

A FUTURE WE CAN ALL LOOK FORWARD TO

The European
Declaration on
Global Education
to 2050 and
what it means

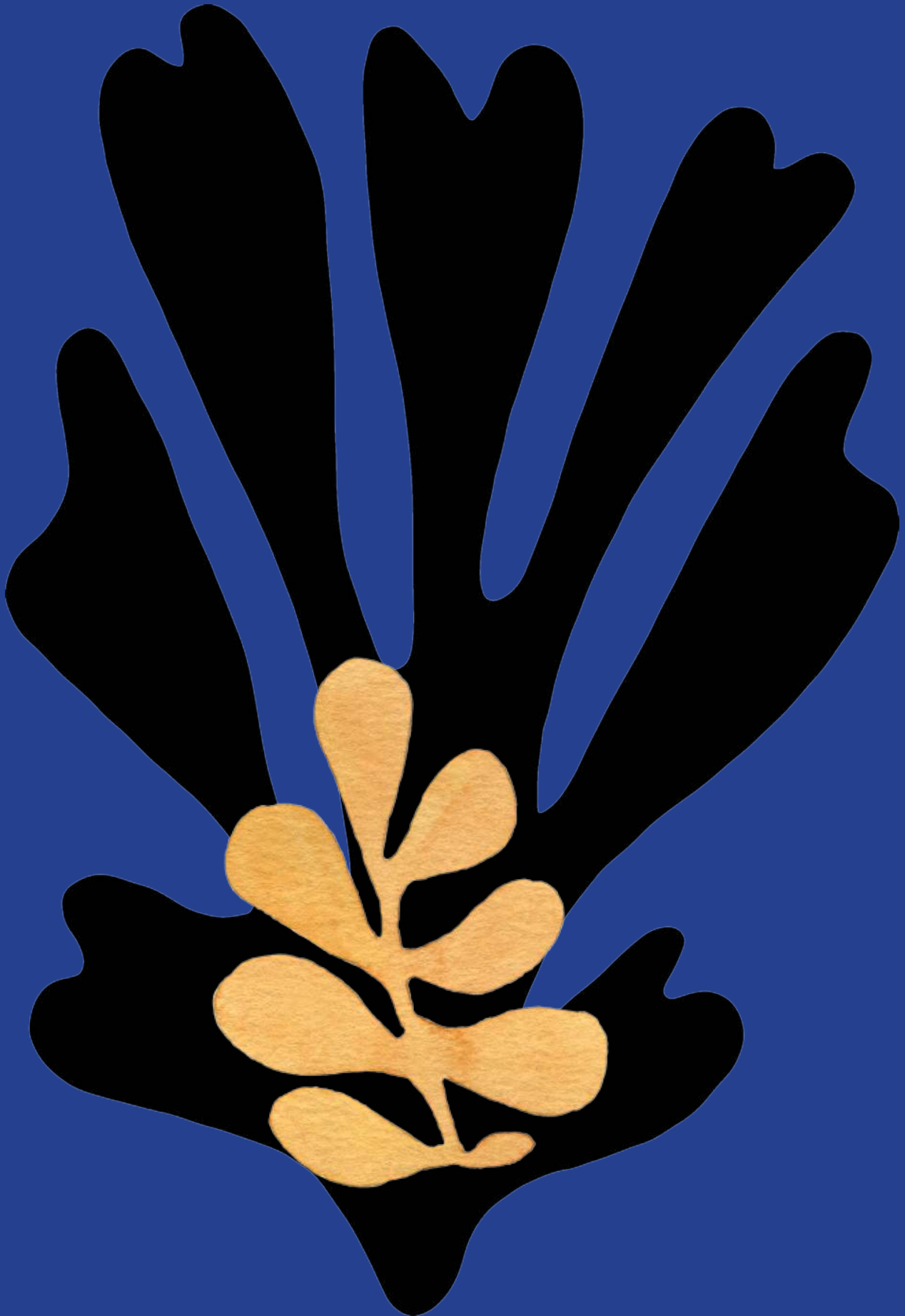






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In GENE (Global Education Network Europe), we believe in a better future for all.

