



MID-YEAR REPORT 2025



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first half of 2025 has been full of challenges - challenges to multilateralism, to international cooperation and solidarity, to human rights and democracy, to peace and global justice. Nevertheless, it has also seen the resurgence of hope, and a growing recognition that Global Education is needed now more than ever.

- **Support to members** included work on institutional memory, national strategy and action planning with Portuguese colleagues, planning for a policy learning exchange between Sweden and Czechia, support for national strategy development and staff training with Slovak colleagues and the Belgium-led research initiative on 'Leave No One Behind'.
- **The 52nd GENE Roundtable in Bratislava**, co-hosted by the Slovak Ministries of Foreign and European Affairs, and of Education, Research, Development and Youth, brought together GENE policymakers on the theme "Global Education and Hope in Challenging Times." This dialogue responded directly to current policy challenges and was described by participants as "exactly what we needed".
- **Latvian Peer Review completed. Germany and Ireland underway.** The European launch of the Latvian Peer Review report took place in March. The process with Germany began with a Secretariat Visit in February and background research during the spring. A shorter process focused on Irish Aid's Strategy work saw the International Team visit in June, with thanks to peers from Luxembourg and Portugal.
- **Cooperation at a strategic level with the European Commission**, including contributions to the INTPA Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) consultation and to the consultation on the European Democracy Shield.
- **GENE's research and policy work continued with the ANGEL Conference 2025**, co-organised with BMZ, Engagement Global and Bamberg University. 250 researchers and policymakers debated evidence-informed policy in Global Education for democracy, sustainability, peace, and social justice. GENE also disseminated the research publication *Global Education and Youth in Europe: Practice and Policy*.
- Following consultation with GENE policymakers and at the kind invitation of the Polish EU Presidency, **GENE presented to the CODEV Committee of Member States** on the crucial importance of support to GE and DEAR at European level. Many Member States responded indicating active support.
- **Expanded collaboration with civil society, youth, and local and regional government stakeholders** included joint research with Platforma on GE with local and regional authorities.
- GENE also pursued **implementation of the Dublin Declaration** with other stakeholders through contributions to events hosted by Solidar, AFS-EFIL, and the Lifelong Learning Platform.
- **Global connections were strengthened** through exchanges with Global Critical Friends — including training sessions with SEGIB in Latin America and the Caribbean supporting national strategy development, dialogue with partners in the Asia-Pacific, and mutual learning with African partners.

GENE WORK AREAS



SUPPORT TO MINISTRIES
& AGENCIES



NETWORKING



PEER REVIEW AND
POLICY LEARNING



RESEARCH & POLICY
WORK



INTERNATIONAL
ENGAGEMENT



PARTNERSHIPS





SUPPORT TO MINISTRIES & AGENCIES

GENE continued to provide tailored and strategic support to Ministries and Agencies across Europe to strengthen policy, funding, and evaluation systems, in line with the commitments in the Dublin Declaration. Member States have also continued using the Dublin Declaration as an inspiration for their work at national level, ranging from practice mapping, through strategy development to evaluation.

Progress Highlights

Policy and Strategy Development

- **Cyprus** revised both its National Strategy for ESD and Green Transition 2030 and the Education for the Environment and Sustainable Development (EESD) curriculum.
- **Czechia** assessed the progress of the 2024–2026 Action Plan, as part of the national Global Development Education Strategy, developed in line with the Dublin Declaration, under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in partnership with the Ministry of Education.
- **Germany:** BMZ and Engagement Global led a process, entitled *Dublin in Berlin*, to expand the GCE network with a particular focus on higher education. The Dublin Declaration was used as a framework for strengthening synergies across the sector.
- **Poland** revised its civic education curriculum and created an Action Plan for Environmental and Climate Education in cooperation with relevant ministries. Poland also expressed the interest in conducting a mapping of GE at the national level.
- **Portugal** progressed with the third National Strategy on Development Education (ENED), focusing on finalising the Strategic Framework and developing the Action Plan, with GENE's input supporting the development of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Learning Exchange and Networking

- **Austria** received support for a national mapping of Global Learning that is now in implementation.
- **Belgium** led with GENE a process of research, focused on Global Education and the “Leave No One Behind” initiative, linked to broader European Global Education research.
- **Czechia** confirmed that it will host GENE Roundtable 54 at the HQs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague on 23-24 April 2026, following detailed discussions with the GENE Secretariat.
- **Germany:** BMZ and Engagement Global, together with Otto-Friedrich-University Bamberg and GENE, and other partners hosted the ANGEL Conference 2025 at the Humboldt Forum in Berlin.
- **Greece:** following an invitation from the Secretary-General of the Greek Ministry of Education, GENE participated in the regional Black Sea Ministers of Education initiative.

