

**CHARTER OF THE EUROPEAN MASTER'S PROGRAMME
IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATISATION**

(CHARTER OF VENICE)

adopted on 26 July 1997, and revised on 15 September 2001, 23 September 2005, 23 September 2016

PREAMBLE

The universities participating in the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation;

UPHOLDING the European commitment to contribute to the UN Decade for Human Rights Education;

ACKNOWLEDGING the role played by the founding universities of the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (hereinafter the Programme), Catholic University Leuven (Belgium), Åbo Akademi University (Finland), Université Robert Schuman Strasbourg (France), Ruhr University Bochum (Germany), National University of Ireland, Dublin (Ireland), University of Padua (Italy), Maastricht University (the Netherlands), University of Coimbra (Portugal), University of Deusto (Spain), University of Essex (United Kingdom); and by the five universities that joined one year later, University of Vienna (Austria), University of Odense in cooperation with the Danish Centre for Human Rights (Denmark), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg (Luxembourg), Lund University (Sweden);

ACKNOWLEDGING the role played by the European Union in founding the Programme and its continuous political and financial support;

ACKNOWLEDGING the support of the Region of Veneto and the Municipality of Venice, the sponsorship of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UNESCO and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, and the cooperation with other international, European and national institutions;

RECOGNISING the unique role of the Programme within the policies set out by the European Union in the field of Human Rights Education and Training (Declaration of the European Union on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Vienna, 10 December 1998);

RECONFIRMING the commitment to the use of the Programme as a pan-European platform for the development of human rights education and research;

STRESSING the need for the further development of human rights education and research at the national and regional levels;

PROCLAIM this Charter of Venice:

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Article 1.

The aim of the Programme is to form high-level professionals in the field of human rights and democratisation qualified to work as academics, staff members or field workers for inter-governmental, governmental, and non-governmental organisations. In addition, the Programme seeks to create a European network of curriculum development and staff exchange among universities in the field of human rights.

Article 2.

To realise these aims, the Programme offers high-level academic and professional training through a two-semester programme, the first semester being organised in Venice, and the second being organised by the Participating Universities.

Article 3.

§ 1. The Participating Universities are: University of Vienna, University of Graz (Austria), Catholic University Leuven, Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium), Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski (Bulgaria), University of Cyprus (Cyprus), Masaryk University Brno (Czech Republic), University of Southern Denmark/Danish Institute for Human Rights, (Denmark), Tartu University (Estonia), Åbo Akademi University, University of Helsinki (Finland), Université de Strasbourg, Université de Montpellier (France), Ruhr University Bochum, University of Hamburg (Germany), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Panteion University, Athens (Greece), Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest (Hungary), National University of Ireland, Galway, University College Dublin - National University of Ireland, Dublin, (Ireland), University of Padua, Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy), University of Latvia/Riga Graduate School of Law (Latvia), University of Vilnius (Lithuania), Université du Luxembourg (Luxembourg), University of Malta (Malta), Maastricht University, Utrecht University (the Netherlands), Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań/ Poznań Human Rights Centre (Poland), University of Coimbra, New University of Lisbon (Portugal), University of Bucharest (Romania), Comenius University Bratislava (Slovak Republic), University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), University of Deusto, Bilbao, University of Seville (Spain), Lund University, Uppsala University (Sweden), University of Nottingham, Queen's University Belfast, (United Kingdom), University of Zagreb (Croatia).

§ 2. The Council, by a 2/3 majority vote of all Participating Universities, may admit new Participating Universities.

§3. Each Participating University is represented by an E.MA Director, who shall be an academic with high qualifications in the field of human rights and/or democratisation.

Article 4.

§ 1. The National Coordinating Universities are: University of Vienna (Austria), Catholic University Leuven (Belgium), Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski (Bulgaria), University of Cyprus (Cyprus), Masaryk University Brno (Czech Republic) University of Southern Denmark/Danish Institute for Human Rights (Denmark), Tartu University (Estonia), Åbo Akademi University (Finland), Université de Strasbourg (France), Ruhr University Bochum (Germany), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest (Hungary), National University of Ireland, Galway (Ireland), University of Padua (Italy), University of Latvia/Riga Graduate School of Law (Latvia), University of Vilnius (Lithuania), Université du Luxembourg (Luxembourg), University of Malta (Malta), Maastricht University (the Netherlands), Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań/ Poznań Human Rights Centre (Poland), University of Coimbra (Portugal), University of Bucharest (Romania), Comenius University Bratislava (Slovak Republic), University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), University of Deusto, Bilbao (Spain), Lund University (Sweden), University of Nottingham (United Kingdom), University of Zagreb (Croatia).

§ 2. The Council, by a 2/3 majority vote of all Participating Universities, may entrust or transfer the mandate of national coordination to other Participating Universities.

§ 3. The program is managed by the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC).

Article 5.

The Participating Universities are committed to the following:

- the provision of teaching staff for the Programme,
- participation in the second semester activities,
- the provision of education related to the overall subject of the course and the opportunity to pursue specialised research,
- participation in the Council,
- cooperation in reporting to those organs and institutions that provide funding for the Programme.

Article 6.

The National Coordinating Universities, in cooperation with the other Participating Universities, are mandated to:

- carry out the selection of candidates for the programme,
- act as a focal point for the acceptance and distribution of students in the second semester,
- be the focal point for all national institutions regarding the course.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Article 7.

The organisational structure of the Programme consists of the following organs:

- the Council,
- the Executive Committee,
- the Academic Curriculum Group,
- the E.MA Programme Director,
- the E.MA Directors,
- the Advisory Board.

