

(RE) UNITE

YEARBOOK FOR THE
20TH ANNIVERSARY OF
E.M.A



20
YEARS!

E.M.A LUMNI
ASSOCIATION

Index

I	<p>Introductions and look into the future</p> <p>Tessa Schrempf (President of E.MA Alumni Association): "The power of the network and releasing our common potential"</p> <p>Manfred Nowak (EIUC Secretary General): "What do you believe to be the core human rights challenge for the coming generation?"</p> <p>George Ulrich (E.MA Programme Director): "What are the priorities and challenges of human rights education?"</p> <p>From a few early attempts to an established professional institution: the E.MA Alumni Association</p>	<p>p.4,5</p> <p>p.6,7</p> <p>p.10,11</p> <p>p.12</p>																				
II	<p>Challenges to the human rights graduate</p> <p>Tania Gisselbrecht (alumna, 1997/98) : "Challenges for the Pioneer Year"</p> <p>Véronique Lerch (alumna, 1998/99): "What were the key challenges when you graduated in 1999?"</p> <p>Katerina Liakopoulou (alumna, 2006/07): "What were the key challenges when you graduated in 2007?"</p> <p>E.MA class 2016/17: "What do you expect to be the key challenges when you graduate in 2017?"</p>	<p>p.16</p> <p>p.17</p> <p>p.18</p> <p>p.19</p>																				
III	<p>Brick and mortar: EIUC staff and E.MA Alumni staff & Boards</p> <p>Corinna Greco (alumna, 1998/99): "An ode to Professor Papisca, founding father of E.MA"</p> <p>EIUC staff forever!</p> <p>Former EMA Programme Directors: "What makes E.MA special?"</p> <p>The face(s) of E.MA Alumni Association- the board members we could not do without</p> <p>Our (former) Vice Presidents: "why did you dedicate your precious free time to E.MA Alumni Association?"</p> <p>Our wonderful staff Secretary Generals without whom we wouldn't function and what made their time as SG special</p>	<p>p.20</p> <p>p.22</p> <p>p.24,25</p> <p>p.26,27</p> <p>p.28,</p> <p>p.30,31</p>																				
IV	<p>E.MA Family: 20 years of anecdotes and pictures</p> <table> <tr> <td>1997-1998</td> <td>2002-2003</td> <td>2007-2008</td> <td>2012-2013</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1998-1999</td> <td>2003-2004</td> <td>2008-2009</td> <td>2013-2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1999-2000</td> <td>2004-2005</td> <td>2009-2010</td> <td>2014-2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000-2001</td> <td>2005-2006</td> <td>2010-2011</td> <td>2015-2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2001-2002</td> <td>2006-2007</td> <td>2011-2012</td> <td>2016-2017</td> </tr> </table> <p>In Memory of Jenni Laxén (1974-2015)</p> <p>In Memory of Stefania Barichello (1983-2017)</p> <p>Some statistics on the E.MA Alumni community</p>	1997-1998	2002-2003	2007-2008	2012-2013	1998-1999	2003-2004	2008-2009	2013-2014	1999-2000	2004-2005	2009-2010	2014-2015	2000-2001	2005-2006	2010-2011	2015-2016	2001-2002	2006-2007	2011-2012	2016-2017	<p>p.32-71</p> <p>p.72</p> <p>p.73</p> <p>p.74,75</p>
1997-1998	2002-2003	2007-2008	2012-2013																			
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1999-2000	2004-2005	2009-2010	2014-2015																			
2000-2001	2005-2006	2010-2011	2015-2016																			
2001-2002	2006-2007	2011-2012	2016-2017																			



Tessa Schrempf (President of E.MAlumni Association): "The power of the network and releasing our common potential"

"So what exactly makes your alumni association special? Why would anyone want to interact with people who studied the same degree ten years after them?" I was asked a couple of very valid questions recently. "Well, we share a common reality which is very distinct, some say it's a bit of a social experiment really. And then there's the value thing - we have a shared moral basis founded in the belief that human dignity as the source of all human rights is the ultimate good to be protected." - "I understand that. But many people share experiences and values and don't form associations."

