil society within the Council of Europe (CoE) and brings together all NGOs with participatory status, including OIDEL.

Its purpose is to facilitate the participation of INGOs in the work of the CoE. The Conference meets in plenary session twice a year in Strasbourg to define priorities and action programs, ensuring coordinated inputs aligned with the CoE’s mission.



During the autumn session, the growing challenges faced by NGOs in several countries were highlighted, and recommendations from the NGO committees were presented and adopted. Among the obstacles mentioned were excessive bureaucratic requirements justified in the name of transparency, sanctions for criticizing governments, and even covert attacks on organizations' bank accounts.



Conference of INGOs

Taken together, these elements show that civic space for NGOs in Europe requires stronger protection and must not be taken for granted. In this context, a priority area of contribution for OIDEL was identified as the Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child in Europe. OIDEL has already established contact with the committee's chair and plans to participate actively in the drafting of future statements and recommendations, especially on issues related to parents' rights and the right to education.

1.3. Presentations of the Freedom of Education Index 2023 (FEI)

The Freedom of Education Index (FEI) is a comparative study produced by OIDEL that assesses the extent to which States respect and guarantee freedom of education as a fundamental human right, in accordance with international standards.

The 2023 edition—the fifth edition of the Index—analyzes, based on legal, financial, and empirical indicators, aspects such as the legal recognition of non-state educational institutions, public support for these institutions, the degree of educational pluralism, and families' real ability to choose their children's education.

In 2025, CEU-CEFAS, a social research think tank linked to Universidad CEU San Pablo, and OIDEL developed a new study entitled "Trends in Freedom of Education Worldwide: Analysis of its enablers and its relationship with social mobility and equity."



Cover of the Freedom of Education Index 2023

This study combines data from the 2023 Freedom of Education Index with other relevant indicators in order to identify global trends and analyze their impact on key dimensions such as educational quality, social mobility, and inclusion.

A central part of OIDEL's work throughout 2025 was devoted to disseminating and presenting these findings to policymakers, academic experts, and civil society actors. Below are some of the main presentations carried out.

1.3.1. International Conference on School Choice and Reform 2025

Fort Lauderdale (USA), 17th–20th January 2025

The ISCRC (International School Choice and Reform Conference) is a forum dedicated to sharing recent research and experiences on school choice. In 2025, the conference brought together more than 200 policymakers, researchers, and educators for three days in Florida.

In this context, OIDEL—represented by Josyane Zingg—presented the main findings of the Freedom of Education Index (FEI) and explained how it can be used by local stakeholders to advance educational freedom in different contexts.



The panel also featured Christy Wolfe (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools) and Leslie Hiner (EdChoice), who addressed, respectively, educational freedom in relation to charter schools in the United States and the usefulness of the 2023 FEI as an advocacy tool at the national and international levels.

During the conference, OI DEL strengthened contacts with researchers from universities and think tanks, opening the door to future research collaborations.

1.3.2. Norwegian Parliament

Oslo (Norway), 24th March 2025

Ignasi Grau Callizo, Director of OI DEL, and Josyane Zingg, Head of Advocacy and Training, were invited to the Norwegian Parliament to present the Freedom of Education Index (FEI) and discuss how Norway can better meet its human rights obligations regarding educational pluralism. The discussions focused on ensuring the right to education for all while respecting the convictions, cultures, and religions of the population, particularly those of minority communities.



Ignasi Grau Callizo, Director of OI DEL, at the presentation of the FEI at the Norwegian Parliament

Although Norway ranks among the top 30 countries in the FEI (behind Finland and Denmark, and ahead of Iceland and Sweden), OI DEL noted that recent changes to the Independent Schools Act are making it more difficult to establish and sustain non-governmental schools, moving Norway's education system away from international standards. In addition to this visit to Oslo, OI DEL continued to pursue other actions to encourage the Norwegian government to reconsider these changes, including its participation in Norway's UPR.