And yet when we consider the kind of world that we are about to hand our children, we have reason to be concerned. Not least because, for the first time in human history, the scale and complexity of problems we face are such that they threaten our very existence.

Problems such as climate change, inequality, poverty, and war.

Addressing such enormous issues is not easy... but it is possible. We believe that education can be a powerful force in bringing about long-term change, but it must take account of these realities of local and global injustice. To imagine different futures, we need learning processes that involve people in understanding these issues.

We believe that a new kind of active learning is now needed in our schools and also in our wider communities. While this approach should be locally focussed, it must also always remain connected to the wider world and to the peoples of the Global South.

We call this kind of learning Global Education; it is learning that encourages necessary competences such as critical analysis, the ability to evaluate multiple perspectives, the ability to learn better as well as the ability to unlearn those things that are no longer useful. Global Education encourages us to always question assumptions and prejudices. It is learning for a more just and sustainable world.

Global Education is education that enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it; to open their eyes, hearts, and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level. It involves imagination and hope, respect for human rights and diversity, inclusion, and a decent life for all, now and into the future.

Global Education provides us with the first steps towards a world that is inclusive, peaceful, just, sustainable and better for all.

In short, a future we can all look forward to.





Over the course of 2021 and 2022 GENE brought together a wide variety of stakeholders, forging a common vision and commitments that enable policymakers to move Global Education to the centre of policy and strategy in European countries.

CREATING A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING FOR A FUTURE THAT WE CAN ALL LOOK FORWARD TO

Back in 2002, the Maastricht Congress on Global Education brought together many different strands and traditions within education, with the aim of breaking down silos between related areas like development education, human rights education, education for sustainable development, global citizenship education, and peace education.

Within this framework, over the past twenty years, Global Education policy and practice have evolved rapidly. At the same time, the political, social and educational background both in Europe and around the world has changed beyond all recognition.

That is why, in 2021, GENE, along with European member states, began the process of developing a new declaration. The process, led by Ireland and Luxembourg, sought to address the changes that have taken place over the past twenty years, as well as to provide a road map for the next decades.

This process led to an agreed 'Strategy Framework for Improving and Increasing Global Education in Europe to the Year 2050'. It is known as the 'European Declaration on Global Education to 2050', or 'The Dublin Declaration'.

GENE brought together a wide variety of stakeholders, including policymakers, international organisations, youth, civil society organisations, academics, local and regional governments, and global critical friends. This collaboration forged a common vision and made commitments regarding the role of education in contributing to international solidarity, human rights, global social justice, sustainability and peace. Commitments were made that enable policymakers to move Global Education from the margins towards the centre of policy and strategy in European countries.

The final Declaration was adopted on 4th November 2022 at the #GE2050 Congress in Dublin, which is why it is often simply referred to as 'The Dublin Declaration'.

The adoption of the Declaration marks an important step towards ensuring that everyone in Europe, in solidarity with peoples globally, have access to quality Global Education.



THE VISION AT THE HEART OF THE DUBLIN DECLARATION



At the heart of the Declaration is a vision of a better future.

This vision is centred around creating a world where every single person – especially the most vulnerable and the most marginalised – can live a decent life, with fairness, peace, and respect for their rights guaranteed. The Declaration emphasises the need for a healthy planet and understanding between different cultures and nations and respect for all forms of diversity. It expresses the fundamental belief that Global Education can play a critical role in the realisation of such a world.

A key part of this vision therefore is to make sure that Europe is a place where everyone has access to quality Global Education, by right.

Global Education is about understanding people from diverse backgrounds, being able to think critically about the world and how to make it better and finding new ways of working together to solve big problems like climate change.

It is about learning from other cultures and histories, understanding historical and geopolitical relationships, and learning how forces like colonialism, conflict, war, and oppression have shaped the world today.

And it is about inspiring people to imagine a better world and act to make it possible to get involved in social and environmental movements and organisations, and to take action locally, nationally and globally.



BUILDING ON A FIRM FOUNDATION OF EXISTING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND COMMITMENTS

In 2002, European nations made a significant commitment to Global Education by agreeing the Maastricht Declaration as a framework for engaging the public and shaping knowledgeable, responsible global citizens.