These are just some recent examples of GENE's work in support of the work of national ministries and agencies in Global Education. For more, please visit www.gene.eu



SUPPORT TO MINISTRIES & AGENCIES

- **Luxembourg:** GENE was invited by Luxembourg MFA for a capital visit and to participate in the Assises2025, which portrayed the continued commitment of Luxembourg to the values of GE and to the quality of ODA. A productive meeting with senior officials indicated Luxembourg's interest in the *Dublin+5* conference and continued support for GENE.
- **Slovakia** kindly hosted GENE Roundtable 52 on 27-28 March 2025, through the warm hospitality of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education.
- **Sweden** started planning to host a peer learning exchange with Czechia, which will take place in early October 2025.
- **UK** organisations engaged with GENE to seek advice in their policy dialogue with parliamentarians as they raise the profile of Global Education and discuss the possibilities for UK policymaker engagement with the Dublin Declaration.

Potential New Member States

During the first half of 2025, the GENE Board invited a small number of Ministries and Agencies from countries new to GENE to join the network. The Secretariat expects to be in a position to announce the involvement of new Ministries and Agencies at GENE Roundtable 53 in Autumn 2025.

Staff Briefing & Training in Global Education

As part of its ongoing support to ministries and agencies, GENE continues to offer tailored briefings in Global Education for policymakers, along with staff training for personnel in Ministries and Agencies.

In May 2024, GENE facilitated an intensive, whole-of-staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training for public servants at Camões, I.P., the Portuguese Agency for Language, Culture, and Development. The two-day training used participatory methodologies to connect staff across departments with the national strategy on Global Education and key international developments. The training aimed not only to deepen integration of Global Education within Camões, but also to foster team cohesion and institutional alignment.

Building on this, GENE provided a smaller-scale training session to staff of the Ministry of Education in Slovakia on 7 July 2025, supporting capacity development and internal awareness-raising at the national level.

GENE is available to all associated ministries and agencies to provide briefings and training. To learn more about how a staff training could be tailored to your national context or to schedule a briefing or training, please contact the GENE Secretariat.



Participants at GENE Roundtable 52 (27-28 March 2025) in Bratislava.



Access the Dublin Declaration here: www.gene.eu/declaration



NETWORKING

GENE Roundtable 52: *Hope in Challenging Times* (27-28 March 2025, Bratislava)

The Roundtable brought together over 50 policymakers, educators, and youth leaders to explore how Global Education can respond to growing global complexity with action, courage, and hope.

GENE frames hope as active resistance and sees global education policy research and practice as a deliberate process of creating hope in the face of current challenges. This conceptual framing provided the foundation for shared reflection, policy dialogue, and peer exchange across all sessions.

Key Moments

- **Opening Keynote:** Slovak State Secretary Dr. Slavomír Partila set the tone with insights on the future of education in the context of AI, underlining the need to combine technical competencies with civic responsibility, critical thinking, and human values.
- **2024 GENE Global Education Youth Awardees:** The Roundtable featured presentations by the Awardees, showcasing youth-led initiatives that addressed climate justice, social inclusion, and civic engagement. These stories highlighted the transformative power of youth-driven global education.

- **Insights from Gallup:** A keynote by Gallup explored global public opinion data on trust, leadership, and the essential human need for hope — linking these to the foundations of quality global education policy.
- **Keynote by Dr. Jamil Zaki (Stanford University)** on “Hope through Conversations Across Difference”: Mr. Zaki highlighted the transformative power of dialogue in divided societies. He showed how engaging across disagreements builds understanding, corrects misperceptions, and cultivates empathy, positioning hope as an active, connective force in global education and policy discourse.
- **Workshops:** Participants engaged in sessions on the future scenarios and trends in education, the use of AI in global education, and public opinion research in development education.
- **Peer Review Launch:** The Latvia Peer Review Report was officially launched, featuring key lessons from Latvia’s national experiences in global education policy and provision.

