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2026 GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT LAUNCHED



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THE 10TH FORUM ON THE REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION HELD IN BEIJING



The 10th Forum on the Reform and Development of Foreign Language Education in Higher Education was held in Beijing from March 20 to 22, with the theme "Integrating China and the World through Digital and Intelligent Empowerment".





“一带一路”语言教育文化组织联盟
BELT AND ROAD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES NETWORK

MONTHLY BRIEFING

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A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Recently, the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris released the 2026 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM Report). At a time of profound transformation in the global education landscape, this milestone resonates deeply with the core mission of the Belt and Road Languages and Cultures Network.

Titled Access and equity, the report says that despite record-high global enrolment, 273 million children and young people remain out of school. For the BRLCN, this underscores a fundamental proposition: our pursuit of language and culture must be grounded in educational equity. As the BRLCN continues to move toward its goal of “100 member institutions,” it is essential to ensure that language education serves as a bridge for inclusion.

The vision of educational equity is closely intertwined with digital development. The sixth annual meeting of the Global Education Coalition, together with the 10th Forum on Reform and Development of Foreign Language Education in Higher Education held in Beijing, both focused on how to translate vision into value through digital transformation. In the age of artificial intelligence, our task is not only to use new tools, but also to advance a “humanistic reconfiguration” of education. As highlighted at the Beijing forum, we should activate intelligent technologies, deepen human-machine collaboration, while upholding the cultural essence and pedagogical integrity of foreign language education.

This reflection on “humanistic reconfiguration” also aligns closely with the upcoming 2026 Global English Education China Assembly, to be held this July. We warmly invite colleagues from around the world to gather in Beijing, bringing insights from global dialogue to jointly explore the theme of “Humanistic Reconfiguration and Civilizational Mission of Foreign Language Education in the AI Era.”

Let us work together—with coordinated policies, sustained investment, and a shared commitment to cultural exchange—to reshape the future landscape of global education and culture.

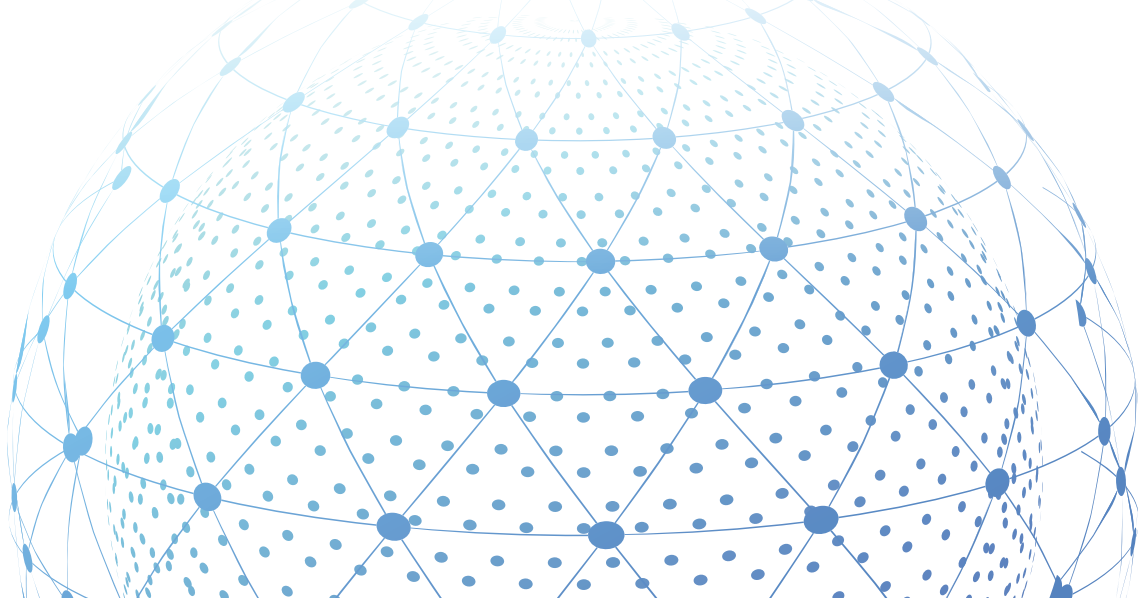
近日，联合国教科文组织巴黎总部发布了《2026年全球教育监测报告》（GEM Report）。在全球教育格局深刻变革的当下，这一里程碑事件与“一带一路”语言教育文化组织联盟的核心使命形成了深远的共鸣。