1.3.3. OI DEL takes part in the “Winning the Fight for Freedom of Education” conference organized by the Pestalozzi Trust

Pretoria (South Africa), 27th–28th March 2025

Invited by the Pestalozzi Trust, OI DEL's Director, Ignasi Grau, took part in the “Winning the Fight for Freedom of Education” conference. In this context, he participated in a presentation on the international protection framework for the right to education, with a particular focus on the role of parents and the State, and in a roundtable devoted to the international challenges of educational pluralism, alongside Professor Johannes Cronje and Peter Stock (HSLDA Canada), moderated by Christopher Cordeiro.

Participation in these meetings enabled our organization to deepen its understanding of South Africa's educational challenges and the impact of the new education law adopted the previous year. In addition, OI DEL met with the leadership of the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) to discuss the organization's future projects and the challenges faced by non-governmental schools.

1.3.4. Joint OI DEL–FUNCIVA–Wilfried Martens Centre event: “Educational Pluralism: Why Is It Relevant for the EU?”

Brussels (Belgium), 8th April 2025

OI DEL co-organized with the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies the event “Educational Pluralism: Why Is It Relevant for the EU?”, which brought together experts from Europe and the United States to analyze current trends in educational freedom.



From left to right: Peter Hefe le, Jan de Groof, Ashley Berner, Gonzalo Sanz-Magallón, and Ignasi Grau Callizo



On that occasion, two key reports were presented: the Freedom of Education Index (produced with FUNCIVA) and a study on global trends in educational freedom and its relationship with social mobility and equity (produced with CEU-CEFAS).

The discussions emphasized that more plural and diverse education systems tend to strengthen equity and democratic resilience. The role of parents in the moral, philosophical, and religious aspects of education was also highlighted, and concerns were raised about the impact of misinformation and ideological pressures, underscoring the need to strengthen critical thinking and an evidence-based education. Finally, the principle of subsidiarity and the role of the EU—also through its international cooperation—in defending the right to education were underscored. The Wilfried Martens Centre announced that it will develop policy recommendations based on the event’s conclusions.

1.3.5. Joint OIDEL–VERUS colloquium held at Nieuwspoord: “Educational Pluralism Policy: Global Challenges and the Dutch Case”

The Hague (Netherlands), 10th April 2025



Teresa Martinez, President of OIDEL, at the joint OIDEL–VERUS colloquium held at Nieuwspoord



Participants at the joint OIDEL–VERUS colloquium held at Nieuwspoord

The event “Educational Pluralism: Global Challenges and the Dutch Case,” held at Nieuwspoord (The Hague), addressed the challenges and opportunities of educational pluralism globally and in the Netherlands. Organized by OIDEL and VERUS, it brought together education policy experts, UNESCO representatives, and Dutch parliamentarians, including Don Ceder (Christian Union) and Harmen Krul (CDA).

Although the Netherlands ranks among the top countries for freedom of education according to the Freedom of Education Index (FEI), the discussion focused on growing pressures, social polarization, and misunderstandings about the meaning of educational freedom, raising the question of how to preserve it and ensure it remains a pillar of a plural society. Notable contributions included those of Gwang-Chol Chang (UNESCO) and Mark Buck (VERUS), as well as Josyane Zingg, Ignasi Grau, and Teresa Martínez (OIDEL). Kathleen Ferrier (Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO) and Arja Krauchenberg (European Parents Association) also took part; Krauchenberg underscored parents’ role and rights as a key element in education system accountability. Ashley Rogers Berner (Johns Hopkins / OIDEL Executive Committee) emphasized the importance of maintaining a balance between the State, civil society, and families. The panel was completed by Jan de Groof and Niels Rijke.

1.3.6. Think Tank Central 2025, organized by New Direction: “Freedom in a Changing World”

Brussels (Belgium), 20th–21st May 2025

At Think Tank Central 2025, New Direction’s annual conference devoted to discussing how to promote freedom in a context marked by conflict, economic uncertainty, and cultural polarization, OIDEL was also present.



In this context, OI DEL spoke in the session “Educational Freedom,” which focused on growing concerns in Europe about who defines educational content and how teaching is delivered, with an emphasis on empowering parents, protecting academic freedom, and the need for a more diverse and competitive education ecosystem.

In its intervention, OI DEL recalled that freedom of education is recognized in international human rights instruments, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and in many national constitutions, but warned that this right is increasingly under threat. OI DEL also took the opportunity to present and disseminate the Freedom of Education Index to Members of the European Parliament, underscoring the need to strengthen its protection across Europe.

