

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, xx September 2021

PREAMBLE

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

UPHOLDING the European Union commitment to contribute to human rights education and training, including in the fulfilment of the UN Sustainable Development Goal (no 4) to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;

ACKNOWLEDGING the role played by the founding universities of the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in 1997 (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 in providing continuous political and financial support;

ACKNOWLEDGING the support of partners of the EMA Programme both past and present, including the Region of Veneto and the Municipality of Venice, the Right Livelihood Foundation, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNESCO, and cooperation with other local, regional and national authorities, international governmental and non-governmental organisations active in the areas of human rights and democratisation, and private foundations and civil society organisations;

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 EMA Programme is to provide high quality human rights education and training for those seeking a pathway to work opportunities as professionals in the field of human rights and democratisation, 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. This European network forms part of the global network of regional human rights masters programmes within the Global Campus of Human Rights (Global Campus). The Programme contributes to the goals set out in the Global Campus' mission statement and its strategic objectives.

Article 2.

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

Article 3.

§ 1. The Council, by a 2/3 majority vote of all Participating Universities (listed in the Annex), may admit new Participating Universities from any European country.

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

§ 3. Each Participating University is encouraged to apply to become a member of the Global Campus in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of the Global Campus.

Article 4.

§ 1. The National Coordinating Universities are: University of Vienna (Austria), Catholic University Leuven (Belgium), Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski (Bulgaria), University of Zagreb (Croatia), 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 Lucerne, (Switzerland), University of Nottingham (United Kingdom).

§ 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 Programme is managed within the framework of the Global Campus and its Statute.

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 and training related to the Programme, and the opportunity to pursue specialised and interdisciplinary research,
- providing expertise in areas of human rights and democratisation,
- participation in the Council,
- cooperation in reporting to those organs and institutions that provide funding for the Programme.
- contributing to the mission and strategic objectives of the Global Campus.

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 Programme.

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 EMA Programme Director,
- the EMA Directors for Participating Universities.

The Programme shall be administered by the above organs on the basis of mandates defined in the 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 Global Campus,
- elect the EMA Chairperson and Vice-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,
- specify the conditions of admission of students, determine the overall size of the student body, and determine the student fees,
- specify the rules of assessment,
- propose to the Inner Circle Universities, as defined in Article 14, 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 § 1, 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 3/4 majority vote of all Participating Universities,
- in accordance with Article 18, amend the Venice Charter by a 2/3 majority vote of all Participating Universities.

§ 2. The Council shall consist of:

- one representative of each Participating University (the EMA Director, or her/his alternate),
- the EMA Programme Director (with consultative status),
- the Global Campus Secretary General (with consultative status),
- the Global Campus Academic Director (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 11 § 2, nominate the EMA Programme Director, for appointment by the Secretary General of the Global Campus,
- make recommendations to the Council on the admission of new Participating Universities and the criteria for admission,
- 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 EMA Programme Director.

§ 3. The Executive Committee shall consist of:

- the EMA Chairperson,
- the EMA Vice-Chairperson,
- seven ordinary members, drawn from the Council, including at least one from the Inner Circle Universities,
- the EMA Programme Director (with consultative status),
- the Global Campus Secretary General (with consultative status),
- the Global Campus Academic Director (with consultative status),
- two representatives of the student body (with consultative status).

§ 4. The period of office shall be four years. All members can be re-elected once.

§ 5. To constitute a formal meeting of the Executive Committee, a quorum of five 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 10.

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

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

Article 11.

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

- implement and develop the Programme,
- liaise with EMA Directors for Participating Universities, Rectors and Presidents of universities, the EMA Chairperson, the EMA Vice-Chairperson and the Academic Curriculum Group,
- 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 EMA Programme Director shall be appointed by the Secretary General of the Global Campus, upon nomination by the Executive Committee.

Article 12.

§ 1 The EMA Directors shall:

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

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

Article 13.

The EMA Council strives to reach out and enrol students from EU and non-EU countries.

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. All Participating Universities are encouraged to become parties to the above Agreement.

Article 15.

The EMA Programme Director is responsible for the activities during the first semester, and the EMA Directors for Participating Universities, for the activities during the second semester. EMA Directors have responsibility for forwarding the second semester and thesis marks to the EMA 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 by a 2/3 majority vote of all Participating Universities through their representatives in the Council.

Annex

Participating Universities

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 Zagreb (Croatia), 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 Lucerne (Switzerland), University of Nottingham, Queen's University Belfast (United Kingdom).