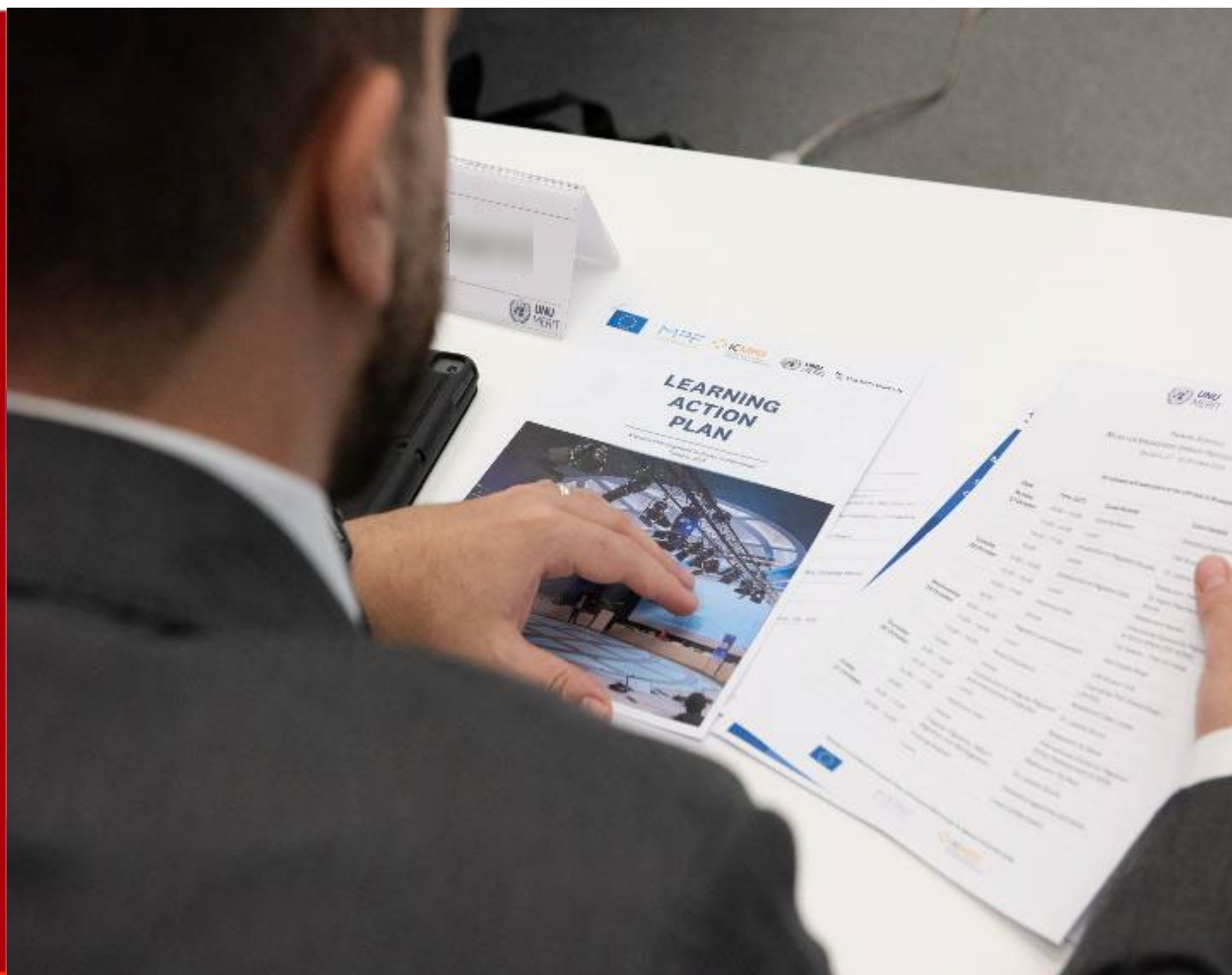




Migration Management Diploma Programme (MMDP)

United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and Social Research
Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)

Maastricht University (UM)



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Maastricht University is a signatory of the Code of Conduct with respect to international participants in Dutch Higher Education. More information about this code of conduct is available at www.internationalstudy.nl

Overview

Introduction

The Migration Management Diploma Programme (MMDP) is designed for government officials with experience in the field of migration and asylum. Running for three months full-time, the course uses a range of teaching and evaluation methods, including lectures and interactive sessions with participants. Special attention is paid to hands-on practical exercises, notably via the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method.