这份题为《机会与公平》的报告指出，尽管全球入学人数创下历史新高，但仍有2.73亿儿童和青少年失学。对联盟而言，这一事实进一步印证了一个关键命题：我们对语言与文化的追求，必须建立在教育公平的基础之上。正因如此，随着联盟向“100家成员机构”的目标不断迈进，我们必须确保语言教育成为连接包容性的桥梁。

教育公平的愿景与数字化发展息息相关。全球教育联盟第六届年度会议，以及在北京举行的第十届高等学校外语教育改革与发展论坛，共同聚焦于如何通过数字化转型将愿景转化为价值。在人工智能时代，我们的任务不只是驾驭新工具，更是推动一次教育的“人文重塑”。正如北京论坛所提出的，我们应当激活智能技术，深化人机协同，同时坚守外语教育的文化内核与教学灵魂。

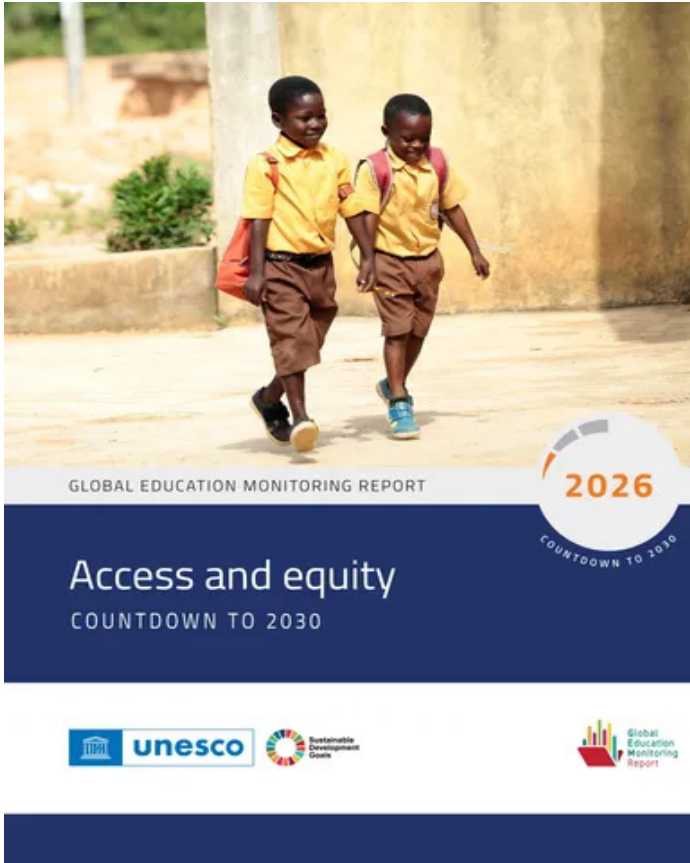
这一关于“人文重塑”的思考，也与即将在今年7月举办的2026国际英语教育中国大会高度契合。我们诚挚邀请大家带着来自全球对话的洞见相聚北京，共同探讨“AI时代外语教育的人文重塑与文明使命”。

让我们齐心协力，以政策协同、长期投入以及对文化交流的共同热忱，携手重绘全球教育文化的版图。



2026 GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT LAUNCHED

联合国教科文组织发布 2026 年《全球教育监测报告》



The 2026 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM Report), titled *Access and Equity*, was released on March 25 at the headquarters of the UNESCO in Paris. As the first installment of the “Countdown to 2030” series, the report reviews global progress toward SDG 4, with a focus on access and equity. Subsequent editions will address quality (2027) and relevance (2028/29).

Based on data analysis and case studies from 35 countries, the report identifies those that have made faster progress in expanding participation across all levels of education while narrowing disparities related to gender, location, wealth and disability. It notes that global enrolment has increased significantly since 2000, reaching 1.4 billion in 2024. However, challenges remain, with 273 million children and young people still out of school, and persistent inequalities—particularly wealth-related gaps—continuing to hinder progress.

The report also highlights structural challenges, including declining teacher qualifications in low-income countries, reduced international education aid, and long-standing deficiencies in basic infrastructure. It calls for strengthened monitoring frameworks, better integration of administrative and survey data, and the development of more context-sensitive indicators.

