

**AGREEMENT ON THE EUROPEAN MASTER'S DEGREE  
IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATISATION  
(E.MA JOINT PROGRAMME)**

**Preamble**

*Considering* that human rights and democracy are fundamental values for all human beings and societies;

*Considering* that the European Union, as stated in article 6 of the Treaty on European Union, is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, and that it promotes respect for human rights, according to the principles of universality, interdependence and indivisibility of all human rights, rights, as well as considering the adoption and entry into force of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights;

*Considering* the necessity of developing the teaching of human rights and democracy in the universities, as well as in the overall teaching systems both in school and out of school, in co-operation with national, European and international organisations and civil society entities;

*Fully aware* of the importance of the university in promoting a law-based civilisation, at the national, European, and international levels, infused with the universal human values, as proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and all relevant international and regional instruments;

*Bearing in mind* the spirit of the Sorbonne Declaration of 25 May 1998 on "Harmonizing the Architecture of Higher Education Systems in Europe", and of the Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999 on the "European Space for Higher Education", that emphasize the importance of a "Europe of Knowledge" as a "pre-condition for consolidating and enriching the European citizenship, by giving to the citizens the competence needed to face the challenges of the new millennium and, at the same time, the awareness of shared values and of belonging to a common social and cultural space" and that "education and co-operation are essential instruments for the development and consolidation of democratic, stable, and peaceful societies";

*Considering* the necessity of promoting co-operation among universities, starting from the European ones, with the aim of further developing research and teaching programmes on human rights, democracy, and good governance, taking advantage from sharing their experience as well as educational and scientific resources;

*Having regard* to the Venice Charter (Annex 1), adopted on 26 July 1997, and revised on 15 September 2001 and 23 September 2005, setting up a programme named "European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation" and binding for all the Universities parties to the present agreement;

*Considering* that the programme named "European Master's Degree" has developed into a unique cooperation project started among fifteen European Universities - University of Vienna, KU Leuven, University of Southern Denmark, Åbo Akademi University, Université Robert Schuman (Strasbourg), Ruhr-University Bochum, Aristotle

University of Thessaloniki, National University of Ireland Dublin-University College Dublin, University of Padua, Université du Luxembourg, University of Maastricht, University of Coimbra, University of Deusto (Bilbao), University of Lund, University of Essex<sup>1</sup> -, and further extended to other Universities – University of Graz, Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski, University of Zagreb, University of Cyprus, Masaryk University of Brno, University of Southern Denmark / Danish Institute for Human Rights, Tartu University, University of Helsinki, Université de Montpellier, University of Hamburg, Panteion University Athens, Eotvos Lorand University Budapest, National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland - University College Dublin, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, University of Latvia, University of Vilnius, University of Malta, Adam Mickiewicz University Poznan/Poznan Human Rights Centre, Maastricht University, Utrecht University, University of Coimbra, New University of Lisbon, University of Bucharest, Comenius University, Bratislava, University of Ljubljana, University of Seville, Uppsala University, University of Nottingham, Queen's University Belfast – constituting a Europe-wide network of Universities collectively referred to as the Partner Universities;

*Recalling* that the E.MA has been actively supported by the European Union, the Region of Veneto, and the Municipality of Venice, as well as by international organisations and institutions such as the Council of Europe, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the OSCE, and the UNESCO;

*Taking account* of the intention expressed by the Council of the European Union in the Declaration of 10 December 1998, cited above, of continuing the European Master's Programme, and of the decision enacted by the European Parliament and the Council to include the European Master's Programme in Chapter A of the EU budget; of the EU Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, adopted on 20 December 2006, establishing a financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide (*European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights - EIDHR*), and in this context expressly naming EIUC as beneficiary;

*Recalling further* Act no. 33 of 28 December 1998, on «European Master in Human Rights and Democratisation» of the Region of Veneto;

*Expressing* deep gratitude to the University of Padua for having ensured co-ordination of E.MA from 1997 till 2003 and continuously provided the E.MA diploma in compliance with the E.MA rules;

*Recognising* the necessity of granting the programme named “European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation” a more suitable structure;

*Considering* that the European Inter-University Centre on Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC), established in Venice on 16 September 2002 is composed by E.MA participating Universities and provides an adequate organisational and administrative support;