True. We might not need our E.MAlumni Association to ensure we share some identity features, to give us that nostalgic feeling of 'something like home' when we think of Venice, to be able to recognise each other as fellow E.MAs at random events in random parts of the world after chatting for a while. That feeling you get when you meet someone who's done the E.MA as well, that immediate sense of intimacy and comfort, that 'one of ours' feeling.

We need it to achieve something far greater and more powerful than what each of us could alone, or with the couple of classmates we still hang out with a few years on: to be a network of likeminded people at a time when we see our shared values threatened on so many fronts and for so many reasons I don't even dare to attempt to start listing them. But I cannot resist - after all we were trained to raise the issues faced by society: the shrinking space for civil society, surveillance and censorship, the challenges big data (and big money behind it) bring at a rapid pace and supported by largely incomprehensible technological achievements, the partial breaking up of the European Union and increasing scepticism by many people as regards the usefulness of this Union, distorted media reporting challenging responsible journalism, attacks on academic freedom and threats of university closures, a repeat of the rise of illiberal extremism paired with growing socio-economic injustice reminding of horrors of the past, millions of people on the move across continents and the lack of understanding that migration is as old as humanity itself, a decrease in solidarity while people are forced to leave their homes, a the rise to power of people who should never have the power to push a button and destroy entire nations, to appoint judges, to dismiss prosecutors or to make laws. And so we see the picture emerging of the fostering of a culture that threatens essentially every value we believe in, a culture in which racist propaganda all of a sudden becomes something that can be voiced publicly, a culture which nurtures the everlasting politics and economics of reckless neoliberal injustice steering societies further towards utilitarianism.

It is this culture which we, as human rights professionals, have a duty to stand up against. And it is our wonderful, diverse and colourful network that gives us the potential to be an active counterweight to tendencies that might otherwise bring down what our idols, our professors and our colleagues have built up over the last 70 years: a human rights culture.



"Our power lies in the connections we make, in the relationships we foster and in the ways in which we strengthen each other," I said. "Rubbish!", my interlocutor retorted, "it lies in the values people support, with the right set of values, you will succeed. After all, those are the right values. It's simply the right thing to do." I disagreed and I will continue to disagree. We may have our hearts in the right place or believe in concepts that we consider right. But righteousness alone does not make us succeed. Two thousand people scattered across the world, all knowing that what they believe in is right or just, will not draw in the other billions. To succeed with our human rights culture, we must stand together. We must recognise our great own potential, recognise our immense common potential, and activate the network we are. The racist are already doing it. The extremist are already going it. The Trumps are already doing it. What about us? We have at our disposal the power of a network of extraordinary human rights professionals, with the potential to be the biggest network of human rights graduates globally together with our GCA colleagues. It is this power that enables us to reach out to each other far beyond the borders of each of our communities, and to inspire younger generations of human rights professionals to join our efforts.

Manfred Nowak (EIUC Secretary General: "What do you believe to be the core human rights challenge for the coming generation?"



The European Master on Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA) is a child of the 1990s. With the end of the Cold War, the security system of the United Nations, which had been blocked by the two superpowers for almost half a century, all of a sudden started to work. The Security Council did not only authorize economic sanctions and even military force in order to stop a military aggressor, such as the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein after having occupied Kuwait in 1990, it also developed new generations of peace keeping and peace building operations. Traditional peace keeping operations, such as in Cyprus, consisted only of military officers with light weapons to be used exclusively in case of self-defence. The new generations of peace building operations, authorized by the Security Council or the General Assembly during the 1990s in countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Cambodia, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Bosnia and Herzegovina or Kosovo, were much more complex and consisted of military and police officers as well as civilians mandated to assist in the capacity building towards a sustainable architecture of human rights and democracy.

The EU is among the main contributors of civilian staff, but at the beginning it was difficult to find enough qualified personnel to be sent as election managers or human rights field officers to post-conflict countries in all world regions. This is the background why the EU Commission in 1996 asked Antonio Papisca, at that time Director of the Human Rights Centre at the University of Padua, to build up with colleagues from other EU member states a European interdisciplinary and trans-university Master programme with the aim of educating professionals in the field of democracy and human rights who could be sent to the field. Our challenge as professors was to provide in one year both sufficient background knowledge in various disciplines relevant for human rights and democracy, as well as practical skills for human rights field officers. For the graduates of our first years it was not difficult to find a job in the field, but they had to adapt to challenging political and security environments. After all, human rights field officer is a highly demanding profession.