This commitment built on the UNESCO Recommendation adopted in 1974 concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace, and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, that is considered a landmark legal instrument that brought together, for the first time, peace, international understanding, human rights, fundamental freedoms and education (the UNESCO recommendation was revised in 2023 and took account of the Dublin Declaration in its reformulation).

In recent decades, many other new international strategic frameworks have emerged, not least the introduction by

the United Nations of the Sustainable Development Goals (the SDGs) in 2015. These goals are a collection of seventeen interlinked objectives designed to serve as a “shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future”.

Of particular significance for Global Education is Sustainable Development Goal Number 4 which includes a special focus on ensuring that education contributes to understanding global challenges and fostering international cooperation and peace.

It is upon firm foundations such as these commitments that the Dublin Declaration is built.

For a full list of international agreements related to Global Education see the Dublin Declaration, Appendix 3:
www.gene.eu/s/GE2050-declaration.pdf



THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF GLOBAL EDUCATION IN EUROPE OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS

Over the past 20 years, Global Education in Europe has seen remarkable progress and development. Since the Maastricht Declaration, there have been clear and significant advancements in this field. National and European policies have evolved to better support Global Education, placing it at the centre of educational systems, whether in formal settings such as schools, in non-formal learning environments such as youth organisations, and even in informal learning processes such as music festivals. Global Education is now recognised as vital for people of all ages, emphasising a lifelong and broad approach.

There has been a growing realisation of the need for a rights-based approach to Global Education, leading to national strategies and policies focused on inclusivity, ensuring everyone in European countries is involved, in solidarity with people globally. The education sector has seen coordinated improvements across various levels – from curriculum reforms in schools to teacher training, student assessments, and leadership development. Early childhood education and non-formal education sectors have also focused on Global Education.

Civil society's role has in many cases been strengthened, with more structured involvement in consultations, strategy development, implementation, and review

processes at national and European levels. This involvement has been especially pronounced in youth organisations and platforms, highlighting the importance of engaging young people in Global Education.

There has been a shift towards more critical approaches to Global Education. This includes addressing historical legacies and global power dynamics, with efforts to decolonise curricula. Research capacity in this field has also been strengthened, providing a strong foundation for informed policymaking.

Funding for Global Education has grown, both at national levels and through European mechanisms like the EU DEAR program. This financial support has been crucial for the development and expansion of Global Education initiatives.

Finally, there has been an increase in international networking and policy learning among policymakers, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of Global Education. This includes activities like GENE Roundtables and the European Global Education Peer Review process, which help maintain and improve the standards of Global Education across Europe.



GLOBAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD



Looking towards 2050, the landscape of Global Education in Europe is set to evolve amidst a backdrop of significant changes and challenges. Education systems are adapting to shifting environmental realities, geopolitical changes, and diverse political scenarios at every level. Europe is grappling with a myriad of interconnected global and local challenges, ranging from climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution to inequality, poverty, and resource scarcity. These are compounded by health crises like pandemics, the looming threat of wars, and ongoing threats to democracy, peace, and human rights.


In response to these challenges, there is a growing movement of people across the globe advocating for solidarity, environmental care, and a world characterised by peace, understanding, equity, equality, and the respect of human rights. Central to these movements is the role of Global Education, which is vital for strengthening civil society, particularly in places where civic freedoms are at risk.

This vision for the future also emphasises the need to value and incorporate the perspectives and knowledge of various cultures, especially indigenous ones, to create equitable and sustainable solutions to global challenges. There is an increasing awareness of the

necessity to integrate learning for social justice, human rights, gender equality, diversity, sustainability, and peace into all forms of education – from childhood to adulthood, and in formal, non-formal, and informal settings.

In the Declaration, technology is recognised as playing a pivotal role in providing inclusive educational solutions and fostering global connectivity and solidarity. However, there is also a cautionary note on the potential of technology and social media to divide people, challenge democracy, and its environmental impact, as well as the need to address the digital divide. This evolving narrative of Global Education in Europe speaks to a future that is interconnected, inclusive, and responsive to the challenges and opportunities of our changing world.