[READ THE SUMMARY REPORT](#)

Upcoming Roundtables

- **23-24 October 2025:** Roundtable 53 | Online
- **23-24 April 2026:** Roundtable 54 | Prague



PEER REVIEW AND POLICY LEARNING

International Launch of the Latvian Peer Review Report

The launch took place on the opening day of GENE Roundtable 52 and followed a national launch in Riga during the autumn 2024. The report provides an overview of Global Education in Latvia, with a particular focus on integrating Global Education as part of implementing Latvia's new curriculum. It includes observations and recommendations intended to assist Latvian Global Education actors to improve and increase provision in the country, celebrating success to date and emphasising the need for continued and strengthened ministerial leadership and support. **Download the report [here](#).**

Peer Review of Germany 2024-2026

During the last week of February, GENE and the [Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development \(BMZ\)](#) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to mark the start of the Peer Review of Global Education in Germany. The core partner BMZ hosted the initial Secretariat visit to Berlin, joined by members of the Reference Group. The international peer review visit is foreseen for late November 2025.

Peer Review in Ireland 2025-2026

During the third week of June, GENE facilitated the International Peer Review Team Visit to Ireland, with peer experts from Portugal and Luxembourg. Initial observations and recommendations were shared with Irish Aid, as the core partner, and the reference group and were well received.



From left to right, at the launch of the Latvian Peer Review Report in Bratislava: Jo McAuley (Head of GENE Peer Review and Policy Research), Anita Vahere-Abražune (Latvian Ministry of Education and Science), Marios Antoniou (Pedagogical Institute/Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, Cyprus), Emer Carney (Irish Aid/Department of Foreign Affairs).



Participants at the ANGEL Conference 2025 (4-6 June 2025) in Berlin.



RESEARCH AND POLICY WORK

ANGEL Conference 2025 – *Research in Global Education and Learning: For Democracy, Peace, Human Rights, Sustainability, and Global Social Justice*

The ANGEL conference underscored the important role of research for policymaking in global education. Throughout the event, attendees engaged in reflection on central topics in Global Education namely its relationship with democracy, peace, human rights, social justice, and sustainability while also addressing decolonisation in global education. The conference took place on 4-6 June 2025 in Berlin and was organised by ANGEL and GENE in partnership with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Engagement Global, Otto-Friedrich-University Bamberg, IOE - UCL's Faculty of Education and Society, with kind hosting support from the Humboldt Forum. It was financially supported by BMZ and the EU.

Leaving No One Behind in Global Education

GENE, together with Enabel's BeGlobal initiative, launched a research project to explore how the 'Leave No One Behind' principle is understood and put into practice in Global Education. The goal is to make GE more inclusive by reaching groups often left out such

as those facing discrimination, living outside urban areas, or excluded from formal education. The research started with a Belgian case study, with input from NGOs, interviews, a focus group, and a webinar. A national report with findings will be ready by 15 July. The second part of the research is a European strand, which will gather practices and challenges across GENE member countries and European NGOs.

NISSEM Publication – *From Global to National: Policy Uptake of Education Agreements*

GENE is also collaborating with [NISSEM](#) (Network to Integrate SDG Target 4.7 and SEL Skills into Educational Materials) and ANGEL to develop a publication that will explore the translation of international education frameworks into national policies and practice. For the first time, this work will place specific emphasis on the relationship between global agreements, such as the UNESCO 2023 Recommendation, and regional initiatives like the Dublin Declaration and change at national level. This new publication will include diverse contributions, aiming to reach broader audiences beyond GENE's usual readers, leveraging NISSEM's strong international profile in the education and development sectors.



INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Over the past months, GENE has deepened its international engagement efforts, helping to shape a more supportive policy environment for Global Education (GE) at both European and global levels. These activities are crucial for raising the visibility of GE among international actors, influencing strategic policy discussions, and creating new opportunities for alignment and collaboration.

Continuing cooperation and increasing engagement

13 May – GENE participated in the SOLIDAR Foundation's Policy Roundtable at the European Parliament in Brussels, titled "Breaking Barriers: Global Citizenship Education for Inclusive Participation." GENE contributed by highlighting the importance of the Dublin Declaration and positioning GE as central to giving hope for a democratic renewal.

