6th meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

10th of December 2026, 09:30 – 17:00 CET

11th of December 2026, 09:00 – 13:15 CET

Hybrid event

Location: UNESCO Headquarters, 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75007 Paris
(please see the PIN For the different entrances on the 10th and 11th of December)

Online: Zoom (link to be provided)

Preparatory note

In line with the Terms of Reference for the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG GPD) and the information previously shared with the Group, the 6th meeting of the CG GPD will be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on Friday, 11th December 2026, following a Peer Learning Activity (PLA) taking place on Thursday, 10th December and on the morning of Friday, 11th December.

The PLA, organised in conjunction with UNESCO's Human Rights Day 2026, will **examine the right to education, with a focus on higher education.**

Human Rights Day 2026 provides an opportunity to examine how the right to education is **translated from normative commitments into effective implementation** across different contexts. Despite robust international, regional and national legal frameworks, persistent gaps remain between legal recognition and implementation, particularly for vulnerable, displaced, and crisis-affected populations.

The event will explore four interconnected dimensions of the implementation of the right to education including in higher education:

1. justiciability and accountability mechanisms;
2. continuity of learning in situations of crisis, displacement, and resource-constrained contexts;
3. academic freedom and institutional autonomy in higher education;
4. cross-border mobility and the recognition of qualifications.

Taken together, these dimensions show how **the right to education can be operationalized, protected, and enforced**, from access to education in crisis contexts to the safeguarding of rights and freedoms within higher education systems. The event

will combine legal analysis, policy dialogue, and country experience to examine **how rights-based commitments can be effectively implemented** across diverse educational settings with particular attention to higher education.

Higher education access, completion and success depend on enabling conditions that allow students to participate, learn and thrive throughout their studies. These conditions include a set of mutually reinforcing legal instruments and normative frameworks. Fundamental to the right to quality higher education is academic freedom, including the freedom to learn, teach, and research without undue interference. From a UNESCO perspective, academic freedom is an integral part of the right to education: as recognised in the 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel, the right to education, teaching and research can only be fully enjoyed in an atmosphere of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, which allow knowledge to be pursued, shared and questioned freely.

Institutional autonomy is an additional important, supporting element for promoting conditions in which learners and academic communities can exercise their rights, engage critically with knowledge, and contribute freely to research and society. Similarly, promoting the recognition of student learning outcomes, including partial studies, through fair and transparent qualifications recognition is another contributing element.

The legal frameworks and normative instruments in each of these areas can support the effective exercise and enforceability of the right to higher education, though they differ from one region to another, which is why regional experiences are important to better understand the situation in each context.

Key themes:

- Academic freedom and institutional autonomy
- Academic mobility and international cooperation frameworks
- Recognition of qualifications, diplomas, and prior learning, including for refugees and displaced persons.

Through discussions incorporating regional and global perspectives, this session explores how the right to higher education can be advanced in practice through stronger legal frameworks, institutional policies and cooperation between higher education systems and institutions.

The **main aim** of the PLA is to identify the key elements to prioritise for improving dialogue and cooperation on the right to higher education at a global level.

- The **first day** will examine the right to education from the global perspective. In the morning, in conjunction with UNESCO's Right to Education team, the discussions will focus on the norms and practice in enforcing the right to

education, followed by a peer-learning activity (PLA) on the right to higher education from a regional and global perspective.

- The **second day,** the PLA will continue and will be devoted to a special focus on the right to quality education, and the importance of combatting fraud, followed by an internal CG GPD meeting.

Input from the meeting and PLA will inform the Global Policy Statement, which will be adopted at the Global Policy Forum in 2027.

Co-funded by the European Union

Draft Agenda

Day 1 – 10th December 2026- Room II

Peer Learning Activity on the Right to Education – CG GPD members and external partners in conjunction with UNESCO	
09.00-09.30	Arrivals and registration of participants
	Segment 1: **Enforcing the right to education - Global perspective and key trends** **Presentation of new material on justiciability of the right to education and financing education from a human rights-based perspective**
09.30-09.50	Opening and framing
09.50-10.30	Panel 1: From recognition to accountability: making the right to education enforceable
10.30-11.00	Panel 2: From law to implementation: institutional capacity, financing and accountability
11.00-11.15	*Coffee/health break*
11.15-11.45	Panel 3: Enforcing the right under pressure: inequality, crisis and displacement
11.45-12.20	Discussion: what makes the right to education effectively enforceable
12.20-12.30	Conclusions and next steps
12:30 – 14:00	*Lunch break*
	Segment 2: **The right to higher education: Regional perspectives & thematic discussions**
14.00-15.30	Panel 4: Academic freedom and institutional autonomy *(national and regional perspectives and interactive session)*
15.30-15.45	*Health break*

15.45-17.00	Panel 5: Academic mobility and international cooperation frameworks *(national and regional perspectives and interactive session)*
20.00	***No host dinner***

Day 2 – 11th December 2026 – Room VII

Peer Learning Activity on the right to education – CG GPD members and external partners	
09:00-09.10	**Welcome addresses and introduction**
09.10-10.30	Right to (quality) higher education - Panel 6: Combatting academic fraud (*national and regional perspectives and interactive session)*
10.30-10.45	**Wrap up: Main take aways and key messages**
10.45 -11:00	*Coffee/health break*

6th meeting of the CG-GPD (members only) – Room VII	
11.00-11.05	**Welcome and introduction to the meeting** *CG GPD Co-Chairs*
11.05-11.10	**Adoption of the agenda and of the 5th CG GPD meeting minutes** o Documents: 6th CG GPD meeting draft agenda o 5th CG GPD meeting minutes
11.10-11.20	**Update from the EHEA Secretariat on the activities of other BFUG working structures**
11.20-11.40	**Updates and discussion on the CG GPD next steps and activities** Proposed action: o Discussion on the updated timeline of the CG on GPD Work Programme o Update on the preparation for the Ministerial meeting and Global Policy Forum

11.40-12.20	**Discussion on the GPFS and EHEA Roadmap beyond 2030** ○ Feedback from the BFUG Board and meeting ○ Discussion on feedback on both texts for next version
12:20-13.05	**Updates about the GLOBAL 2030 project activities** o Information about project and deliverables o Update and discussion on the two draft reports – Quality assurance and digitalisation
13:05-13.15	**Wrap up and close of meeting**
13.15 – 14:15	*Lunch*

The events will be organised within the framework of the „Support for the CG on Global Policy Dialogue - GLOBAL 2030" project.

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