*Welcoming* the establishment of the Global Campus of Human Rights, the cooperation platform of the seven EU-sponsored Regional Programmes in Human Rights and Democracy, set up to “educate a new generation of human rights professionals [...], and aimed at strengthening the resilience of democracies and democratic movements on all continents”. The Global Campus comprises, beside E.MA, the LL.M./M.Phil Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa, coordinated by the University of Pretoria; the Master's programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in the Asia-Pacific Region,

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<sup>1</sup> No longer in the network.

coordinated by Mahidol University (Bangkok); the European Regional Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe, coordinated by the University of Sarajevo; the Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation in Latin America and the Caribbean, coordinated by the University of San Martín (Buenos Aires), the Regional Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratization in the Caucasus, coordinated by the Yerevan State University, and the Arab Master in Democracy and Human Rights, coordinated by Saint Joseph University (Beirut);

**The University of Graz, the Ruhr-University Bochum, the University of Hamburg, the University of Padua, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, the University of Ljubljana and the University of Deusto, Bilbao, hereinafter referred to as the Inner Circle Universities, have agreed as follows:**

#### **Art. 1 – Founding Universities and institutional support**

The European Master's Programme has been constituted jointly by the Partner Universities mentioned in the Preamble, with the support of the European Union and of the other mentioned Institutions.

#### **Art. 2 – The E.MA programme and admission requirements**

The E.MA is a one-year programme leading to a postgraduate qualification in accordance with the national laws of each Partner University party to this Agreement (Inner Circle University), as stipulated in art. 12 of this Agreement.

Applicants are required to hold a University degree at least of Bachelor level, normally in a field relevant to human rights disciplines, including in law, social sciences, and the humanities. Fluency in English is required. Practical experience in the area of human rights in inter-governmental, governmental, or non-governmental organisations is considered an added advantage.

At the end of the programme the attainable title is "European Master in Human Rights and Democratisation", and adjoining national titles as appropriate according to national legislation.

The Joint diploma is jointly signed by the legal representatives of the Inner Circle Universities that legally recognise the admission qualifications of the students and whose national regulations allow the awarding of the joint diploma.

Two layouts of the joint diploma are provided, based on the ECTS credits or an equivalent thereof at the admission time (either 180 or 240, normally corresponding to a first cycle university degree) required for admission to postgraduate programmes in the Inner Circle Universities, according to the relevant national or other applicable legal framework.

All Partner Universities will be listed on the diploma, as institutions co-operating for the common implementation of the programme. A diploma template is annexed to the present Agreement (Annex 2).

#### **Art. 3 – Administrative seat. University of first enrolment**

The E.MA administrative co-ordination will be carried on by the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC), based in Venice. The University of Padova is the University of first enrolment.

#### **Art. 4 – Aims of the E.MA programme**

The aim of the one-year postgraduate programme is to educate professionals in the field of human rights and democratisation according to an action- and policy-oriented approach. As a multidisciplinary academic programme, E.MA reflects the indivisible links between human rights, democracy, peace, and development.

#### **Art. 5 – E.MA programme organisation**

The E.MA programme is organised in two semesters.

In the first semester (September - January) students are taught in Venice by lecturers from the Partner Universities and experts from inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations. At the end of the first semester, within a training period of two weeks devoted to human rights in field operations and including monitoring and electoral observation, a one-week field trip is organised. Assessment is made by oral and written examinations at periodical intervals.

In the second semester (February - June), students will be selected and hosted in the E.MA Partner Universities and in the Universities of the Global Campus of Human Rights, according to the specialties they have indicated, to attend, under the coordination of the E.MA Directors and local Regional Master's coordinators, further courses and engage in supervised research leading to a written submission (E.MA thesis). At the end of the semester, an evaluation will be made of the work undertaken by the students at the Partner Universities.

The Master's thesis is assessed with regard to both the written work and the oral defence. The thesis defence is held before a panel of E.MA Directors.

#### **Art. 6 – Contents of study programme**

The programme, being multidisciplinary, includes continuous preparatory sessions to post-graduate level studies in politics, philosophy and law. The Thematic Sections' contents and methodology is set forth by the E.MA Executive Committee assisted by the E.MA Curriculum Group, and approved by the E.MA Council, in accordance with the provisions of the E.MA Statute – The Venice Charter.

#### **Art. 7 – Teaching methodology**

The teaching language is English. The thesis may be written either in English or French; the thesis oral defence shall be in English.

The programme combines theoretical and practical approaches to human rights and democratisation issues. Classes consist of lectures, workshops, round-tables, tutorials, skill-building sessions and rolling seminars. Attendance and active participation is required, as well as intensive reading and preparation. Students receive a compendium with all the reading material necessary for each thematic section.