20 May – At the invitation of the Greek Chairmanship, GENE joined the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Working Group on Education. In this forum, GENE presented its work and explored future collaboration opportunities in areas such as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), curriculum integration, and policy partnerships.

19 June – GENE engaged in two significant activities:

- **Council of the EU Working Party on Development Cooperation (CODEV):** At the kind invitation of the Polish EU Presidency, GENE presented its work and shared views on the importance of Global Education and Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) to the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). This led to strong expressions of support from many Member States, the European Commission, and the EEAS, who acknowledged GENE's contributions and recognised the importance of supporting Global Education at the European level in future budget discussions.
- **Brussels Multi-Stakeholder Meeting:** GENE participated in this event to continue dialogue with key European actors, funders, and stakeholders on aligning support for Global Education.

- GENE also made a formal submission to the European Commission's public consultation on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), advocating for the inclusion of Global Education as a strategic funding priority in the next EU budget cycle.

Ongoing and Forward-Looking Engagements

- **OECD DAC** – GENE has continued its dialogue with the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), including an informal meeting with DAC Chair Carsten Staur and further meetings with the secretariats of the Peer Review and Statistical Division. These conversations focused on strengthening recognition of GE/DEAR as eligible development cooperation expenditure—ensuring its place in international development accounting and financing.
- **UNECE Cooperation** – GENE is in ongoing discussions with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in preparation for a high-level Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) conference proposed for 7–8 May 2026, during the Cyprus EU Presidency.

Looking Ahead: GENE's 25th Anniversary in mid-2026 and Dublin+5 Conference in 2027

In view of the upcoming 25th anniversary of GENE in June 2026, the Board has proposed marking this milestone. More news on this to follow.

GENE also foresees a major inter-ministerial conference in late 2027, provisionally titled *Dublin +5*, to review progress on the Dublin Declaration and launch renewed commitments.



PARTNERSHIPS

In the first half of 2025, GENE continued to strengthen and diversify its partnerships with a range of organisations and networks, advancing shared goals for Global Education and contributing to a broader, more inclusive policy and practice environment across Europe and beyond.

Strategic Collaborations and Emerging Alliances

GENE has actively pursued synergies with civil society and education platforms, particularly through ongoing dialogues with SOLIDAR, the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLL), and IDEA. These conversations have focused on supporting the implementation of the Dublin Declaration.

A deepening partnership with PLATFORMA, the pan-European coalition of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) active in development cooperation, is also progressing. As part of the cooperation, a Terms of Reference for a joint research publication on Global Education and LRGs has been agreed.

Youth Engagement and Outreach

Youth remains a key priority in GENE's partnership approach. Efforts have focused on:

- Promoting the GENE Youth Award to raise awareness and recognise young changemakers in Global Education;
- Maintaining dialogue with the European Youth Forum (EYF) board to strengthen strategic cooperation;
- Participating in the AFS-EFIL General Assembly, where GENE contributed inputs on policy and practice linkages;
- Launching and disseminating the publication *Global Education and Youth in Europe – Practice and Policy*, which offers insights and examples of youth engagement across Europe.

Global Collaboration and Mutual Learning

GENE's engagement with the Ibero-American Programme on Global Citizenship for Sustainable Development has been a recent highlight of international partnership work. Originally proposed by Portugal and endorsed at the XXVII Ibero-American Summit in 2021, the programme aims to build national GCE agendas across 17 countries in Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. As part of its 2024-2025 capacity-building cycle, GENE has contributed to three training sessions, helping design, deliver, and facilitate learning for officials from ministries and development agencies across the member countries. These sessions covered:

1. Conceptual foundations (Oct 2024)
2. Processes and policy development (April 2025)
3. Roles and collaboration between actors in policymaking (May 2025)

GENE is deeply grateful to Portugal and Spain for their continued leadership and for including GENE in this inspiring initiative, which also informs and enriches GENE's work.

Global Critical Friends (GCF)

Plans are now underway for further meetings of the group in Autumn 2025. These will contribute to a publication focused on the GCF and the Dublin Declaration process, intended to inform and support future engagement, particularly in the lead-up to *Dublin+5*.

MEET GENE'S BOARD MEMBERS

Nominated by participating Ministries and Agencies, the GENE Board governs the network and ensures GENE's strategic leadership and direction, on behalf of the Roundtable.



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