1.3.7. Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit 2025

Dublin (Ireland), 22nd–25th June 2025



Ignasi Grau, Director of OI DEL

The fifth edition of the Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit, organized by the University of Notre Dame (Law School and Religious Liberty Clinic) under the theme “Political Authority, Civil Society, and Religious Freedom,” brought together more than 100 advocates of religious freedom from around the world, including academics, religious leaders, and civil society organizations. In this context, OI DEL was represented and contributed to the discussions on religious freedom and education.

OI DEL’s Director, Ignasi Grau Callizo, was invited as a speaker on the panel “Threats to Civil Society, Religious Education,” alongside Michael Helfand (Pepperdine Caruso School of Law) and Sister Mary Cecilia Draru (African Sisters Education Collaborative), moderated by Professor Nicole Stelle Garnett (Notre Dame Law School). In his remarks, Grau underscored the importance of building alliances and fostering interreligious cooperation to defend parents’ right to choose their children’s education, beyond the interests of any particular denomination.

The panel addressed growing challenges to educational pluralism, including legal and political pressures on faith-based schools, and the role of religious freedom in protecting diverse education ecosystems. OI DEL’s contribution reaffirmed its commitment to freedom of education as a fundamental human right and to working jointly with international partners in support of families, schools, and civil society.

1.3.8. Rimini Meeting: Freedom of Education as a Human Right

Rimini (Italy), 23rd July 2025

As part of the Rimini Meeting—one of the most significant cultural gatherings in Italy and Europe, which each summer attracts more than 800,000 visitors—OI DEL was present through the participation of its Director General, Ignasi Grau, as a speaker. This edition also featured high-profile international speakers such as Mario Draghi and Giorgia Meloni.

In this context, the event “Educazione libera, scuola autonoma” was held, organized jointly with CdO Opere Educative/FOE, Diesse, Di.S.A.L., and the Associazione Culturale Il Rischio Educativo, with contributions from Marco Galdi, Ignasi Grau, Paolo Maino, Maurizio Serafin, and Massimiliano Tonarini, moderated by Tommaso Agasisti (Politecnico di Milano and a member of OI DEL’s Executive Committee).



The debate converged on a shared message: without greater autonomy for schools and without meaningful financial support for state-funded independent (paritaria) schools, educational freedom risks being reserved for only a few.

Grau also recalled that freedom of education is an internationally recognized human right and warned that if it can only be exercised by those who can afford it, it ceases to be an effective freedom. OIDEL also presented data from its Freedom of Education Index, which places Italy among the lowest-ranked countries in Europe—alongside Greece and Cyprus—in contrast with countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, or Ireland, where public funding for non-governmental schools makes families' freedom of choice a reality. The meeting concluded by emphasizing that ensuring a free education and an autonomous school system is a central challenge for the future of Italy and Europe.

1.3.9. Chamber of Deputies of Italy

Rome (Italy), 30th September 2025

At the Press Room (Sala Stampa) of Italy's Chamber of Deputies, OIDEL presented the Freedom of Education Index at an event organized by LABORA, which brought together speakers and political authorities and highlighted the urgency of strengthening educational pluralism in the country, in line with Article 26(3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes parents' right to choose their children's education.



Chamber of Deputies of Italy

During the presentation, Ignasi Grau Callizo, Director of OIDEL, set out the main findings of the report: Italy ranks among the lowest countries in Europe in terms of freedom of education—alongside Greece and Cyprus—and stands at 62nd place in the global ranking, highlighting remaining challenges in fully recognizing the role of families and independent schools within the education system. Andrea Maria Maccarini (University of Padua), Massimiliano Tonarini (CdO | Compagnia delle Opere Educative), and Giovanni Vicari (CEFA Schools) also spoke. The support of Paola Frassinetti (Undersecretary of State for Education and Merit) was also highlighted, as well as that of Lorenzo Malagola and Chiara Iannarelli for their commitment to families' right to freely choose their children's education and to the value of independent schools.