The MMDP aims to develop theoretical knowledge as well as practical skills such as articulation and presentation; how to formulate evidence-based policy; how to work in a group and deal with conflicting interests; and scenario-building workshops. In the scenario-building sessions, participants create migration scenarios for their own countries, which have proven to be highly helpful in policy formation. Overall, the course will equip participants with a range of new skills and insights, as well as practical, interactive experiences in applying the latest knowledge in migration management.

The Host Institute

UNU-MERIT is a research and training institute of the United Nations University. The institute is also part of Maastricht University, based in the southeast Netherlands. The institute's research mission is to provide new insights into the economic, social and political aspects of growth and development in local and international contexts. Its research and training programmes address a broad range of questions, including the economics of technology and innovation, national and international governance, intellectual property protection, social protection policy, knowledge creation and diffusion, and migration.

Researchers at UNU-MERIT are internationally recognised for their contributions to understanding the economic, political, social and philosophical foundations of technical change. UNU-MERIT has a history of implementing projects for various international institutions, including the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, as well as national governments, focusing on social policy and migration developments. The institute also participates in research projects for international organisations, governments, businesses, and foundations worldwide. Beyond working with and for other UN bodies, the institute has a long history of conducting applied research for organisations such as the European Commission, the International Development Research Centre, and numerous national governments.

Course Structure

The MMDP consists of three main courses: i. Introduction to Migration Studies, ii. Migration & Development, and iii. Migration Policy.

Each of the three main courses is deliberately broken down into smaller modules, making the learning process both structured and digestible. To ensure the quality of the programme, there are 40 hours per week – including contact hours and self-preparation - with special attention paid to interactive exercises and practical workshops (see p.5 for more details of our Problem-Based Learning approach).



Picture above: MMDP 2025 opening ceremony

Programme & Course Descriptions

The programme familiarises participants with a range of tools and ensures their learning is effectively monitored through various evaluation methods. These include brief written assignments, papers, presentations, oral evaluations, group participation and interactive work. A mix of useful information about the study period is available online for participants to access before, during and for up to a year after the course. The agenda also includes field trips across Europe, including visits to the relevant Dutch Ministries in The Hague, EU institutions in Brussels, and intergovernmental agencies in Geneva.

Course Objectives

The course has three overarching objectives:

- Understand the concepts, data and legal frameworks that describe different types of migrants and migration experiences, and analyse how migration patterns shape protection, rights, and policy responses.
- Identify how different forms of mobility, including labour migration, shape the development outcomes of migrants and their communities of origin and destination, and mainstream migration into development planning.
- Analyse migration policies and global governance arrangements, critically assess their strengths and limitations, and use scenario building to identify ways to improve migration management.

i. Introduction to Migration Studies

This course covers professional communication, migration definitions, concepts, trends and data. It examines the main types of migration, including irregular and transit migration, return and reintegration and forced migration. The course will also cover major legal frameworks relating to migration, plus a field visit to organisations involved in the Dutch migration context.

ii. Migration & Development

The main focus of this course is how migration fits into the development debate. It covers the causes and motivations for migration, the overall relationship between migration and development, and the effects of migration at the macro, meso, and micro levels in countries of origin and destination.

Further themes include labour migration (brain drain, circular migration, brain gain, the role of the diaspora, and return migration), remittances, and the social consequences of migration. The course also addresses how to mainstream migration into national development planning.

iii. Migration Policy

This course examines comparative immigration, emigration and integration policies in countries of origin and destination, together with diaspora engagement policies. It also covers EU policies on asylum and migration, especially the external dimension, including the major dialogues and instruments for development with third countries and regions, as well as policy options for migration management and development in countries of origin.

