

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Dear Prospective Students,

The document below presents the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (E.MA) 2010/2011.

It is a living document subject to revision on a regular basis. It contains answers to the most FAQs received by EIUC Secretariat in Venice.

Admission requirements

ECTS CREDITS

Q: What are ECTS credits?

A: The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is widely used by European universities as a tool to measure the weight of the academic performance at the graduate and post-graduate level. According to this system one year of university studies generally corresponds to 60 ECTS, and a Bachelor Degree (BA) to 180 ECTS.

More details available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm

Q: I have a Bachelor Degree plus a one year Master, a summer course, etc. Is that enough to satisfy the E.MA entry requirements?

A: The entry requirement requested by E.MA is of 240 ECTS credits with a 180 ECTS minimum university title/degree.

Candidatures can be considered as long as the applicant has obtained a BA corresponding to 240 ECTS credits (generally 4-year degree) or a BA corresponding to 180 ECTS credits (generally 3-year course). If the BA corresponds to 180 ECTS credits, the applicant must prove having obtained 60 additional ECTS credits. The 60 ECTS credits can correspond to a 1year MA, to the first year of a 2year MA, or can be otherwise collected by the candidate as long as equivalent to one full year of university studies. In exceptional circumstances the additional 60 ECTS credits can also be obtained through documented prior learning components that are related to the E.MA curriculum and include a minimum structure of: a) independent project research and/or b) supervised academic learning.

The applicant has to carry a workload approximately equivalent to one academic year. The Executive Committee will decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether the applicant meets the required 240 ECTS credits.

Q: How can I obtain the specification of relevant ECTS credits for my diploma, certificate, etc.?

A: To obtain such specification the applicant should refer to the institution (university, other educational authority) which issued the relevant diploma or which courses the applicant is attending. If the diploma/degree-granting institution is not in a position to specify ECTS credits related to the course in question, it should at least provide indications on an alternative credit system (and how to convert it into the ECTS system) or summarize key information on the relevant course (duration, workload, supervision, individual research/preparation) so that the E.MA Executive Committee has sufficient information to make a comparative assessment.

Q: What happens if I complete the degree entry requirements of the E.MA Programme after having been admitted?

A: Applicants completing the degree entry requirements subsequently to the application deadline are requested to provide a current transcript of exams. Eventual admittance into the Programme will be conditional upon documentation of completed degree **prior to the beginning of the E.MA academic year** (the deadline is 6 September 2010).

Q: To how many ECTS credits does the E.MA Degree corresponds?

A: The European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation corresponds to 60 ECTS credits.

LANGUAGES

Q: What are the language requirements to enter the E.MA Programme?

A: Fluency in English is an admission requirement to the Programme. While not a prerequisite, the ability to understand lectures and read academic texts in French is a definite advantage for participation in the Programme.

Q: What are the working languages of the course?

A: English and French are the official working languages of the E.MA Programme. E.MA courses and activities are mostly held in English. Lecturers who teach in French may provide basic reading materials in English on their courses for those students who are not fluent in French. Exam questions are to be answered in English.

Q: Can I write my thesis in French?

A: The thesis shall be written in English. However, a student may write the thesis in French upon prior approval of the E.MA Director of the second semester University.

Q. Which kind of language certificate do you accept?

A: Preferred certificates for English knowledge are the Cambridge First Certificate/Advanced/Proficiency, TOEFL or IELTS. We also accept other certificates as long as they are proof of fluency in English. Please note that language certificates must be issued prior to 2005. Language knowledge may be assessed in the course of interviews that may be conducted by the E.MA national coordinating universities, or by the E.MA selection staff.

Q: I am not a native English speaker, but I have done my studies in English and I usually use this language for my work. In this case am I required to provide language certificates proving my knowledge of English?

A: If the applicant demonstrates (CV, other documentation, interview) an obvious knowledge of the language required following work experience or studies, there is no need to provide language certificates.

AGE

Q: Is there an age limit to participate in E.MA?

A: E.MA does not apply any age limit. However, in case of applications from mature candidates, acceptance is generally conditioned upon demonstrated intention to put skills and knowledge acquired into practice. As a general indication E.MA students' age range from 23 to 31 years. If you wish to have an overview of E.MA current students please see http://www.emahumanrights.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=74

How to apply

Q: How do I apply to E.MA?

A: Candidates for admission should send two completed application forms and supporting documentation to the EIUC Secretariat in Venice by **19 March 2010** (date of receipt of the application materials). It is mandatory that all applicants to the E.MA 2010/2011 fill in the E.MA online survey.

For application materials and further information, please contact any of the participating universities or visit the websites www.emahumanrights.org or www.eiuc.org

Q: Documentation needed

A: The documents to be submitted jointly with the signed application form are:

- a) Curriculum vitae;
- b) University degree certificate, original or certified copy (with official translation into English, French or Italian) including transcript of exams;
- c) Certification of other ECTS credits claimed, including postgraduate studies following the BA;
- d) Language knowledge certificates and other certificates proving work experience;
- e) Letters of reference.