In the meantime, the political and economic situation of our globalized world changed dramatically. The terror attacks of 11 September 2001 and the so-called "war on terror" initiated by US President George Bush led to a wave of securitization and militarization of the world with dramatic challenges for human rights in all world regions. Secondly, the neoliberal policies of deregulation, privatization and minimizing the role of the state led to global financial and economic crises and various other dangerous consequences for the protection of human rights and democracy, including climate change, failed and fragile states, corruption, organized crime, armed conflicts, migration, displacement and an increasing power of transnational corporations, financial markets and other non-state actors. The rising economic inequality as another consequence of neoliberal policies has reached a level in the US, UK and other European states which is seriously undermining social coherence and basic democratic values of cooperation, tolerance, solidarity and finding compromises.

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For EMA and the Global Campus, democracy and human rights are closely interlinked. Human rights guarantee the basic conditions of functioning democracies, such as the right to vote, freedom of speech and assembly, protection of minorities, equality and non-discrimination. On the other hand, democracy provides a climate of tolerance and mutual respect in which all human rights can best flourish. Democracy is based on the right of peoples to self-determination which means that the people, by means of free and fair elections, elect a government that is accountable to the people and that is entrusted with the task of ensuring internal and external security, providing essential services to the people, as well as protecting and fulfilling human rights. In the era of the nation-state as the main political entity under current international law, national governments bear the main responsibility for ensuring human rights and democracy. This concept is fundamentally challenged by the neoliberal policies of deregulation, privatization and minimizing the role of the state. If basic services which are essential for the protection of human rights, such as health, education, social security, pensions, the administration of justice, prisons, the police and the military are increasingly privatized and outsourced to the corporate sector, governments are no longer in a position to ensure these human rights. Since the corporate sector is acting in a globalized world, national governments also have lost control over global financial and other markets. It is not surprising that many people lose trust in their democratically elected representatives and move towards authoritarian leaders. The current state of affairs of democracy in the US, the UK and many other European countries, above all Hungary and Poland, is alarming. Populism and new authoritarianism are on the rise and threaten the basic values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. This means that, in addition to spreading the message of universal human rights to all corners of our planet, EMA graduates will also have to become human rights defenders in Europe and stand up for our common values at a time when the space of civil society is constantly shrinking. We do not only need to educate and train new generations of human rights professionals to be sent abroad, but also human rights defenders in our own countries. EMA graduates will have to explain to ordinary people in Europe, who are among the many losers of globalization and expect solutions from new authoritarianism, that human rights are not only a platform for minorities, such as migrants and refugees, the LGBTI community, prisoners and suspects of terrorism, but that all human beings benefit from human rights, including from economic, social and cultural rights. EMA graduates will have to destroy the myth, so eloquently developed and nurtured by neoliberal politicians, that the neoliberal ideology and human rights are two sides of the same coin. They are not, because neoliberalism not only endangers social justice and security, based upon economic, social and cultural rights. In the long run, neoliberalism also endangers civil and political rights as it restricts the power and possibilities of political structures to control the economy in a rapidly globalizing world. This leads to dissatisfaction with democratic politicians, makes the democratic competition increasingly brutal, undermines democratic values and finally leads to new authoritarianism. In my opinion, this is the biggest challenge which the coming generations of EMA graduates will be confronted with. They need to defend in an increasingly hostile environment democratic values against new authoritarianism and human rights against neoliberal economic policies.

Future

There are, of course, also many other **challenges** for future generations of EMA graduates. The digitalization has reached all corners of our life and makes us dependent on the internet and social media and, thus, vulnerable to all forms of cyber-crime and electronic surveillance from both state and non-state actors. Population growth, migration, urbanization, environmental pollution and climate change will continue, even if the targets set at the Paris Climate Conference in December 2015 will be reached. This will mean that many natural resources will become rare. Certain human rights, such as the rights to food, water and possible future rights to clean air and clean energy, will gain in importance and need to be defended against powerful economic and political actors. Scientific and technological progress will confront us with many new challenges, not only in information and communication technology, but also in many other fields, such as biomedicine, genetic engineering and artificial intelligence. Finally, globalization will continue, even if no longer driven by neoliberal politics, and thereby challenge the role of the nation-state.