A major practical focus will involve designing policies for migration and development, diaspora engagement, immigration, and emigration. Policy models include the external dimension of EU migration policy; the Rabat and Prague processes; and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Their action plans and policy coherence within the architecture of global migration governance will also be studied. The course will end with a scenario-building workshop in which participants build migration scenarios for their own countries.



Picture above: MMDP Participants engage in a debate session on brain drain

Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) puts participants at the core of the learning process, allowing them to gain knowledge in the context of complex, multifaceted and realistic problems. The goals of PBL are to help participants develop flexible knowledge, effective problem-solving skills, self-directed learning, and effective collaboration skills. Working in groups, participants identify what they already know, what they need to know, and how and where to access new information that may help resolve the problem.

The role of the lecturers is that of learning facilitators who provide appropriate structure, support, and modelling of the process while monitoring learning. This approach works particularly well for participants who have both academic and working experience. It has yielded some of the best results with mid-level career professionals, including in several training programmes conducted by our institute with UN staff. Besides lectures, PBL sessions, group work sessions and other interactive settings, we offer educational and networking trips, access to institute seminars and a scenario-building workshop in the third course.

Digital Learning Environment

The University of Maastricht (UM) digital learning environment, also known as Canvas, is an integrated part of teaching curricula, study programmes and external training programmes. Participants in the diploma programme will receive an email upon enrollment with their access codes, a PDF user manual, and a user instruction video. UNU-MERIT will provide a short introduction session on Canvas once participants have arrived in the Netherlands.

The UM virtual learning environment provides access to:

- Course materials, including schedules, presentations, lecture recordings; collaborative learning facilities; a discussion forum; document sharing; blogs, wikis and social bookmarking;
- E-library facilities, including electronic books, articles and journals;
- Participant desktop, with access to software such as EndNote, SPSS, and Microsoft Office;
- On-screen tutorials, e.g. how to analyse immigration data using Excel;
- Video conferencing;
- Podcasts;
- Alumni section.

At the end of the diploma programme, participants will have acquired knowledge and skills relating to:

- Migration concepts, trends and data sources, and how to interpret and present migration statistics for policy audiences;
- Key international conventions and protocols of importance for national legislation with regard to border control, entrance (access), asylum, residence, deportation, readmission and return;
- The distinctions between regular, irregular, transit and forced migration, and their implications for protection and for national migration systems;
- The mandate and decision-making of inter-state organisations such as UNHCR and IOM within the field of forced displacement and migration;
- The Dutch national migration context and the external dimension of EU asylum and migration policy;
- The links between migration and development, including labour migration, remittances and diaspora contributions;
- How to mainstream migration into national development planning so that migration becomes a positive force for development;
- Key themes and positions of countries of origin and destination in the international debate on migration and development, within the framework of the UN and the Global Forum on Migration and Development;
- Comparative migration and diaspora engagement policies in countries of origin and destination;
- Policy coherence and the architecture of global migration governance.



Assessment & Admissions

After completing the MMDP programme, alumni can stay connected for at least one year through the digital learning environment. This provides an alumni section including a blog, access to new UNU-MERIT publications, the online UNU-MERIT migration seminars and the YouTube channel. Alumni will also receive regular updates through e-newsletters and can stay connected through the UNU-MERIT alumni social media platforms.

Continuous Assessment

Participants are expected to implement and report on a learning action plan upon completion of the programme. They are also asked to integrate newly gained knowledge with prior work experience during problem-based learning sessions and group discussions. They are therefore able to apply their insights to case studies and problem-based exercises. Educational progress will also be assessed through presentations and written assignments, such as comparative policy briefs and strategic policy papers. Participants are monitored weekly to ensure they do not fall behind.

Diploma

Upon successful completion of the diploma programme requirements, including all assignments and full attendance, participants will receive a Diploma in Migration Management.

Participants who do not comply with the MMDP code of conduct will not be eligible for the Diploma and will instead be awarded a Certificate of Participation.