Global Education is education that enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it; to open their eyes, hearts, and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level.

It empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity, equality, planetary sustainability and international understanding.

HOW GLOBAL EDUCATION CAN EFFECT THE CHANGE WE NEED

Global Education is increasingly seen as crucial in preparing us for an uncertain and complex future. This holistic approach to education aims to prepare individuals for meaningful contributions to a more just and sustainable world. It does this by equipping people with the necessary knowledge, critical thinking ability, skills and competencies, attitudes, and values and imagination to deal with complexity in an increasingly uncertain world.

Global Education can empower us to confront existential global challenges such as the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, growing inequality, persistent poverty, racism, xenophobia, and the threats of war. It enables us to take action towards social, economic, and ecological change, promoting global citizenship, sustainability, intercultural understanding, inclusion, peace, non-violence, and gender equality.

Global Education also plays a key role in raising public awareness and fostering a critical understanding of both local and global issues. At both a national and a European level the process of Global Education enables policy coherence across various fields like environment, trade, migration, justice, and health, ensuring that education aligns with broader societal goals and that people have the necessary concepts and skills to engage with these issues.

Global Education places the promotion of international solidarity, human rights, global social justice, sustainability, and peace at the heart of education system.



THE NEW COMMITMENTS TO THIS CHANGE MADE AT NATIONAL LEVEL



In the Declaration, governments pledged to focus more on Global Education in their national policies and strategies.

This includes integrating Global Education across all levels of learning, from early childhood to adult education, and aligning it with foreign, international, and development cooperation policies. The goal is to ensure that everyone has access to quality Global Education.

Efforts are being made to develop or strengthen national, regional, and local strategies to improve Global Education. This involves enhancing coordination between various government departments to create coherent and effective policies and initiatives.

Support is being directed towards organisations and groups active in Global Education, like youth and civil society organisations, adult education groups, community organisations, and researchers. This recognition of their expertise aims to bolster efforts in Global Education

There is a commitment to providing educators with the necessary support, skills, and confidence to integrate Global Education into their teaching. This includes developing standards, quality assurance, and evaluation

mechanisms that are suited to the specific needs of Global Education.

Funding is a key focus, with governments seeking to ensure adequate and predictable resources for Global Education. This includes investing in research to inform policy decisions and initiatives.

A significant part of this commitment is to include and support marginalised communities in Global Education processes. Innovation in Global Education is encouraged, along with outreach to new sectors and publics, including the private sector.

Lastly, there is a commitment to fostering international networking among policymakers to continuously improve Global Education policy and practice, aiming for a global approach to education that is inclusive, comprehensive, and forward-thinking.



THE NEW COMMITMENTS TO THIS CHANGE MADE AT EUROPEAN LEVEL



At the European level, commitments were also made to a series of actions aimed at enhancing Global Education.

The Declaration provides a framework to develop and strengthen a universal, rights-based approach to Global Education across Europe, engaging in dialogue with counterparts from other world regions.

There is a concerted effort to ensure ongoing coordination at various levels – local, regional, national, pan-European, and international – to support policy dialogue and coherence in Global Education. Part of this involves sector-wide coordination through European networks, which will include a diverse range of actors from civil society, youth, local and regional governments, and other sectors.

Securing adequate and accessible funding for Global Education at the pan-European level is a priority, ensuring it aligns with national funding and the ambitions outlined in the declaration. There is also a push to advocate for Global Education as an integrated priority within European institutions like the Council of Europe, the EU, and other international organisations.

Continued collaboration with peers and colleagues worldwide is also on the agenda, aiming to engage in mutual learning and support the development of regional structures for networking among policymakers and other stakeholders. This effort includes strengthening the European Global Education Peer Review process, improving the quality of Global Education, and supporting GENE, in its work as an intergovernmental organisation that networks policymakers in member states for better Global Education in Europe.