The report says that there is no one-size-fits-all model for reform, noting that sustained progress depends on policy coherence, long-term commitment to equity, and alignment among governance, financing and local conditions. As the 2030 deadline approaches, it calls on countries to adopt balanced, evidence-based approaches to advance inclusive and equitable quality education for all. (Source: UNESCO)

2026 GLOBAL EDUCATION COALITION SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING

2026 年全球教育联盟第六届年度会议在法国召开

The sixth annual meeting of the Global Education Coalition brought together Member States of UNESCO, along with partners and key stakeholders in the education sector, to advance the digital transformation of education. Held at a crucial stage in the run-up to achieving SDG 4, the meeting served as a high-level platform to review progress, set priorities and strengthen partnerships.

Under the theme “Turning vision into value: Transforming education together”, participants discussed the socio-economic impact of investment in digital transformation and artificial intelligence. It was widely recognized that, when embedded in system-wide strategies, such investment can generate tangible benefits for learners and teachers, while promoting more inclusive and equitable education systems.

The meeting featured plenary sessions, ministerial dialogues, as well as workshops and parallel sessions, focusing on areas including teacher empowerment, skills development, digital learning ecosystems and innovative financing approaches. These exchanges integrated strategic perspectives with practical insights, highlighting the importance of coordinated action.



worlddidac.org

Participants reaffirmed the Coalition’s role as a global platform for pooling expertise, resources and innovation, and called for enhanced cooperation to better prepare education systems for an increasingly digital and AI-driven future. (Source: UNESCO)

THE 10TH FORUM ON THE REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION HELD IN BEIJING

第十届高等学校外语教育改革与发展论坛在北京举行



Jia Wenjian, president of Beijing Foreign Studies University, addresses the opening ceremony of the forum.

The 10th Forum on the Reform and Development of Foreign Language Education in Higher Education was held in Beijing from March 20 to 22, with the theme “Integrating China and the World through Digital and Intelligent Empowerment”. The forum was jointly organized by Beijing Foreign Studies University and two teaching

steering committees under China’s Ministry of Education.

In his opening remarks, Jia Wenjian, president of Beijing Foreign Studies University, outlined three priorities for advancing reform in foreign language education, including promoting global vision and mutual learning among civilizations, leveraging intelligent technologies to enhance human-machine collaboration, and advancing the integration of industry and education.

Wu Shixing, deputy director-general of the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education, called for deepening innovation in foreign language education in the digital era, optimizing curricula, strengthening talent cultivation, and promoting the application of artificial intelligence in education.

The forum featured plenary sessions and thematic discussions on teacher development, skills training, digital learning ecosystems and education financing. Chen Dali, deputy director-general of the Department of International Cooperation and Exchange of the Ministry of Education, said the forum aligns with China’s efforts to expand opening-up in education and called for enhanced exchanges and practical cooperation to cultivate more globally oriented talent.

(Source: Xinhua News)

COUNCIL MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

Mar 26

SHANGHAI INTERNATIONAL STUDIES UNIVERSITY

Agreement signed with University of Reading, UK

上海外国语大学与英国雷丁大学签署合作备忘录



Wu Lirui, deputy secretary of the CPC SISU Committee, and Caroline Baylon, pro-vice-chancellor of the University of Reading, after signing an agreement.

Dr. Caroline Baylon, pro-vice-chancellor for international affairs at the University of Reading, visited Shanghai International Studies University on March 26. The two sides reviewed the foundations of their existing collaboration and exchanged views on future areas for expansion, as well as the advancement of joint education programs between Chinese and international institutions. Following the meeting, representatives from both universities signed a memorandum of understanding.

Mar 23

BEIJING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE UNIVERSITY

Agreement signed with Ionian University, Greece

北京语言大学与希腊爱奥尼亚大学签署合作协议



Duan Peng (right), president of Beijing Language and Culture University and Andreas Floros, president of the Ionian University after signing the agreement.

Duan Peng, president of Beijing Language and Culture University, met with Andreas Floros, president of the Ionian University on March 23. Following the meeting, the two sides signed a memorandum of understanding on academic cooperation.

