

EMA Call for Applications 2026/2027

1. PRESENTATION

The European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA), organised by the Global Campus of Human Rights, is a one-year post-graduate course that provides a practice and policy-oriented approach to learning that combines legal, political, historical, anthropological, philosophical and cultural perspectives of human rights and democratisation with skill building activities and a field trip exercise. The EMA Programme is co-designed and co-implemented by 43 participating universities representing all EU Member States and the United Kingdom. It is managed by the Global Campus of Human Rights. The University of Padua, Italy, assumes the role of university of first enrolment on behalf of the consortium.

Students are taught by leading academics representing EMA participating universities, experts and representatives of international organisations (for example the European Union and the Council of Europe) and NGOs while studying in an international environment.

Upon completion of all course components, EMA graduates will have **gained both academic and practical skills**: on the one hand, the ability to conduct independent and interdisciplinary academic research in relation to human rights and democratisation issues; on the other hand, skills which are relevant to human rights practitioners such as reporting, fact-finding and project management.

2. CONTENTS OF THE EMA PROGRAMME

FIRST AND SECOND SEMESTER

The academic year of the EMA Programme is divided into **two semesters**: the first semester (September to February) in Venice-Lido and the second (February to July) at an EMA participating university situated in the European Union and the United Kingdom. The second part of the programme is conceived as a **university exchange**, which means that students will be hosted for the second semester activities in a university in which they have not previously enrolled in degree level education, and which is located in a country in which they a) do not hold citizenship and b) have not resided or carried out their main activity for more than 12 months in the previous 36 months immediately prior to the date of enrolment.

The EMA Programme, being multidisciplinary and wide-ranging, includes lectures, seminars, workshops, tutorials, skill-building sessions and individual research.

The EMA **first semester** curriculum consists of a core programme, made up of thematic sections (the *first stream*) held in plenary with all students, and a series of *second stream* activities consisting of classes devised for smaller groups.

First stream courses are organised in thematic sections as indicated below (they are subject to modification):

- TS1: Human Rights Institutions, Mechanisms and Standards (United Nations; Council of Europe; EU; OSCE; Organisation of American States; African system; perspectives on Asia);
- TS2: Globalisation, Development and Human Rights (Stakeholders in Economic Globalisation: States, International Economic Organisations, Companies, NGOs; Human Rights and Development; Business and Human Rights; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights);
- TS3: Human Rights in Context: Historical, Philosophical, Religious and Anthropological Perspectives;

- TS4: Building and Protecting Democracy (Regime Change and Democratic Consolidation; Transition and Transformation Processes; Governance; Political Participation; Electoral Processes)
- TS5: Human Rights, Peace and Security + Field Trip (Humanitarian Law; International Criminal Law; Human Security and Crisis Response; Human Rights in the Field; Human Rights and Security). In the a.y. 2026/2027 students will also participate in a field trip to Kosovo.

Second stream courses consist of different components such as a series of Cluster classes that foster advanced knowledge of specialist human rights issues; rolling seminars on international law, philosophy and international relations; sessions on academic skills; and some semester-long special projects in which students organise human rights and democracy related events, e.g. the EMA student-led film festival.

During the **EMA second semester** students relocate to one of the 43 participating universities to follow courses in an area of specialisation of their own choice and to undertake supervised research for their master's thesis.

3. ASSESSMENT

First semester assessment comprises written and oral assignments and in-class exams. Only those students who successfully pass the first semester are allowed to proceed to the second semester. During the second semester, students attend further specialised courses, the assessment of which is based on the practices of the hosting universities. During the second semester students also prepare a research thesis under the supervision of the second semester university.

4. DEGREE

After successfully passing exams and completing a master's thesis, students will be awarded the "European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation", which is worth 60 ECTS credits. The diploma is jointly conferred by the universities of the Global Campus of Human Rights/EMA network that have ratified the Joint Degree Agreement. These are called 'Inner Circle Universities'.

