

# Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



OAS

More rights  
for more people

The Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education works to build a global movement to fulfill higher education's democratic mission and strengthen the role of higher education in developing, maintaining, and sustaining democracy on campus, in the community, and the wider society. The cooperation is comprised of four pillar organizations: the Council of Europe; the International Association of Universities; the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility, and Democracy; and the Organization of American States.

The Council of Europe (CoE) and the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy (IC) have worked in cooperation since 1999 to advance the contributions of higher education to the development of democratic culture. The Organization of American States (OAS) joined this cooperation in April 2018 and the International Association of Universities (IAU) in October 2019. In January 2021, the CoE, the IC, the OAS, and the IAU named their partnership the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education.

The Global Cooperation has undertaken cross-national research projects and joint meetings to share best practices, as part of its efforts to advance the contributions of higher education to the development of democratic societies. The first cross-national research project between the CoE and IC started in 1999, with the research findings published by the CoE in *The University as Res Publica: Higher Education Governance, Student Participation and the University as a Site of Citizenship* (2004). Six global forums have been hosted and the CoE has published monographs on each conference theme:

- *Higher Education and Democratic Culture: Citizenship, Human Rights, and Civic Responsibility* (2008)
- *Higher Education for Modern Societies: Competencies and Values* (2010)
- *Reimagining Democratic Societies: A New Era of Personal and Social Responsibility* (2013)
- *Higher Education for Democratic Innovation* (2016)
- *Higher Education for Diversity, Social Inclusion, and Community: A democratic imperative* (2018)
- *Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy and the Future of Democracy* (2020)

Two other books were published that, while unconnected to a global forum, were stimulated and edited by partners involved in the Global Cooperation: *The Local Mission of Higher Education: Principles and Practice* (2019) and *Higher Education's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building a More Sustainable and Democratic Future* (2021).

At the 2006 Global Forum, a declaration on "The Responsibility of Higher Education for a Democratic Culture: Citizenship, Human Rights and Sustainability," was adopted by acclamation, affirming the need to increase the commitment of higher education institutions to democratic culture and sustainable societies. It also called for action to promote the principles of democratic citizenship, human rights, and civic responsibility. At the 2019 Global Forum, participants adopted a declaration supporting the role of academic freedom and institutional autonomy in ensuring the future of democracy, which has been widely distributed. The 2022 Global Forum on "Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability, and Social Justice" is the seventh global forum and the first gathering officially co-hosted by the partners of the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education and will result in a volume in the CoE higher education series.

## **Partner Organizations of the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education**

**The Council of Europe (CoE)**, established in 1949, promotes human rights, democracy and the rule of law, develops continent-wide agreements to standardise member countries' social and legal practices, and promotes awareness of a European identity across cultures based on shared values. It comprises 46 member countries. The Steering Committee for Education oversees the Council of Europe's programmes in the field of education and advises the Committee of Ministers on education issues. Governments of the Council of Europe member States are represented in the Committee by senior officials from the general education and higher education sectors.

**The International Association of Universities (IAU)**, created under the auspices of UNESCO in 1950, represents universities and other higher education institutions, organisations and affiliates across 130 countries. The IAU acts as the global voice of higher education and its organisations, in particular to UNESCO, advocating and advancing a dynamic leadership role for higher education in society. Articulating the fundamental values and principles that underpin education and the pursuit, dissemination and application of knowledge, the Association advocates the development of higher education policies and practices that respect diverse perspectives. In addition, it promotes social responsibility and contributes to the development of a sustainable future.

**The International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy (IC)** was created in 1999 to work with the Council of Europe with the objective of developing, explaining, and advancing the contributions of higher education to democracy on college and university campuses, their local communities, and the wider society. It is composed of the United States (represented by a Steering Committee from the American Association of Colleges and Universities, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Council on Education, Anchors Institutions Task Force, Campus Compact, Democracy Commitment and NASPA-Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education); Australia (represented by Engagement Australia); the United Kingdom (represented by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement); Ireland (represented by Campus Engage); South Africa (represented by Universities South Africa); and the Magna Charta Observatory.

**The Organization of American States (OAS)**, established in 1948, is the main political forum of the Western Hemisphere. It gathers all 35 independent states of the Americas to jointly promote and consolidate democracy; strengthen human rights; foster peace, security, and cooperation; and advance in achieving common interests. Since its inception, the main objective of the OAS has been to prevent conflicts and support political stability, social inclusion, and prosperity in the region through dialogue and collective actions including cooperation and mediation.