1.3.10. Parliament of Catalonia

Barcelona (Spain), 28th October 2025



Parliament of Catalonia

As part of the parliamentary hearing on a bill aimed at ensuring that Catalonia invests at least 6% of its GDP in education, OIDEL's Director General, Ignasi Grau Callizo, was invited to appear before the Parliament of Catalonia. In his statement, he argued that any education policy grounded in human rights must incorporate educational pluralism, warning that "without funding to guarantee it, pluralism becomes a privilege rather than a right."

Grau emphasized that funding must enable all families to choose a school, regardless of their economic situation, and stated that pluralism contributes to social cohesion. He also presented evidence from research carried out by OIDEL together with Universidad CEU San Pablo linking full public funding of socially run (non-state) schools with greater social mobility, and cited an OECD report (2012) indicating that higher levels of public funding reduce the socio-economic gap between schools. He concluded by highlighting the opportunity this initiative offers to strengthen the education system as a whole, avoiding exclusions "in the name of human rights."



1.4. Other events

1.4.1. ARC – Conference “Alliance for Responsible Citizenship”

London (United Kingdom), 17th–19th February 2025

The ARC conference brought together leaders from fields such as politics, psychology, education, policymaking, and the arts to discuss major social and cultural questions, including how to build a culture that fosters civic responsibility, the role of the family, the community and the nation, and the contribution of education within this framework. The event was opened by CEO Philippa Stroud and featured international figures such as Jordan B. Peterson, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Erica Komisar, Bari Weiss, and former Australian Prime Ministers Tony Abbott and Scott Morrison.

For OI DEL, the three-day conference was a valuable opportunity to deepen its reflection on the role of education, freedom of education, and cultural rights in relation to human and social flourishing.

1.4.2. 104th General Assembly of the European Committee for Catholic Education

Tirana (Albania), 21st–22nd March 2025

Catholic schools constitute the largest non-governmental school sector in Europe. As usual, OI DEL was invited to the 104th General Assembly of the CEEC (European Committee for Catholic Education) to present an update on educational pluralism at the international level and explain how the CEEC can play an important role in advancing freedom of education across different European nations.



Josyane Zingg, Advocacy and Training Officer of OI DEL, at the 104th General Assembly of the CEEC

In our intervention, we paid special attention to the new European Parliament Intergroup on Education and Skills, as well as to the political events that OI DEL is organizing in Brussels in the coming months.

This event brings together representatives from various national networks of Catholic schools, which represents an excellent opportunity for OI DEL to gain a better understanding of freedom of education in national contexts. This understanding is important for our work, as it enables us to accurately represent the voice of parents and civil society in international debates.

1.4.3. Meeting at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., to strengthen alliances for freedom of education

Washington, D.C. (United States), 12th–15th May 2025

OI DEL carried out a four-day mission in Washington, D.C., to strengthen strategic alliances in defense of freedom of education and to explore new institutional and academic collaborations. Ignasi Grau, Director of OI DEL, accompanied by Leslie Hiner (EdChoice and a member of OI DEL's Executive Committee), held meetings with universities, think tanks, civil society organizations, and policymakers.



A central part of the visit took place at The Catholic University of America, where potential training collaborations, participation in OIDEL's Summer University, and avenues for cooperation linked to advocacy at the United Nations were discussed. Meetings were also held with actors such as the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Cato Institute, and HSLDA to exchange views on emerging education challenges.

On the political front, OIDEL took part in a private meeting with like-minded organizations and met with senators' advisers to discuss freedom of education and the role of the United States in multilateral negotiations. In addition, on behalf of OIDEL, Grau attended an event with the Secretary of Education, Linda McMahon, to whom he presented a copy of the Freedom of Education Index, and took part in a televised interview on EWTN. This mission reinforces OIDEL's commitment to working with U.S. partners in support of free and plural education.

1.4.4. 105th General Assembly of the European Committee for Catholic Education

London (United Kingdom), 8th–10th October 2025



Josyane Zingg, Advocacy and Training Officer of OIDEL, at the 105th General Assembly of the CEEC

Invited to the semiannual 105th General Assembly of the European Committee for Catholic Education (CEEC), OIDEL took part in this meeting, which brings together national leaders of Catholic education from across Europe to discuss priorities and strengthen cooperation. The first day took place at St Mary's University, with a symposium marking the 60th anniversary of Gravissimum Educationis, in which experts examined its historical and current relevance and how it can be updated in a more culturally homogeneous context.