Graduates receive one of two versions of the joint diploma, which is based on the number of ECTS credits or an equivalent thereof that candidates held at the time of admission (either 180 ECTS or 240 ECTS), which in turn are required for admission to postgraduate programmes in the Inner Circle Universities, according to the relevant national or other applicable legal framework:

- The Universities of Graz, Padua, and Ca' Foscari Venice issue the EMA Diploma to students who are enrolled in the EMA programme holding a university degree of 180 ECTS credits or recognised as equivalent thereto;
- The Universities of Graz, Padua, Ca' Foscari Venice, Deusto (Bilbao), Ruhr-University Bochum, Hamburg, and Ljubljana issue the EMA diploma to students who are enrolled in the EMA programme with a university degree of at least 240 ECTS credits or recognised as equivalent thereto.

The national equivalent value attributed to the EMA Joint Programme varies among the Inner Circle Universities as follows:

- for the Italian universities (Padua, and Ca' Foscari University Venice) the EMA Degree corresponds to a "Master Universitario di primo livello" (see DM 270/2004);

- for Ruhr-University Bochum the EMA Degree corresponds to a Master's title as envisaged by paragraph 66, Hochschulgesetz (HG) 16.9.2014;
- for the University of Deusto – Bilbao the EMA Degree corresponds to a “Master Universitario” recognised by the Real Decreto 822/2021 de 28 de septiembre;
- for the University of Graz the EMA Degree corresponds to a Master's title recognised by the UG 2002 (BGBl I nr. 120/2002);
- for Hamburg University the EMA Degree corresponds to § 1 Abs. 2 der Prüfungsordnung für den Masterstudiengang “Peace and Security Studies - (M.A.)” vom 26. Januar 2022.
- for the University of Ljubljana, the EMA Degree corresponds to a Master degree, magistrski št. druge št., mag. člov. prav. in demo. according to the Odločba Sveta NAKVIS št. 6034-46/2015/15, Master of Arts (M.A.).

5. PLACES AVAILABLE AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The EMA Programme is open to a maximum of 90 candidates from EU and non-EU countries. Candidates must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Have at least a three-year university degree (180 ECTS credits) or equivalent.
- Have a certified knowledge of English at least at level B2. Accepted certificates are IELTS (min. score 6), TOEFL (min. 80 for the IBT) and Cambridge exams (min. score 160-172), obtained no more than 3 years before the start of the Programme.
- Candidates who are completing a degree, required to meet the entry requirements, in the year of application may still apply to the EMA Programme and may be admitted on condition that they obtain their degree prior to the beginning of the EMA Programme. In such cases, admission into the EMA programme is conditional upon the submission of all relevant documentation showing the completion and award of the degree qualification prior to the start of the EMA Programme.

For more information about entry requirements please refer to [Legge 33](#) issued on 12 April 2022, and to [Decreto MUR](#) issued on 29 July 2022.

6. SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

Candidates will be selected by a Selection Committee, made up of the EMA National Directors for every EU country and by the EMA academic team. The selection process covers an assessment of candidates' qualifications and, if deemed relevant by the Selection Committee, an online interview.

The Committee will select the candidates by awarding up to 30 points to their qualifications and motivation, based on the following criteria:

- University final grade, evaluated by using a scale from 6 to 10;
- Relevance of the degree and thesis subject (where a thesis is required for graduation), evaluated by using a scale of 1 to 5;
- Relevant additional academic work/courses/publications, measured by using a scale of 1 to 5;
- Relevant practical experience, measured by using a scale of 1 to 5;
- Motivation, measured by using a scale of 1 to 5;

Only candidates who receive an overall score of at least 20/30 points will be considered eligible for the EMA Programme. All eligible candidates will be contacted for admission in accordance with the order of ranking.