We are living in difficult, challenging, but also interesting times. Every crisis also constitutes a positive chance and opportunity for meaningful reform. The "Agenda 2030" with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted unanimously at the UN Summit of September 2015, **provides** an ambitious, but certainly not unrealistic vision for our planet. All SDGs, most of which are based upon the international human rights framework, **can be achieved** by 2030 if the political will was there. Most importantly, the SDGs demand a fundamental reform of our current economic system. I wish all past and future EMA and Global Campus alumni much success in defending human rights and democracy in all regions of our world and in contributing to the realisation of the "Agenda 2030".



George Ulrich (E.MA Programme Director: “What are the priorities and challenges of human rights education?”



The editors of the present anniversary publication have invited me to reflect on ‘challenges to human rights education for the coming generation’. This presents a welcome opportunity to take stock of 20 years of E.MA experience. What are we fundamentally up to in the Aula Magna? Which aspects of our didactic agenda have changed and which remain the same? What are the most pressing future challenges for EMA? To start, it may be relevant to recall that human rights education comes in many different flavours and addresses different target groups. At one level, it is oriented towards empowering rights holders to claim their rights. Similarly, as part of the same endeavour, it involves enabling government officials and civil servants to effectively honour their responsibilities as duty bearers. Underpinning both of these pragmatic agendas, human rights education also involves a dimension of civic education, starting already at elementary school age, which aims to foster a thorough understanding of human rights within the general population and inspire us to embrace an ethos of human rights vis-à-vis one another in our daily interaction.

Within the academic context, human rights courses often feature as one component among many within a wider curriculum. Specialisation in the area of human rights is in this context typically research-oriented and aims to contribute to expert knowledge of particular aspects of the subject. However, in recent decades a new species of master’s programmes (and increasingly also bachelor programmes) has emerged that is distinctly practice-oriented and aims to educate the next generation of human rights professionals who will work in national bureaucracies and international organisations, civil society organisations, international field missions, and as human rights defenders in volatile situations. This, fundamentally, is the focus of EMA. We have been pioneers in propagating this modality of human rights education both in universities around Europe and within the context of the expanding Global Campus network of EU-funded human rights and democratisation master’s programmes. If the common aim is to professionalize human rights work, how then is a professional identity constituted?

Drawing on the experience of other emerging and consolidated professions, Michael O’Flaherty and I suggested some years ago that the core elements of a professional group are: (i) a set of shared values, (ii) a body of scientific knowledge, and (iii) systems to apply that knowledge. E.MA closely conforms to this mould. By design and by the example set by leading human rights practitioners, the programme encourages students to embrace the value base of the profession – both those values that are expressly articulated in the international and regional legal instruments and the associated ethical values that in a derived sense constitute all of us as human rights duty bearers (such as respect for the integrity and dignity of the human person; respect for diversity, transparency and accountability; a commitment to assisting fellow humans in need). The highly intense first semester curriculum, secondly, places a strong emphasis on a fostering comprehensive understanding of established human rights standards, mechanisms, policies and procedures as well as the core knowledge base related to the promotion and safeguarding of democracy. Thirdly, it is a central aim of the programme to foster a range of practical skills that will enable graduates to act in support of human rights in diverse concrete settings, including in the context of development cooperation and fieldwork in conflict and post-conflict societies.