During the second and third days, dedicated to the General Assembly, OIDEL shared updates on the international landscape, its advocacy work, and upcoming research projects. In turn, national representatives presented the challenges facing Catholic education in their respective countries. For OIDEL, these exchanges are especially valuable because they provide a better understanding of the realities of non-governmental schools at the national level and help guide advocacy priorities.

1.4.5. 6th Meeting of the International Forum of NGOs of Catholic Inspiration in Rome

Rome (Italy), 26th–27th November 2025

Created in 2007, the Forum promotes a space for dialogue oriented toward the common good, the defense of human dignity, and the promotion of world peace. The meeting also included the participation of Permanent Representatives of the Holy See to the UN (New York and Geneva), the FAO, UNESCO, and the European Union, as well as representatives of the Vatican Secretariat of State.

The 6th Meeting of the International Forum of NGOs of Catholic Inspiration, held at Villa Aurelia (Rome), brought together more than 120 organizations with consultative status with intergovernmental bodies to strengthen collaboration, share experiences, and reinforce the collective presence of Catholic-inspired NGOs at the international level. In this context, OIDEL was represented by its Director, Ignasi Grau Callizo.



6th Meeting of the International Forum of NGOs of Catholic Inspiration



1.5. Collaboration Agreements

1.5.1. Renewal of strategic collaboration with OIEC

Paris (France), 18th June 2025

OIDEL and the International Office of Catholic Education (OIEC) signed a new cooperation agreement in Paris, represented by their respective directors, Ignasi Grau (OIDEL) and Hervé Lecomte (OIEC). This agreement formalizes and strengthens a strategic alliance between two sister organizations that, since their beginnings, have worked together in the defense of human rights, freedom of education, and religious freedom.



From left to right: Ignasi Grau (OIDEL) and Hervé Lecomte (OIEC)

The agreement seeks to coordinate actions within the United Nations framework, promote shared educational projects, and strengthen networks of actors committed to educational freedom at the international level. OIDEL is deeply pleased to renew this collaboration with OIEC, whose educational mission it fully supports and accompanies.

1.5.2 Signing of a framework cooperation agreement with the IPC in Paris

Paris (France), 9th December 2025



From left to right: Emmanuel Brochier (IPC Paris) and Ignasi Grau (OIDEL)

OIDEL and the IPC – Free Faculties of Philosophy and Psychology of Paris recently signed a framework cooperation agreement, represented by Ignasi Grau, Director of OIDEL, and Emmanuel Brochier, Dean and Director of IPC Paris. This agreement strengthens the commitment of both institutions to promoting education, human rights, and public policies grounded in respect for human dignity.

The collaboration aims to develop joint research projects in the fields of human rights and public policy, as well as to promote summer courses, training programs, and international higher-education studies focused on human rights and the management of cultural diversity.

The agreement also includes offering internships for students in international organizations dedicated to the defense of human rights and cooperation on international development projects related to cultural, social, and educational policies.

1.5.3 Signing of a framework cooperation agreement with Universidad Panamericana

Online, 15th December 2025

OIDEL and Universidad Panamericana (Mexico) recently signed an academic cooperation agreement, represented by Teresa Martínez on behalf of OIDEL, and by Martha Alicia Rodríguez, Secretary General of Universidad Panamericana, together with María Isabel Álvarez, Dean of the Faculty of Law.

This agreement lays the foundations for strategic cooperation aimed at developing joint research projects and academic reflection, organizing seminars, meetings, and training activities, as well as collaborating on initiatives related to freedom of education, human rights, and law.



Teresa Martínez
President of OIDEL

María Isabel Álvarez
Dean, Faculty of Law,
Universidad
Panamericana

Martha Alicia Rodríguez
Secretary General,
Universidad
Panamericana

The agreement also seeks to strengthen international academic dialogue between Europe and Latin America.