The Programme shall be administered by the above organs on the basis of mandates defined in the present Charter.

Article 8.

§ 1. The Council shall be the highest decision-making body and shall supervise the international and national elements of the Programme. It shall, *inter alia*:

- adopt directives regarding the budget, to be submitted to the EIUC,
- elect the E.MA Chairperson, by a 2/3 majority vote of the members present,
- elect the ordinary members of the Executive Committee, by a 2/3 majority vote of the members present,
- invite appropriate persons to form the Advisory Board,
- specify the conditions of admission, determine the overall size of the student body, and determine the student fees,
- specify the rules of assessment,
- in accordance with Article 15, propose to the Inner Circle Universities the awarding of the Master's degree to those students who meet all the requirements of the Programme,
- evaluate the Programme at the end of each academic year,
- approve all structural changes to the Programme,
- in accordance with Article 3 § 2, decide on the admission of additional universities to the Programme, by a 2/3 majority vote of all Participating Universities,
- in accordance with Article 17 § 2, decide on the expulsion of a Participating University, by a ¾ majority vote of all Participating Universities.

§ 2. The Council shall consist of:

- one representative of each Participating University (the E.MA Director, or his/her alternate),
- the E.MA Programme Director (*ex officio* member),
- the EIUC President and Secretary General (with consultative status),
- two representatives of the student body (with consultative status).

§ 3. To constitute a formal meeting of the Council, a quorum of 2/3 of all Participating Universities is required. In the absence of consensus, decisions of the Council may be reached by a simple majority vote of all the members present, unless otherwise provided, and without violating the autonomy of the Participating Universities.

Article 9.

§ 1. The Executive Committee shall:

- implement the decisions of the Council,
- in accordance with article 10 § 2, nominate the E.MA Programme Director, for appointment by the EIUC Board,
- oversee examinations and other procedures,
- monitor the planning of the academic programme for the first semester, taking into account the recommendations of the Academic Curriculum Group,
- make the final selection of the students to the Programme,
- review and compile examination results,
- establish contacts with inter-governmental, non-governmental, and governmental organisations,
- propose initiatives for the development of the Programme to the Council,
- promote collaborative research among the Participating Universities.

§ 2. The Executive Committee shall generally assure the continuity of the Programme in the period between meetings of the Council. It may at times delegate its authority to the E.MA Programme Director.

§ 3. The Executive Committee shall consist of:

- the E.MA Chairperson,
- the E.MA Programme Director (*ex officio* member),
- seven ordinary members, drawn from the Council, including at least one from the Inner Circle Universities,
- the EIUC President and Secretary General (with consultative status).

§ 4. The period of office shall be two years. The ordinary members can be re-elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

§ 5. To constitute a formal meeting of the Executive Committee, a quorum of 5 voting members is required. In the absence of consensus, decisions of the Executive Committee may be taken by a simple majority vote of all the members present.

Article 9bis

§ 1 The Academic Curriculum Group reviews the curriculum of the programme, and makes appropriate recommendations to the Council and the Executive Committee.

§ 2 The Council appoints the members of the Academic Curriculum Group, on a yearly basis.

Article 10.

§ 1. The E.MA Programme Director shall, *inter alia*:

- implement and develop the Programme,
- liaise with E.MA Directors, Rectors and Presidents of universities, the E.MA Chairperson, the Academic Curriculum Group and the Advisory Board,
- forge contacts with international and other related organisations,
- put forward proposals to be addressed in meetings of the Council and the Executive Committee, and implement decisions taken by them.

§ 2. The E.MA Programme Director shall be appointed by the EIUC Board, upon nomination by the Executive Committee.

Article 11.

§ 1 The E.MA Directors shall:

- ensure the implementation of the E.MA Programme at their respective universities,
- execute the decisions of the Council and the Executive Committee.

§ 2 The E.MA Directors of the National Coordinating Universities coordinate the Programme activities at the national level.

Article 12.

§ 1. The Advisory Board shall:

- advise the Council on the Programme,
- be apprised of the decisions of the Council and the Executive Committee.

§ 2. The Advisory Board shall consist of individuals and representatives of international, national, and non-governmental organisations, active in the field of human rights and democratisation. They shall be invited by the Council.

Article 13.

The student body shall consist of citizens from European and other countries. The E.MA Council strives to attain a balanced geographical distribution and diversity of the student body.

CONFERRING OF THE DEGREE

Article 14.

The Degree of *European Master in Human Rights and Democratisation* shall be awarded by those Participating Universities that are party to the Agreement on the European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation (Joint Degree) (i.e. the Inner Circle Universities), on behalf of the Programme and in compliance with the relevant legal provisions, and will be recognised by means of a formal diploma.

Article 15.

The academic responsible, for the activities during the first semester, and the E.MA Directors, for the activities during the second semester, will forward the marks to the E.MA Programme Director for compilation. The Council acting in its capacity as Examination Committee and after having conducted an oral defence of every Master's thesis will propose to the Inner Circle Universities the names of those candidates qualified to graduate.

LEGAL REMEDIES

Article 16.

Students may avail themselves of the remedies provided by the Council with respect to the conferral of the Master's Degree. The normal remedies of the Participating Universities will apply in the second semester.

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 17.

§ 1. Any Participating University may withdraw from the Programme upon written notice submitted at the latest six months before the beginning of the next academic year.

§ 2. Failure to uphold the responsibilities spelled out in this Charter may lead to the expulsion of any Participating University subject to a decision of the Council, reached by a 3/4 majority vote of all Participating Universities.

Article 18.

Amendments to this Charter can only be made with the unanimous consent of the Participating Universities through their representatives in the Council.