These three focal points are, in a certain sense, the constants of EMA, what has defined the programme ever since it began 20 years ago. They will remain pillars of human rights education also in the years to come. But new challenges continually arise and we are arguably at a juncture of unprecedented set-backs to the global human rights agenda. This obviously needs to be reflected in the forward-looking development of the programme as well. A main priority in the on-going EMA curriculum planning is to identify and understand concrete threats to human rights and democracy. Some obvious examples to which we need to pay close attention are the way in which big data in the era of information technology poses threats to privacy, or the way in which deliberate misinformation campaigns abuse freedom of expression and pose threats to the integrity of democratic processes. These may both be seen as examples of how illiberal forces strategically misuse human rights and democratic mechanisms to further an antagonistic agenda. In other contexts, we see rising challenges to women’s reproductive rights and a surge of hate crimes targeting minority groups in society. Climate change has multiple adverse human rights implications that we are only slowly beginning to comprehend. And the tangible gains in mobility, access and general welfare that many of us associate with globalisation are inextricably related to the concurrent marginalisation, exclusion and structural poverty of vast segments of the global population. This poses one of the most important and most difficult challenges to the contemporary human rights agenda. We live in an era of a widespread mistrust of expert cultures and a readiness within a growing cross-section of the political spectrum to sacrifice human rights on account of real or perceived security threats. The 2017 Global Classroom, which brought together students from all seven EU-funded regional master’s programmes, was devoted to a comparative survey of securitisation measures in different regions of the world. This served as a stark reminder of a challenge to human rights that will remain high on our agenda for many years to come. Within the student body itself, we sometimes detect a sense of disillusionment, or a lack of assurance and loss of bearings in view of the rising backlash against human rights. As educators, our response must be not simply to brush aside voices of dissent but rather to acknowledge and critically examine them and thereby equip students to engage constructively with conflicting sentiments in the surrounding society. This, fundamentally, is a practical endeavour that alongside other skill building components will reinforce the contemporary relevance and effectiveness of our educational efforts. These efforts are no longer primarily Lido-based but extend throughout Europe and across the entire Global Campus network where, in a spirit of shared allegiance to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and key elements of the EU human rights commitment, we join forces to strengthen accountable multilateralism. The EMA Alumni, together with other Global Campus Alumni, are indispensable partners in this undertaking.

From a few early attempts to an established professional institution: The E.MAlumni Association

E.MAlumni President 2010-2012

20 years, over 1500 masteroni, in more than 100 cities across all continents! 20 years marks an important milestone for E.MA and one where we are proud to have an active alumni association with members from all generations and strong bonds with our sister associations through the Global Campus Alumni (GCA). Following several earlier attempts, our E.MAlumni Association, as it exists today, was re-invigorated and founded in 2009 - in Italy, of course. It has since continued to develop, to become more professional, and to draw in more and more of our peers. Today, we have an annual budget which allows us to pay some of the invaluable Human Resources we employ, in addition to the generous and dedicated time the association receives predominantly from volunteer Board members and volunteers from the alumni community. 2017 marks not only our 20th Anniversary but also the Year the E.MAlumni moved to Belgium, allowing us to further develop institutionally. But this is not about institutional development - it is about people. We have had four Boards who together, have re-connected alumni, built the association and created projects aimed at building the professional and practical expertise of our community. We have asked our former Presidents and Vice-Presidents to share a few words of wisdom...on the why's and the how's and anything else that takes their fancy.... **Giorgos Kosmopoulos**, the first President of the E.MAlumni, has played a major role in making our alumni community what it is today.

"No one said that setting off to create the E.MAlumni from scratch was going to be easy. Right from the very beginning and until today, in my mind, the E.MAlumni is a home and a launching pad for future endeavors. Forever grateful to all those who contributed in those early times, I am fascinated by the progress and achievements of the Association over the years."



Cristiano Gianolla, E.MAlumni President 2012-14



The E.MAlumni for me was a necessary continuation of a learning and enthusiastic personal experience. Before enrolling, I held the E.MA as dream in order to make of my professional life a service to global justices, democratisations, human rights and values. After eagerly seeking volunteering opportunities, I saw the E.MA as the educational step that would allow me to think of a professional future connected with my personal vocation. When I finished the E.MA I was even more enthusiastic for the great experience and learning dynamic, so that I felt a greater attachment to the E.MA-EIUC family. After an internship in China I worked at EIUC for two years during which I pushed forward the revitalisation of the E.MAlumni Association which had been created some years earlier but remained mostly silent. With great enthusiasm, in 2009-2010 I made the first steps to get in touch with the biggest possible number of Alumni, and engage many of them in confirming the Association's name, create a website, amend the statutes (especially to allow remote working) and organise the first general assembly held in Brussels, followed by online elections for the board and president.

Due to my new academic position I then moved away from Venice but still remained affectionate to the E.MA-EIUC family, so in 2012 I accepted the invitation of friends and fellow alumni to run for board and president and I was elected for two years. I decided to run because I believed that the effort of revitalising the E.MAlumni was not fully accomplished and indeed in the two years in office we strengthen existing projects and initiated a number of new programmes such as the Career Service, E.MActivism Prize, E.MAlumniInTheField, E.MAlumni Web-Star, E.MArrivals, E.MAg, E.MAday, E.MAhub and E.MAmbassador and others. In those two years, I had a wonderful co-working experience with the board and especially with Lydia Malmedie, vice-president - or bi-president - as we decided to adopt operational horizontality.