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TRAININGS

2.1. Summer University “Human Rights and Education” – 3rd Edition

Geneva (Switzerland), 23rd–26th June 2025

OIDEL organized, for the third consecutive year, the Summer University on Human Rights and Education, in collaboration with the ERDIE department of the University of Geneva and the Global Human Rights Clinic of Notre Dame Law School. Over four days, 25 participants from different universities and organizations took part in sessions devoted to the right to education and international human rights principles, strengthening their networks and gaining tools to promote education as a human right at local and global levels.



Participants of the 3rd Summer University
“Human Rights and Education”

The edition featured recurring speakers such as Ashley Berner (Johns Hopkins University) and Alexandre Moreira (KU Leuven), as well as new academics, including Kimberly Jenkins Robinson and Gerard Robinson (University of Virginia) and Mikel Mancisidor, former member of the CESCR Committee. Highlights included a dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Farida Shaheed, on safety in education, and a visit to the IBE-UNESCO Documentation Centre, with an exchange with its Acting Director, Sobhi Tawil.

2.2. Joint course OIDEL – University of La Rioja: “Women, Peace and Security”

Geneva (Switzerland), 14th–17th July 2025

OIDEL, in collaboration with the University of La Rioja, organized the Summer Course on Women, Peace and Security on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Over one week, law students from the University of La Rioja (Spain) and the University of La Sabana (Colombia) gathered in Geneva to explore in greater depth the role of women in peacebuilding and security initiatives.



Participants of the course “Women, Peace and Security”

The program featured speakers such as David Diaz (UN Human Rights Council), Seraina Eldada (GCSP), Adriana López (UNITAR), and Camila Ojeda (Permanent Mission of Mexico). Highlights included visits to the United Nations Palais des Nations and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum, as well as particularly powerful testimonies from Indigenous women participating in EMRIP, with the support of DOCIP, offering first-hand perspectives on gender, peace, and Indigenous peoples’ rights.



2.3. Joint training OIDEL – Government of La Rioja: “Institutional Modernization and Digital Government in the framework of the 2030 Agenda”

Geneva (Switzerland), 15th–17th September 2025



Participants of the training “Institutional Modernization and Digital Government in the framework of the 2030 Agenda”

OIDEL, in collaboration with the University of La Rioja, organized a training course on Institutional Modernization and Digital Government in the framework of the 2030 Agenda. The program brought together leading experts, including Ana María Vega Gutiérrez (University of La Rioja), Helen Griffiths (OHCHR), Aitana Jáñez Pedrayes (OHCHR), Kamilia Amdouni (ITU), and Ignasi Grau (OIDEL), who provided perspectives on how institutional modernization and digital governance can contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and strengthen the protection of human rights.

In addition to the academic sessions, participants visited the United Nations in Geneva and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum, and took part in activities linked to the Human Rights Council, including a UN side event co-organized by OIDEL focusing on defending the role of parents in ensuring the right to education.



PUBLICATIONS

3.1. OIDEL publications.....21-22

3.1.1. Joint presentation by CEU-CEFAS and OI DEL at Universidad CEU San Pablo of the report “Trends in Freedom of Education Worldwide”

3.1.2. Joint report by OI DEL and the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies: “Educational Pluralism in Europe: Where We Are and the Way Forward”

3.1.3. “Human Rights Observatory” Reports

3.1.4 Academic Publications

3.2. Other publications.....22

3.2.1. UNESCO report: “Homeschooling through a human rights lens”



PUBLICATIONS

3.1. OIDEL publications

3.1.1. Joint presentation by CEU-CEFAS and OIDEL at Universidad CEU San Pablo of the report “Trends in Freedom of Education Worldwide”

Madrid (Spain), 11th June 2025



Ignasi Grau Callizo Director of OIDEL

At the Madrid campus of Universidad CEU San Pablo, the report “Trends in Freedom of Education Worldwide: analysis of its enablers and its relationship with social mobility and equity,” authored by Gonzalo Sanz-Magallón, a CEU-CEFAS researcher, was presented. The study is based on the Global Freedom of Education Index (FEI 2023), developed by OIDEL, and on an extensive review of academic literature on the strong performance of non-state schools in numerous countries.