#### **Art. 8 – E.MA programme and rules of assessment**

Provisions on programme components, exam procedures, and thesis assessment are contained in the Charter of Venice (Annex 1) and in the rules thereby adopted by the E.MA competent bodies.

#### **Art. 9 – Credit structure**

E.MA academic teaching modules are expressed in ECTS, the European Credit Transfer System, according to the following distribution (which indicates limits for each main component, the whole being at least 60 ECTS credits worth): component A (first semester programme units): 30 ECTS credits; component B (second semester programme units): 9 ECTS credits; component C (E.MA thesis): 21 ECTS credits.

#### **Art. 10 – Didactic structure**

The Master's didactic organisation is supervised by the E.MA Council and the E.MA Executive Committee, and carried on by the E.MA Directors and the E.MA Programme Director assisted by the E.MA Fellows, in accordance with the Venice Charter.

#### **Art. 11 – Call for applications and student selection**

EIUC announces the annual Call for Applications on behalf of the University of Padova as University of first enrolment, and of the other Inner Circle and Partner Universities.

EIUC collects students' applications and students' fees on behalf of the Inner Circle Universities.

The EIUC will collect all the application forms, within the deadline decided upon by the E.MA Council every year. According to the Venice Charter, the E.MA Council determines the overall size of the student body and the student fees.

Selection of candidates will be made by the participating Universities and the E.MA Programme Director.

The selection of candidates holding an EU university qualification will be made at the national level. Each participating University (or, in case of more than one in the same Country, the National Coordinating University) will select candidates holding a first or higher cycle University degree and indicate whether the candidate enters the E.MA with 180 or 240 ECTS credits.

The selection of candidates holding a non-EU university qualification will be conducted by the E.MA Programme Director.

As to the credits possessed by the applicant students holding a non-EU university qualification (generally a first or higher cycle university degree), a Commission composed by the E.MA Chairperson, the E.MA Programme Director, the E.MA Director for the University of Padova, the Director of the Human Rights Centre of the University of Padova, and an officer of the Post-lauream Service of the University of Padova will formulate a proposal on whether to admit students with an equivalent of 180 or 240 ECTS credits. All Inner Circle Universities will be notified about the Commission assessment's outcome and have 15 days to communicate any remarks. The University of Padova will eventually proceed with the enrolment of students according to the conclusions jointly reached.

The E.MA Executive Committee sets up the final ranking of applicants that will be offered to enrol in the E.MA and supervises the management of the list.

The E.MA Programme Director will make available on an online platform the applications and university certificates of all admissible applicants so that the E.MA Directors and the respective competent administrative staff of the Inner Circle Universities may access such data.

#### **Art. 12 – Issuing of the Joint Diploma**

The Inner Circle Universities shall issue the single joint diploma in "European Master's degree in human rights and democratisation", in accordance with the joint conclusions on the credits as described in art. 11 and in compliance with the respective national laws and regulations.

Accordingly,

- the Universities of Graz, Deusto (Bilbao), Padua, and Ca' Foscari Venice issue the E.MA diploma to students, having accessed the E.MA programme holding a university degree of 180 ECTS credits or recognised as equivalent thereto;

- all Inner Circle Universities, namely the universities of Graz, Deusto (Bilbao), Padua, Ca' Foscari Venice, Bochum, Hamburg, and Ljubljana issue the E.MA diploma to students having accessed the E.MA programme with a university degree of at least 240 ECTS credits or recognised as equivalent thereto.

Since the legal value of such diploma depends on the Country where it is used, a disclaimer is included in the diploma (see Annex 2) stating that "The diploma and the diploma supplement are inextricably linked to each other and form one integral entity" (or an equivalent formula).

#### **Art. 13 – Application fee**

Each student admitted to the Master's programme must pay an application fee. The amount is decided every year by the competent E.MA and EIUC bodies.

**Art. 14 – Financial plan**

In addition to application fees, the E.MA budget consists of funding from the European Union and any other public or private institutions and of student fees. The budget is administered by EIUC.

**Art. 15 – Accession to the Inner Circle and withdrawal**

Any Partner University can join the Inner Circle by accessing to the present Agreement and its Implementation Protocol. The accession is subject to written approval on the part of each Inner Circle University and shall take effect in the following academic year. Any Inner Circle University will inquire on the implication of any change in the composition of the Inner Circle, taking into account that the enlargement of the Inner Circle is a strategic advance for the E.MA Programme as a whole.