We created a virtual office by which we were able to work remotely, and of course mostly at night and during weekends. It was very hard to conciliate professional life, family, other volunteering activities and the E.MAlumni. It was demanding but rewarding to see the results coming up and the Association increasing its cooperation and support to the other "Regional Masters" Alumni Associations, and then being actively engaged in the creation of the Global Campus Alumni.

I believe that the board experience is a great opportunity to enter in a stimulating working environment where E.MAlumni can actively shape their Association, create new opportunities of interaction and cooperation, and integrate or support initiatives for global justice, democratisation and human rights. I also believe that this community represents a great potential for all of us, a growing network that incorporates colleagues and friends from all around the world with a range of experiences and a variety of educational and professional background. With such diversity, it is a space for those who believe that another world is possible and I believe that to such an extent the potential of the E.MAlumni and GCA is still to be unveiled...

Lydia Malmedie,

E.MA Board Member 2010-12; Vice President 2012-14; President 2014-16



I ran for president three years ago because I wanted to make sure the E.MAlumni Association would build on its strengths and realise its potential. An academic programme will always be measured on its graduates and their impact. A strong alumni association is therefore absolutely vital for a programme like the E.MA. In this case it is even more important because it also means enabling graduates to more effectively promote human rights across the world. This was my motivation then and it is still my conviction today.

I knew what I was getting myself into when I campaigned: I had served on the board since the relaunch of the Association in 2011 and I was vice president for two years from 2012. And still, the responsibility at first came as a bit of a shock when I was elected in May 2014. All board members were new to the association, the annual financial report was due shortly after the elections and I learnt that we had to set up a new organization in Brussels, the GCA, in order to be able to continue to have staff and funding. Meanwhile, projects like the career coaching and mentoring programme were ongoing and the new website far from launching. I managed to overcome my shock and get to work and I was able to build on the great work of previous presidents Cristiano Gianolla and Giorgos Kosmopoulos.

There were definitely times when I regretted my decision to run for this post: when the dozens of daily E.MAlumni emails meant I then didn't get around to writing my friends; when another skype Board Meeting overran and I missed dinner with my partner; when I was frustrated about projects not moving according to schedule and carried this into the weekend. Would I do it all over again? The answer is "yes!" The reasons? The amazing people I had the opportunity to work with and see excel: the other Board Members and in particular vice president Daniel Toda Castan and Laura Pasquero, E.MAlumni Secretary General, at the time.

During those years on the E.MAlumni Board, I learnt more about team work, leadership remote working, diplomacy, EU budgeting, databases, website development, event organization, film production, organizational structures, Belgian bureaucracy and not least myself than I had ever hoped for. I am very grateful for this amazing opportunity and I remain indebted to the wonderful people at EIUC, Global Campus, the EEAS and DEVCO I had the pleasure of working with. One of the hardest things was probably the letting go, the handing over. With so much energy, time and effort invested, you want to be sure the Association continues and there is the temptation to think that one should stay involved, just to make sure it will be alright. One likes to feel irreplaceable. And yet the opposite is true: If the E.MAlumni or the GCA had continued to need me, I would have failed. The fact that E.MAlumni and GCA are doing just fine is testimony to them having developed into stronger organizations based on structures and institutions which make them more durable. It is also testimony to a great new generation of leadership with Tessa Schrempf at its helm taking them to the next level and the continued support of EIUC, the Global Campus and the EU. I am very curious to see what these next levels are and can only encourage every Masterona and Masterini to stay in touch and get involved in the E.MAlumni and experience it for themselves.