The two sides reached consensus on areas of collaboration, including the establishment of a Sinology center, joint talent cultivation programs, faculty exchanges, co-development of academic disciplines, and cultural exchange initiatives. They agreed to take the signing of the memorandum as an opportunity to advance the implementation of these initiatives, enhance faculty mobility and academic exchange, and jointly build a high-quality platform for educational and cultural cooperation between China and Greece.

Mar 19

SHANDONG UNIVERSITY

Agreement signed with Universidad de Sevilla, Spain

山东大学与西班牙塞维利亚大学签署合作协议

Julián Martínez, vice-rector of Universidad de Sevilla, visited Shandong University on March 19. Yi Fan, vice president of Shandong University, met with the delegation, and the two sides signed an agreement.

Yi reviewed the solid foundations of collaboration between the two institutions in fields including medicine and mathematics, and expressed the hope that both sides will further advance joint talent cultivation and collaborative research in key disciplines. He added that the planned joint establishment of a Confucius Institute will serve as a platform to promote bilateral cooperation.



Representatives after signing an agreement.

Mar 12

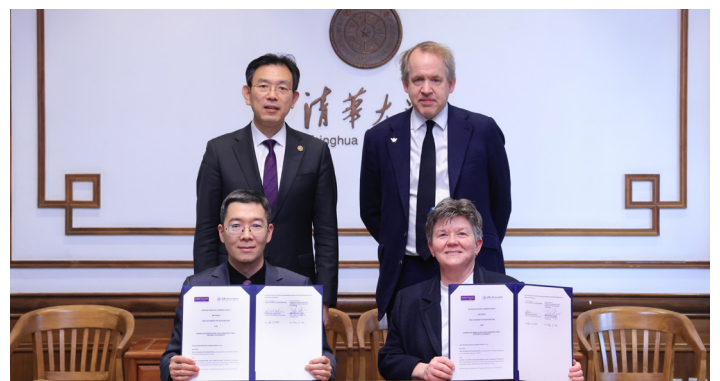
TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY

Agreements signed with Mongolian University of Science and Technology and University of Manchester

清华大学与蒙古科技大学、英国曼彻斯特大学签署合作协议

Li Luming, president of Tsinghua University, and Namnan Tumurpurev, president of the Mongolian University of Science and Technology, signed a memorandum of understanding on March 12. Li said the two universities will take the agreement as an opportunity to further deepen cooperation, enhance faculty and student exchanges, and contribute to the development of education in both countries.

Li also met with Duncan Ivison, president of the University of Manchester, to discuss expanding and deepening bilateral cooperation on March 16. The two sides signed a student exchange agreement and a supplementary agreement on a jointly conferred doctoral degree program.



Representatives of both universities after signing a Memorandum of Understanding.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

Mar 9

SEAMEO REGIONAL LANGUAGE CENTRE, SINGAPORE The 60th RELC International Conference

第 60 届东南亚教育部长组织区域语言中心学术年会在新加坡举办

The 60th RELC International Conference was held from March 9 to 11, 2026, bringing together 13 invited speakers and nine featured speakers. Under the theme “Global Trends and Innovations in Language Education: Theory, Research, and Practice in Action”, the conference featured more than 200 parallel sessions and 15 workshops delivered by experts from Southeast Asia and beyond. This milestone edition also introduced 14 poster presentations, held in the RELC Library, showcasing visually engaging summaries of research projects.



A group photo of the representatives.

At the invitation of the organizing committee, 21st Century recommended Dr. John Liang, clinical professor and director of the TESOL program at NYU Shanghai, to deliver a featured speech at the conference.



Dr. John Liang gives a featured speech at the conference.

Mar 5

NORTHWEST NORMAL UNIVERSITY Memorandum of Understanding signed with Aberystwyth University, UK

西北师范大学与英国亚伯大学签署合作备忘录

Professor Ian Barber, pro-vice-chancellor for research at Aberystwyth University, visited Northwest Normal University on March 5. Ma Libang, vice president of Northwest Normal University, and Ian Barber signed a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of their respective universities.

Barber said that both universities uphold an open and development-oriented approach to higher education, and expressed his expectation to strengthen cooperation with Northwest Normal University in areas

including faculty exchanges, the development of joint research platform, and collaborative postgraduate training.



Ma Libang (right), vice president of Northwest Normal University and Ian Barber, pro-vice-chancellor for research at Aberystwyth University after signing a MOU.