A GLIMPSE OF THE IMPACT THE DUBLIN DECLARATION HAS HAD IN SOME COUNTRIES



It has been over a year now since the European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 was agreed and adopted. Since then, its impact has been felt in a widespread strengthening of both policy and provision of Global Education in countries across Europe:

BELGIUM

Belgium is using the Dublin Declaration in the development of its national strategic note on Global Citizenship Education.

CZECHIA

Czechia is using the Dublin Declaration to inform the work of the National Strategy Group, and across various departments of the Ministry of Education.

FRANCE

In France, the Dublin Declaration has led to renewed inter-ministerial cooperation and greater stakeholder engagement in Global Education strategy.

IRELAND

Ireland is integrating the Dublin Declaration into its Global Citizenship Education Programme to implement the programme, measure progress and set priorities.

ITALY

Italy is integrating the Dublin Declaration into its National Action plan.

LATVIA

Latvia is using the Dublin Declaration to improve the implementation of its new curriculum (including using the Peer Review process).

LUXEMBOURG

Luxembourg is using the Dublin Declaration to inform evaluation of Global Education at a national level.

MALTA

Malta is using the Dublin Declaration to help map the territory of Global Education and to inform national strategy.

PORTUGAL

In Portugal, the Dublin Declaration has helped increase funding for civil society organisations.

SLOVAKIA

In Slovakia the Dublin Declaration is helping to facilitate inter-ministerial dialogue, and this, in turn, is helping to shape the National Strategy and Action Plan.

SPAIN

Spain intends developing Declaration-based toolkits for use in schools and non-formal learning spaces.





A GLIMPSE OF THE IMPACT THE DUBLIN DECLARATION HAS HAD IN SOME SECTORS

GENE also continues to work in partnership with other stakeholders to strengthen the policy environment for Global Education in the wake of the Dublin Declaration.

CIVIL SOCIETY



GENE continues to work in partnership with the coordinator of the Civil Society Organisations Global Education group that convened during the Declaration process, CONCORD's Global Citizenship Education working group as well as Global Education platforms such as IDEA (Ireland), FoRS (Czechia), Ambrela (Slovakia) and Lapas (Latvia). In partnership with GENE, the NGO platform FoRS convened a regional virtual meeting focused on the implementation of the Dublin Declaration in June 2023.

YOUTH

GENE is currently working with a number of different youth organisation partners to produce a youth-related Global Education publication that will bring together an overview of policy and practice across Europe.

LOCAL & REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

GENE is engaging directly with local and regional governments to strengthen the policy environment for Global Education in the wake of the Dublin Declaration. GENE is also doing this in conjunction with Platforma, the

pan-European coalition of towns and regions that promotes decentralised cooperation. Platforma's 29 partners represent communities that are active in region-to-region development cooperation. With all of these partners cooperating internationally to promote sustainable development.

GLOBAL CRITICAL FRIENDS

In the wake of the Dublin Declaration GENE continues to strengthen the policy environment for Global Education on a global level, by facilitating inter-regional and global processes in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

ACADEMIA

GENE worked closely with ANGEL to ensure that the ANGEL-UNESCO Conference (June 2023) embodied the principles established by the Dublin Declaration and its implications for Global Education research. A series of articles have also appeared in academic publications in many Member States focusing on the Dublin Declaration.



GENE recognises the significant leadership of Ireland and Luxembourg in the Dublin Declaration process



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs



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We would like to recognise and express our thanks to the European Commission and to the increasing number of ministries and agencies that fund GENE. We very much appreciate the support. We also very much appreciate the consistent support of our ongoing, annual and

long-term funding ministries and agencies. Finally, we appreciate all the non-financial, but precious support and engagement by all GENE member state ministries and agencies that participate in various GENE policy learning and networking processes.

The work of GENE is supported and made possible by the contributions of the following Ministries and Agencies:



Austrian
Development
Agency



Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
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and Research



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Federal Public Service
Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Trade and
Development Cooperation



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
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ABOUT GENE

GENE (Global Education Network Europe) is a network of ministries, agencies, and institutions with responsibility for Global Education. GENE supports networking, peer learning, policy research, national strategy development and qualitative improvements in the field of Global Education. Through these activities, GENE works toward the day when all people in Europe - in solidarity with people globally - will have access to quality Global Education.



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