Tania Gisselbrecht (alumna, 1997/98): "Challenges for the Pioneer Year"

Over the course of 6 months in Venice, Masterini pioneers got diagnosed with an extensive array of pathologies. Fortunately promiscuity and room over-occupation did not breed shameful diseases. Only short bouts of nuttiness and depression. More notable were stomach disorders. Aside from the ordinary nausea experienced during the vaporetto journey from Venice to Giudecca, some of my classmates suffered from chronic indigestion. Tons of (at the time, non chlorine-free unrecycled paper) pages were to be ingested on a weekly basis. Although no case of force feeding were reported, self inflicted harm was more than commonplace. Dark circles, decrease in concentration level, random drowsiness, unpredictable mood swings were frequently spotted among pioneers. For the sake of accuracy, it should be added that, back then, alternative assumptions were made to explain those symptoms. A red liquid substance was widely used within the pioneers community. Easily available, cheap, and effective, it reportedly increased the level of conviviality and made masterini fellows temporarily oblivious to their daily worries. This list of medical conditions is yet sadly short of being exhaustive. Allergies to our communal lifestyle also manifested themselves. They were treated in different ways: one of our comrade left before the first signs of affliction became unbearable, at least one other conspicuously deserted later during the second semester. Additionally, isolated cases of claustrophobia were noted. Insularity did befit those looking for entertainment. Venice could sometimes feel like a golden cage, more thrilling for potbellied-short-wearing tourists than for excitement-thirsty students. A persisting epidemic of itchy feet consequently developed within our group. Fascinatingly the pioneers also suffered more than occasional bursts of tonsillitis. Scientists gathered that it was the prolonged use of French in the classroom to trigger widespread but short-lived outbreaks as students would regain the use of their tongue as soon as English would resonate again in the corridors of the scuola Palladio. Despite those extreme circumstances, no permanent brain damage were recorded...unless I was not made aware of. But rest assured that pioneers did recover from all their ailments thanks to the antibody they developed while interacting. They all grew more resilient and resistant to hostile environments. Nevertheless a slight side effect of this extraordinary 6 months endures 20 years afterwards: the pioneers occasionally experience bout of extremely contagious laguna nostalgia. Life in the 'Shitty di Milano' wasn't so shitty after all...

Véronique Lerch (alumna, 1998/99): "What were the key challenges when you graduated in 1999?"

Looking back at the challenges faced by myself and many others in my graduating class I am struck by the realisation that today's graduates face many of the same challenges. Some of the reasons that made it difficult for some of us to find the first paying job :

Expectations that you should work for free to get more experience : the vicious circle of unpaid internships and « volunteering ». Some of the current alumni are involved in a campaign for paid internships. It is high time to stop this inflation of unpaid internships, which give a chance to those who can afford being unpaid for a long period of time and leave other talented individuals behind. Gap between the more-theoretical content of the master and the skills needed in working on human rights issues (advocacy, fundraising, policy, research...). This said, I am not convinced the master programme should include too many courses on these skills. They are better learned in practice and it is important to acquire a strong knowledge in human rights.

No alumni network :

We were not the 1998 pioneers but were still trailblazers. The master was in the making and we could not rely on a wide network of alumni to share opportunities and give career advice. Today, we have an alumni association offering solutions through mentoring and coaching. The potential of the alumni network to offer support in job searches is still underutilized by recent graduates. Being lost in a sea of opportunities. Many students did not use the time of the master to reflect on which kind of jobs they wanted after the graduation and that reflection was not fostered by the staff and professors of the master. There were no career services at that time. Some of us therefore did not make a search for a specific type of job or a certain field. It was very often chance that guided our choices.

Aside from these professional challenges, I admire the way the people from my year have woven deeper contacts over the years (in a pre-facebook and pre-whatsapp world...). Power to the old-fashioned ways of keeping in touch !

Katerina Liakopoulou (alumna, 2006/07): "What were the key challenges when you graduated in 2007?"

Challenges? What challenges?

I'm a human rights expert, what don't you understand?

Yes, I'm both a Balkans expert and a human rights expert. Beat that!

My favourite word? Interdisciplinary! Have to write it twice in my CV...

Which part of "I studied Balkan Studies" sounds so funny to you?!

No, I'm not a lawyer. Neither a political scientist.

I bet "Master in Human Rights" sounds better.

How many languages do I speak? Well, what's the right answer here?

English? Of course, fluently!

French? Again of course, but maybe not so fluently. Let's say "very good".

Next year it will go to "excellent".

A third language would look even better? Let's start learning Spanish! Olé!

No, I'm not a lawyer. Neither an economist.

What do you mean what's my specialisation? I'm so specialised!