Admissions

Applications are welcome from professionals and civil servants working in migration management. **Applications are now being accepted**, and the **application deadline is 1st October 2026 at 23:59hrs Amsterdam Time.**

Eligible applicants for participation in the MMDP programme must fulfil the following criteria:

- Be fluent in spoken and written English
- Hold a minimum Bachelor's degree
- Be confident in computer skills to follow an education programme
- Work as government officials in the field of migration in one of the eligible countries (see Scholarships section for the list of countries)
- Be committed to implementing and reporting on a learning action plan after the completion of the programme

To apply to the MMDP, prospective participants need to submit their application via our online platform:

<https://application.unu-merit.nl/mmdp/form.php>

Please note that in the online application platform, prospective participants will be required to upload the following documents:

- A recent CV explicitly outlining work experience in the field of asylum and/or migration;
- A valid passport copy;
- Two reference letters, from current or former employers and/ or professors;
- A portrait-style photograph;
- Proof of proficiency in English (IELTS / TOEFL/ or equivalent);
- Copies of degree(s) and transcripts;
- A motivation letter explaining the applicant's reasons for choosing the programme and showing their ability to successfully complete it;
- Evidence that the applicant is working in the government of an eligible country in the field of migration.
- A support letter from the applicant's employer confirming that the applicant is allowed to dedicate their full time to the MMDP, will not be required to perform work duties during the programme, and will retain their employment and salary throughout the duration of the programme. **Note that without this letter, the application for the scholarship will not be considered.**

Course Dates

The Programme runs from **5 April 2027 until 24 June 2027** and takes place in Maastricht, the Netherlands.



Picture above: Maastricht location in Europe

Scholarships

Scholarships for the MMDP are available to government officials and policy practitioners working in migration and/or asylum in the eligible countries.

Scholarships funded by the European Union through the Migration Partnership Facility (MPF) of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) are available to applicants from eligible countries in the following regions: **EU Southern Neighbourhood, the Silk Route, Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia.**

Only a limited number of scholarships are available and are granted based on merit. Scholarships cover all programme costs, including travel to the Netherlands, accommodation during the programme, tuition fees, field trip costs, course materials, and living costs. To be eligible for a scholarship, applicants must provide evidence that they have been working in the government of an eligible country in the field of migration. Participants must obtain support from their employers in the form of a letter stating that the participant will remain a paid employee of their government for the duration of the programme and will continue to receive their salary in accordance with their contractual agreement.

The candidate selection will be finalised in October 2026. **Successful applicants to the MMDP will be notified of their selection to participate in the programme by mid-October 2026.**

After acceptance of the scholarship, any participant who withdraws for reasons other than force majeure will be liable to reimburse all the costs incurred by the University in relation to their participation.

Facilities

Courses will be provided in lecture rooms. Copy machines and scanners are available throughout the university buildings and the library.

All participants will be provided with a UM card that gives them access to the university library. The university library provides:

- A variety of rooms for individual and group work, with or without computers;
- More than 1300 ergonomic study areas, many equipped with computers;
- A wireless network and laptop outlets;
- Special collections such as audiovisual material.

The UM card also provides access to UM sports facilities (where a payment is required) and the 'Studium Generale', which offers a programme of cultural activities. Course accommodation and the library are located in the city centre of Maastricht, which includes cafes, supermarkets and restaurants.

Accommodation

Participants will be facilitated in staying in the city of Maastricht for the duration of the programme. Accommodation shall also be provided for the various field trips that will take place during the programme.

Practical Information

The MMDP runs full-time, with an estimated 40 learning hours per week. Participants must attend ALL courses every day and complete assignments on time to be awarded the programme Diploma. If a participant does not fulfil the MMDP Code of Conduct, including unauthorised absences, they will be ineligible for the Diploma and will instead receive a Certificate of Participation.

The teaching contact hours will be approximately 4 hours per day, Monday to Friday. In addition, participants will need to spend 4 hours per day on assignments and study materials provided by their tutor, or on activities planned as part of the programme. Therefore, participants will be expected to focus 100% of their time on MMDP and cannot spend any time on their job/work duties.



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