Mar 4

JIANGSU UNIVERSITY Agreement signed with Deakin University, Australia

江苏大学与迪肯大学签署合作协议

Zou Xiaobo, president of Jiangsu University, visited Australia from March 4 to 7. During his visit, he met with David Halliwell, chief executive officer of Deakin University, and the two sides signed a cooperation agreement on internationalized oriented undergraduate talent cultivation in disciplines including electrical engineering and automation, software engineering, and data computing and applications. They also exchanged views on expanding joint student programs, enhancing exchanges visits for young faculty members, and jointly applying for international research collaboration projects.



Representatives after signing the agreement.

Mar 2

SHANGHAI JIAO TONG UNIVERSITY Memorandum of Understanding signed with Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

上海交通大学与朱拉隆功大学签署合作备忘录

Ding Kuiling, president of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, met with Wilert Puriwat, president of Chulalongkorn University at Minhang Campus in Shanghai on March 2. Ding said that the university looks forward to advancing comprehensive collaboration with Chulalongkorn

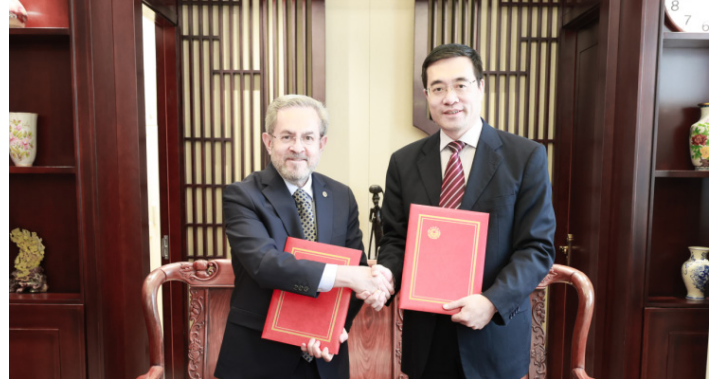
COUNCIL MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

University in areas including student exchanges, dual degree programs, and joint research, continuously expanding the scope of cooperation and elevating the partnership to a new level. The two universities signed a memorandum of understanding following the meeting.



Ding Kuiling (right), president of Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Wilert Puriwat, president of Chulalongkorn University after signing a Memorandum of Understanding.

February 27. Gao expressed hope for strengthening future cooperation with Ankara University, with a focus on interdisciplinary talent cultivation and promoting collaborative research, particularly in the field of global governance. The two sides also exchanged views on cooperation under the Erasmus Programme and participation in the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, and signed a memorandum of understanding.



Gao Fei (right), president of the China Foreign Affairs University and Necdet Ünüvar, rector of Ankara University after signing a MoU.

Feb 27

SOOCHOW UNIVERSITY

Agreement signed with Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Republic of Kazakhstan

苏州大学与哈萨克国立大学签署合作协议

Zhang Qiao, president of Soochow University, met with Tummebayev Jansset, rector of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Suzhou on February 27. During the meeting, the two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding and exchanged views on cooperation in areas including joint talent training, joint laboratory construction, and university-enterprise collaborative innovation.



Zhang Qiao (right), president of Soochow University signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Tummebayev Jansset, rector of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University.

Feb 27

CHINA FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNIVERSITY

Memorandum of Understanding signed with Ankara University, Turkey

外交学院与安卡拉大学签署合作备忘录

Gao Fei, president of the China Foreign Affairs University, met with Necdet Ünüvar, rector of Ankara University, Turkey in Beijing on

COMING EVENTS

April 8-11, 2026

IATEFL International Conference and Exhibition, Brighton,
England

May 18-21, 2026

NATE Russia conference, Samara, Russia

May 22-24, 2026

6th Psychology of Language Learning Conference, Shantou,
Guangdong, China

May 29-31, 2026

Africa ELTA 10th International Conference, Nairobi, Kenya

July 14-17, 2026

22nd BRAZ-TESOL International Conference, Vitória, Espírito
Santo, Brazil

July 23-26, 2026

9th Global English Education China Assembly, Beijing, China

August 24-25, 2026

16th AzETA International Conference, Baku, Azerbaijan

September 12-13, 2026

34th MELTA International Conference 2026, Ipoh, Malaysia

October 1-3, 2026

61st National and 7th International ASOCOPI Annual
Conference, Bucaramanga, Colombia

October 28 - November 8, 2026

China Annual Conference & Expo for International Education,
Beijing