All documents must be submitted in two copies. The second copy can also be a simple photocopy.

Q: Why do I have to fill in the E.MA online survey?

A: The EIUC Secretariat needs you to fill in the E.MA online survey for statistical purposes and in order to speed up the processing of your application.

REFERENCE LETTERS

Q: Is there a specific form for the letters of reference?

A: No.

Q: Do the reference letters have to be attached to the application form sent before 19 March 2010, or do they have to be forwarded separately directly from the referees?

A: It is preferable that the letters are received directly from the referee, or, if they are included together with the application materials that they are enclosed in sealed and signed envelopes.

Q: Do the references have to come from the university's environment, i.e. be produced by professors, or can they also be from employers or supervisors?

A: Letters of reference do not have to be written by professors only, but can also come from employers or supervisors, as long as they are relevant to the application in question (relevance in terms of HR expertise, motivation to perform HR studies, etc.).

Q: Do the references have to be written in English, or should they be translated?

A: The letters can be presented in English, French or Italian (E.MA official languages). In other cases, please do include a translation.

Q: Is there a possibility to apply for the programme without having already finished the first university degree (for example: applying in January - finishing university in June - starting the E.MA in autumn)?

A: Applicants completing the degree entry requirements subsequently to the application deadline are requested to provide a current transcript of exams. Eventual admittance into the Programme will be conditional upon documentation of completed degree prior to the beginning of the academic year.

Selection procedure

Q: How do you select Non-EU citizens?

A: The E.MA Executive Committee is the body responsible for selecting and ranking all candidates (both EU and non-EU). The selection process is based on the criteria indicated in the call for applications: academic ability and background, experience, motivation, and language competence.

Q: Besides the Brazilian citizenship, I have an Italian one. With what citizenship is better to apply for this Master? Why?

A: Candidates holding multiple citizenships must indicate all citizenships in the application form. The Executive Committee will decide in which national category they will be selected. As a general rule please consider that in the case of multiple citizenship, and in accordance with the existing Italian system of Private International Law (Law 218/95, *Conflicts of Law*), the practice is as follows:

- if one of the citizenships is Italian, the individual is considered an Italian citizen;
- if the person has multiple citizenships but not an Italian citizenship, art. 19 of Law n.218/95 applies, which means applying the law of the country with which the person has the closest links.

Q: When and how will I be notified about admission?

A: Only short listed candidates will usually be contacted by email in May 2010. Selected candidates will receive specific information on the enrolment procedure upon admission.

Fees and financial issues

Q: What does the tuition fee include?

A: Tuition fees cover all courses of the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation, in the first and second semesters.

Q: Is there a reduction on the tuition fee for EU or Non-EU citizens? How this tuition fee can be paid?

A: There is no reduction for applicants. All candidates must pay the same amount. The tuition and the enrolment fees will be paid after the selection.

Q: What other costs besides the tuition fee and the enrolment fee will I have to cover?

A: Students enrolling in the E.MA Programme should bear in mind that, besides the enrolment fee and accommodation costs, they will have to cover all other costs related to the participation in the Programme, such as:

- eating expenses (except for lunch during lecture days in the first semester, *see question below*);
- travel (i.e. travel to the second semester University, travel to the awarding ceremony in September);
- visa procedure for the second semester destination (including travel to the competent Italian diplomatic and consular offices, and eventual costs for the visa issuing);
- and any other additional personal expenses.

Students are therefore encouraged to carefully consider their overall financial situation and ensure that they have adequate additional funds for the entire year. Based on previous experience, the minimum total cost which E.MA students should foresee to cover can be estimated at approximately 750 € per month.

Q: What kind of student support is available?

A: The following provisions are foreseen for all E.MA students (subject to approval of proposed budget):

Meals: EIUC provides free lunches in the Monastery of San Nicolò for all students on lecturing days during the 1st semester.

Reading materials: Reading materials concerning the subjects dealt with in the first semester are provided free of charge to all students in advance of each academic week. Please note, in addition, that a few books may have to be purchased by the students themselves in the course of the semester.

Housing arrangements

- 1st semester: The Venice housing market is extremely expensive. In order to assist students in finding suitable and reasonable accommodation, EIUC has organised a housing mediation service, which students are free to make use of. Please note that this service is subject to the restrictions of the local housing context and without guarantees of being able to provide ideal accommodation to all students. Ultimately the responsibility for finding accommodation rests with the E.MA students themselves. Depending on the choice of accommodation, the anticipated cost per each student will be in the following range:
 - rent (excluding utilities): from 250 € to 500 € per month;
 - utilities and condominium expenses: from 80 € to 160 € per month.
- 2nd semester: E.MA students have the responsibility for all accommodation arrangements for the 2nd semester. Accommodation costs vary depending on the second semester destination, due to the differences in the cost of living among European countries.

Q: Is there a possibility to apply for external financial support?