The joining of a Partner University to the Inner Circle Universities does not require an amendment of the present Agreement. The E.MA Programme Director will circulate a Note to the Agreement attesting the joining of the concerned University; the instruments of approval will be attached to the Note.

Any party can withdraw from the present Agreement.

A University wishing to withdraw from the Inner Circle must notify to this effect the EIUC Board and the E.MA Chairperson before the publication of the Annual Call for Applications. A Note, set forth by the E.MA Programme Director, reflecting the new composition of the Inner Circle will update the present Agreement.

Following any accession or withdrawal, the new composition of the Inner Circle shall be reflected in the annual Call for Applications and joint diploma template.

**Art. 16 – Protocol on the implementation of the E.MA**

The present agreement will be implemented according to the provisions of the Protocol on implementation.

**Art. 17 – Entry into force and duration**

This Agreement and the Implementation Protocol shall enter into force with the date of the last signature of the Inner Circle Universities' representatives. The previous Agreement shall apply until this one enters into force.

**Art. 18 – Dispute settlement**

Any dispute arising from the interpretation and implementation of the present Agreement will be regulated according to Italian law. The Padova Court shall have jurisdiction to hear the case.

Annexes: Venice Charter (Annex 1)  
Joint diploma sample (Annex 2)

## PROTOCOL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE E.MA JOINT PROGRAMME AGREEMENT

1. E.MA Students are jointly enrolled by the Universities party to the present Protocol (hereinafter Inner Circle Universities) in accordance with paras. 2 and 3 below. The Inner Circle Universities, with the exception of the one acting as University of first enrolment, will not request reimbursements or resources from the E.MA budget for their services.
2. The University of Padova is the University of first enrolment. The other Inner Circle Universities are Universities of second enrolment. The enrolment is carried out through the following procedure, in the framework of the responsibilities and with the full administrative support of the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratization (EIUC):
  - a. Admission requirements of prospective students holding an academic qualification issued by a University of a EU Member State are checked by the E.MA National Director of that Member State;
  - b. In case of a prospective student holding an academic qualification issued by Universities of more than one EU Member State, the competent E.MA National Director will be the one of the State where the first cycle degree, or the most relevant first cycle degree, was awarded;
  - c. Admission requirements of prospective students holding an academic qualification issued by a University of a non-EU State will be checked by the E.MA Programme Director and by the Commission as regulated in art. 11 of the Agreement;
  - d. All Inner Circle Universities are invited to cooperate to verify that students possess the admission requirements. All student positions, including the type of diploma that will be awarded at the programme completion, shall be settled and communicated to students before the beginning of the programme by the EIUC secretariat.
3. The Inner Circle Universities will issue a certificate of joint enrolment whenever asked for by the students participating in the programme.
4. EIUC is tasked to collect the student fees. The E.MA Council in coordination with the competent EIUC bodies will establish the amount due to the University of first enrolment and to the other Inner Circle Universities.
5. As a consequence of enrolment, all students are insured for the full academic year, first and second semester. The insurance policy is provided to the students by the University of Padova as University of first enrolment. All along the legal duration of the master's programme, the University of Padova will provide E.MA students with the services (including badge, e-mail account, access to the e-library and to the inter-university library loan service, etc.) as for any regularly enrolled students.
6. The E.MA Council will approve the E.MA Call for Applications in liaison with the Inner Circle Universities.
7. EIUC will send the transcript of records (including a copy of the E.MA thesis) of each successful student to the University of Padova that will carry out the required administrative check.

8. The E.MA Joint Diploma document will be provided as described in Art. 12 of the Agreement and shown in the Annex 2 to the Agreement on the E.MA Joint Programme. A Diploma Supplement, produced by EIUC, will accompany the E.MA Diploma, the two documents being inextricably linked to each other and forming one single entity.
9. The Inner Circle Universities shall meet at least once a year, if necessary via Skype. The University of first enrolment will convene and chair the meeting. Any Inner Circle University can propose extraordinary meetings. To the meeting participates also the E.MA Programme Director. Each Inner Circle University shall appoint its representative. An administrative contact person will be also appointed and his or her name and address will be notified to the University of first enrolment.
10. For any administrative aspect concerning the relationship among the Inner Circle Universities not regulated by the EIUC Statute, the E.MA Charter of Venice, the Joint Programme Agreement and its Implementation Protocol, the Inner Circle Universities commit themselves to reach a consensual solution, taking into account the rules applied in the University of Padua as the University of first enrolment.