7. APPLICATION PROCESS

Candidates will submit their application online at: <https://apply.gchumanrights.org/> and should follow the instructions described in the section “How to apply” of the EMA website. For further information or in the event of any technical problem concerning the application submission, candidates should contact the EMA Secretariat (ema.secretariat@gchumanrights.org)

All applications must be accompanied by the following documents:

- Up-to-date transcript of records and degree diploma
- Curriculum vitae
- 2 reference letters
- Copy of passport picture page for non-EU students, ID accepted for EU students
- Proof of English language proficiency as outlined in the entry requirements section
- Receipt of payment of the application fee of 50 Euro

Only complete applications will be considered for evaluation.

8. DEADLINES

Applications are accepted and evaluated on an rolling basis.

All interested candidates should apply by 1 February 2026.

Applications from non-EU candidates will only be accepted up to the 1 February to ensure sufficient time for the collection of pre-enrolment documents, if admitted, and to ensure visa processes are completed on time.

However, the EMA programme reserves to the right to open an additional round of applications after this date for EU candidates only, in the event that further applications be required to reach the quota of 90 students.

The EMA Executive Committee approves the final list of admitted students (for a maximum of 90 students). Short-listed candidates will be contacted on a rolling basis. The application process is completed by the end of July each year.

9. TUITION FEES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The tuition fee for the a.y. 2026/2027 is €6450,00 (€6300,00 tuition fee + enrolment fee of €150) payable in instalments (see paragraph 10 for payment timeline). The tuition fee covers attendance costs and participation in the field trip, learning materials, canteen service (on class and exam days), and access to the Global Campus library resources and access to resources at the University of Padua. Travel, visa and accommodation costs during both the first and second semester are the responsibility of student. There is no additional tuition fee due to the second semester host university.

Students who have a disability certificate pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 1 of Italian Law n. 104 of 5 February 1992 issued by an Italian Medical Committee or with civil disability equal to or greater than 66% attested by an Italian Medical Committee are exempt from payment of tuition fees. They are only required to pay the pre-registration fee (Euro 30.00), insurance costs (Euro 6.50) and a tax duty (Euro 16.00).

The Global Campus does not offer full scholarships. However, there are a small number of partial scholarships available for qualified candidates. Scholarships include a full tuition waiver and a modest stipend of €4,500,00 as a contribution toward living expenses. This stipend is paid in two instalments. One mid-way through the first semester, and the second at the beginning of the second semester providing that the student has successfully completed the first semester.

There are nine available scholarships for qualified candidates. Four of these scholarships are reserved for particular categories of candidates:

1. **Right Livelihood-EMA Scholarship on Children's Rights:**
Two scholarships are reserved for qualified candidates who commit to researching issues related to Children's Rights for their thesis project. Support for these scholarships is provided by the [Right Livelihood](#).
2. **Nicola Tonon Scholarship:**
This scholarship is reserved for a qualified candidate who commits to researching the topic of Information Technology and Human Rights. This scholarship has been created in memory of Nicola Tonon who was the IT and Web Marketing Coordinator for the Global Campus for 16 years, and who passed away suddenly in 2022. (Funded by the European Commission)
3. **EMA Widening Participation Scholarship:**
A further scholarship is reserved from candidates coming from the following countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (Funded by the European Commission):
4. **EMA-GC Scholarships:**
The remaining five scholarships are open to all qualified candidates regardless of their research interest. These scholarships are funded by the European Commission.

Information concerning the criteria for scholarships will be made available on the EMA website.

Please note that scholarship recipients are responsible for bearing all additional costs associated with the EMA programme and they should ensure they have sufficient funds available to carry out their studies and pay for rent and living costs in Venice and in the second semester.

The allocation of scholarships will be determined by the EMA Executive Committee based on the criteria listed above under each scholarship. Candidates who wish to be considered for these scholarships should specify it in the online application form, to be submitted according to the deadline for applications.

10. ENROLMENT PROCEDURE AND PAYMENT

Admitted candidates will be notified by the EMA Secretariat over email to the email address indicated in the application form. Admitted candidates who wish to enrol in the EMA Programme are required to confirm their acceptance of the admission offer within one week of the date indicated in the admission letter by completing and signing an Enrolment Form and returning it by email to the EMA Secretariat (ema.secretariat@gchumanrights.org).