A: Students are invited to apply for funding to their Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Foundations or other Institutions supporting education in the field of human rights or advanced education in general.

Q: Can you give me a rough estimate of monthly living expenses in Venice?

A: Monthly living expenses in Venice can be roughly summarized as follows:

- Accommodation: rents depend on the size and location of the apartment, on the type of room (single or shared), and other variables. Rents range from a minimum of 250 € to a maximum of 500 € per month (apartment shared by 2/3 students). Small apartments (1 or 2 bedrooms) for 1 student range from a minimum of 550 € to a maximum of 700 € per month.
- Utilities (gas, electricity, water, trash removal, a few others): around 80 - 160 € per month per person.
- Local transport: if you make a subscription (monthly ticket) to vaporettos (boats) + Lido buses you should spend 20 € per month (for students under 26) or 28 € per month (for over 26).
- OVERALL: a student can live in Venice with minimum amount of 750 € per month.

Non-EU students

Q: Who will pay for the visa procedures?

A: Applicants and students bear all costs involved in the visa procedures.

NOTES ON VISA AND DECLARATION OF VALUE

Concerning the Visa and Declaration of Value, applicants and students are responsible to manage the procedure of request of both documents upon the competent diplomatic and consular Italian Representation Offices. When possible, the best solution is to file the application for the Declaration of Value and the Visa at the same time.

It is up to the students to:

- Gather all relevant information concerning the procedure and contact details of relevant Italian representation offices;
- Submit the application to the relevant diplomatic and consular Italian Representation Office according to the official procedure and enclose all requested documentation in their possession;
- Cover all the related costs;
- Comply with all applicable immigration rules;
- Update the EIUC Secretariat on the developments of the procedure and provide the Visa (in copy) and the Declaration of Value (in original or certified copy), when made available.

EIUC Secretariat is able to offer only some help to non-EU students concerning Visa and Declaration of Value, including providing students with the letter of support for the Visa request.

A letter of support concerning the Declaration of Value is provided to the student only upon specific request (as it is generally not needed).

EIUC Secretariat does NOT contact directly the relevant diplomatic and consular Italian Representation Offices concerning Visa and Declaration of Value procedure unless there is a specific need, and in any case never prior to the students having started the procedures themselves. Therefore, after a student has submitted his/her application, please inform the EIUC Secretariat. Upon request, the EIUC Secretariat is available to contact directly the relevant Italian Representation Office in order to facilitate the procedures. In case further assistance of this kind is needed, students should provide the EIUC Secretariat with the full contact details of the Embassy/Consulate involved.

For assistance concerning the Visa and Declaration of Value, please refer to:

- Ms Silvia Del Fabbro (providing supporting documentation)
EIUC Administrative Secretary – Assistant to the E.MA Programme Director
email: silvia.delfabbro@eiuc.org
- Ms Elisabetta Noli (supervisor)
EIUC Senior Project Manager
email: elisabetta.noli@eiuc.org

Non-EU degree

Q: When do I have to provide the Declaration of Value of my degree?

A: As soon as possible after confirmation of acceptance to the E.MA Programme. Please note that without this document you will not be awarded the E.MA Degree.

About E.MA

Q: When do the E.MA courses 2010/2011 start/end?

A: The exact dates still need to be confirmed, it is however likely that students will be requested to reach Venice on 13-14 September 2010 (start of first semester activities with registration of students and orientation sessions), that second semester will run from February to mid July 2011, and that the Thesis Defense and Awarding Ceremony will be scheduled during the second half of September 2011.

Q: Is it possible to work while attending the E.MA courses?

A: Working is *de facto* not compatible with courses. Given the intensity of the E.MA Programme, it is not feasible to engage in income generating work on the side.

Q: What are the second semester University allocation procedure?

A: The E.MA Programme is a trans-European programme. Each student has to present her/his thesis proposal to six E.MA Universities. Then each one of the six chosen universities responds to the research proposal communicating acceptance or refusal on the basis of each proposed thesis topic and second semester university supervision availability. Subsequently the same student has the possibility to express three preferences. The final decision on the second semester destination is taken by the E.MA Council. Even though students' preferences are taken into account, they may be sent in any of the 41 E.MA Universities.

Career opportunities

Q: Which are the career opportunities after the E.MA?

A: Having obtained the E.MA Diploma, the majority of graduates are likely to find job opportunities with human rights organisations (both governmental and non-governmental, international and national) which could involve them in field missions (electoral observation, human rights monitoring, international cooperation projects) or as officials taking care of the activities carried out at their headquarters. In a number of cases graduates are involved in human rights-related activities by their home Ministries of Foreign Affairs, or are seconded by them to participate in international institutions activities (e.g. JPO programmes). In many cases access to these institutions starts with an internship period. A minority of graduates pursues the academic career. In previous years EIUC itself has facilitated the entry of its graduates in the human rights job-market through the E.MA Internship Programme and the EIUC EU-UN Fellowship Programme.