The event was opened by Javier Tello, Director of the CEU Foundation, and Ignasi Grau, Director of OIDEL, who highlighted the report’s relevance in the context of today’s education debate. The report provides a rigorous empirical analysis that reveals significant correlations between educational pluralism and factors such as equity, academic performance, and the efficiency of the education system. As Professor Sanz-Magallón emphasized, “correlation is not causation, but neither is it mere coincidence.”

The presentation was followed by a roundtable moderated by José María de Moya, Director of Magisterio magazine, with contributions from Alfonso Aguiló (President, CECE) and Luis Centeno (Secretary General, Escuelas Católicas). Both experts placed the report’s findings in the context of Spain’s current education landscape, generating a rich discussion on the challenges and opportunities that pluralism presents.

3.1.2. Joint OIDEL–Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies report: “Educational Pluralism in Europe: Where We Are and the Way Forward”

October 2025

The publication “Educational Pluralism in Europe: Where We Are and the Way Forward,” published by the think tank Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, provides a clear, evidence-based roadmap to strengthen freedom of education and educational pluralism in Europe, combining practice, principles, and public policy recommendations.

OIDEL actively contributed to the preparation of this work, which stems from the policy seminar held in Brussels and helped consolidate concrete guidance for advancing this issue at the European level.

Access to the publication : <https://www.martenscentre.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Educational-Pluralism-in-Europe.pdf>



September 2025

Cover of the report “Educational Pluralism in Europe: Where We Are and the Way Forward”



3.1.3. “Human Rights Observatory” Reports



Editions of the “Human Rights Observatory” Report :
01/2025–04/2025 and 05/2025–07/2025

OI DEL publishes each year a series of periodic reports to bring civil society closer to the current state of international human rights debates, with a particular focus on the right to education, religious freedom, and the role of the family.

In a global context marked by the speed of events and the growing influence of international bodies on local decision-making, these reports—produced in collaboration with the FUNCIVA Foundation—offer a clear and accessible overview of ongoing discussions on the transmission of values and democratic quality, with the aim of enabling more informed and effective participation by local stakeholders.

In 2025, two editions were published: 01/2025–04/2025 and 05/2025–07/2025.

3.1.4 Academic Publications

In 2025, OI DEL’s Director, Ignasi Grau Callizo, published an academic article in *Frontiers in Education* entitled “The Right to Education in a Pluralistic World: Balancing the Pluralistic Approach to the Right to Education and Minimum Requirements.” In this article, Grau Callizo analyzes how to guarantee the right to education in plural contexts by balancing the protection of cultural identities with minimum educational standards grounded in human rights.

The work highlights the importance of cooperation between families and public authorities in promoting inclusive, respectful, and pluralistic education.

Access to the publication :

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/education/articles/10.3389/feduc.2025.1616074/full>

3.2. Other publications

3.2.1. UNESCO report: “Homeschooling through a human rights lens”

September 2025

For the first time, UNESCO formally acknowledges the reality of homeschooling in a public policy document, whose development included input from OI DEL.

Beyond the headline, this step is significant because it broadens the debate on how the right to education can be made effective through diverse pathways. Recognizing homeschooling does not mean replacing schools; rather, it highlights families’ responsibility, learners’ needs, and the plurality of ways in which learning can take place when grounded in human rights.

Access to the publication :

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/what-you-need-know-about-homeschooling-through-human-rights-lens>



Cover of the UNESCO report :
“Homeschooling through a human rights lens”



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Dear friends and collaborators,

As you can see in this activity report, 2025 was another year full of initiatives and commitment. I can affirm that the entire OIDEAL team did everything within its reach to ensure that educational pluralism and a human rights-based approach remained at the center of international discussions.

This would not have been possible without the support and dedication of many people.

First, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all our members and partners. Without their support, we would not have been able to reach so many forums or carry out the work we do. We are truly grateful for the growing trust in this shared project, which enables us to continue promoting freedom in the field of education.


Second, our sincere thanks go to the members of OIDEAL's Executive Committee, who constantly demonstrate exceptional commitment to our work and mission. Their support, guidance, and expertise have given OIDEAL renewed momentum in this exciting stage.


Finally, we would like to thank the OIDEAL team that accompanied us throughout 2025. We assure all readers that the team's dedication to the mission of this organization is clearly reflected in the pages that follow.


With our deepest gratitude,

The OIDEAL Team




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