Timeline for payment of the EMA tuition fee:

To secure a place, a **non-refundable security deposit** (€500,00) is required within ten days of the date indicated in the admission letter.

EMA tuition fee (€5950,00) may be paid within three weeks of accepting an enrolment offer or by

following the two-stage instalment plan outlined below:

- Receipt of payment of the first instalment (€2800,00) is due within four weeks of accepting the enrolment offer. Receipt of payment of the second instalment (€3150,00) is due within four weeks of payment of the first instalment.

Payment methods:

The tuition fee should be paid to the following bank account by bank transfer:

INTESA SANPAOLO SPA Bank

Address: Piazza Paolo Ferrari, 10 – 20121 Milano.

For money transfer between the countries included in the **SEPA Region** (Single Euro Payments Area):

IBAN code (International Bank Account Number): IT72Q 03069 09606 10000 0016008

BIC/SWIFT: BCITITMM

For money transfers from countries **not included in the SEPA Region**:

ABI Code: 03069 - CAB Code: 09606 Bank account C/C: 10000 0016008 BIC/SWIFT: BCITITMM

Beneficiary: GLOBAL CAMPUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS; description of payment: EMA 2026-27, student's full name.

To complete the pre-enrolment process, all admitted students must provide the following documents **no later than 31 August 2026**:

- Original copies of the official degree diploma, final transcript of records and, for those who graduated from an EU based institution, Switzerland, the UK and Turkey, official diploma supplement according to the European standard model. If the documents are issued in a language other than English, Italian, French or Spanish an English translation should be provided.
- An English language certificate, if not already provided at the application stage.
- Copy of passport picture page (for non-EU candidates) or national ID (for EU candidates). The validity period must go beyond the expected conclusion of the academic year (September 2027)

There are additional documents that non-EU candidates are required to provide during the pre-enrolment process:

- Copy of type-D study visa, valid for the entire academic year (12 months).
- If the degree was obtained in a country outside the EU (except for Switzerland, the UK and Turkey), students should provide either: a Declaration of Value ("Dichiarazione di Valore in loco") issued by the relevant Italian diplomatic office in the same country where the qualification was obtained; or, the Statement of Verification or a Statement of Verification and Comparability issued by CIMEA.

Failure to provide these documents will prevent enrolment in the EMA Programme.

At any time, the EMA Programme, by a substantiated decision, may withdraw an offer of admission if an candidate fails to comply with the admission requirements or fails to provide the required admissions documents. In such cases, the student is not entitled to any reimbursement of the tuition fee already paid.

11. WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDIES

A student can withdraw from the Programme at any time by presenting a specific request. Upon withdrawal, the student is not entitled to a refund of the security deposit or tuition fee.

12. CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Having obtained the EMA Diploma, many graduates find job opportunities with human rights organisations (both governmental and non-governmental, international and national), which might put them to work in field missions (electoral observation, human rights monitoring, international cooperation projects) or as officials taking care of the activities carried out at 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 work for international institutions. In many cases, access to these institutions starts with an internship period. Some graduates pursue further academic studies and research.

The Global Campus of Human Rights facilitates the entry of its graduates in the human rights job market through a successful placement programme: the **EMA Internship Programme**. Every year since 1998/1999 the Global Campus of Human Rights, with the support of the European Union, has awarded a **paid internship** in the field of human rights to the 15 students who have achieved the highest results during each academic year. EMA Internships last five months.

13. SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

EMA is primarily financed by the European Union* through the Global Campus of Human Rights. The Global Campus of Human Rights premises are made available by the Municipality of Venice. EMA also collaborates with UNESCO, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and benefits from close cooperation with the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other international organisations.

The EMA Programme is further enriched by the input of representatives of non-governmental organisations such as, among others, Human Rights Watch, the International Commission of Jurists, the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims. All these organisations are members of the Global Campus of Human Rights, thus providing their expertise to the EMA management on a continuous basis.

** Subject to approval by the budgetary authorities.*