Yep, it's probably time to sign up for a summer school. They always look cool on the CV. I'll try to forget how much it costs.

Unpaid internship? Sure! It has always been my dream!

How will I cover my expenses? Don't be silly, I'll just live like a Buddhist monk for 6 months.

No, I'm not a lawyer. Neither the No Impact Man.

Another unpaid internship? Sure, but let me ask my million dollar mom first.

A paid internship?!?!?! I think I'm gonna get a heart attack....

What do you mean I've done too many internships? The more the merrier!

Oh yes, I hit the bull's eye. My boss has offered me a one-month consultancy contract.

You think it's too short? UN, baby! And don't tell anyone, but pay is sweet ;)

If I manage to renew it twice, I can go to Cuba in the summer. ¡Grande!

No, I'm not a lawyer. Neither Che Guevara's lost daughter.

Time for some field work? Sure, I love Africa!

Amazing experience, stunning profile pictures.

Back to Europe? Yep, time for a real job. Apply, apply, apply!

No, no interview yet. Those guys don't even bother to simply write "Thank you for your application".

My French? Still not excellent, but still "very good".

Still no interview. Please stop asking me, I'll let you know if I have news.

Follow an online course? Yeah, that might boost my CV a bit.

You know what? I think I'll go try something else for a while. Hasta la proxima, Human Rights.

E.MA class 2016/17: "What do you expect to be the key challenges when you graduate in 2017?"



In May of 2017, the E.MA class of 2016-2017 was polled via facebook about the challenges they foresaw upon their graduation in September of 2017. Students were able to add their own answers to a bar poll, and select multiple answers. Despite some responses focusing on more immediate challenges such as finishing the thesis and seeing fellow students, the majority of responses point to economic challenges and an unease in the presence of adequate opportunities in the labour market, be it lack of adequate payment for labour, availability of desirable or attainable work, or existing barriers to further growth such as the need to pay off student loans. In addition, responses point to a strong coalition of anti-capitalist sentiment and systemic distrust of the current global world order.

RESPONSES: 'Unpaid Internships' (21.3%); 'Mobilise the revolutionary forces of the global proletariat so they may rise up and organise to bring down the capitalist world' (20%); 'I don't know. I'm not thinking about challenges. I'm thinking about writing my thesis.' (20%); '+5 years experience' (17.3%); 'Not getting to see my E.MA friends ' faces all the time' (12%); 'Job availability' (6.7%); 'Student loans' (2.7%)

(Total Responses: 75, Total Students participated: 42)



“An ode to *Professor Antonio Papisca*, founding father of E.MA”

Back in September 1998, in the council room of Venice City Hall, Cà Farsetti, a cohort of 75 students from across the globe were welcomed by Professor Antonio Papisca, the founding father of the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (E.MA). His fellow academics in attendance represented the 15 participating universities running the programme, and Ms Daniela Napoli, was the EC official who strongly supported the launch and funding of this first human rights programme. The E.MA adventure started in the Monastery of San Nicolò in Lido, the newly established E.MA seat. We soon discovered and got familiar with a word that Prof. Papisca often used in addressing human rights issues: interstices. Most of us, his Supranational Masteroni of 1998/1999, probably understood what this word meant later on in our lives and careers as human rights defenders and professionals. He was a wise man with a gentle and humble attitude that had the ability to put you at ease. Because he truly believed in human beings, brotherhood, and in a multi-and-interdisciplinary approach to human rights education, he successfully established and strengthened partnerships with major European Universities and international institutions (IGOs and IGOs) with the aim of merging theory and practice within the curriculum.

Very soon Prof. Papisca encouraged and supported the creation of the E.MA Alumni Association. It keeps his restless and wise advice alive for generations of students who share a common bond with this Benedictine monastery on the Venetian lagoon. Prof. Papisca can be proud of the so many generations of Masteroni who, thanks to his visionary and pioneering Master programme, now form a professional community of human rights experts and activists spread all around the world. This intensive and unique Master programme also generated deep friendships, love, E.MA weddings, and babies! A wonderful success. The legacy left by Prof. Papisca will continue to grow and flourish through the work and activities run also by us, its disciples working in the field, within academia, at the institutional level, or anywhere else where human rights and fundamental values are at stake or denied. Just like us, recent generations of Masteroni and present Masterini owe to this wise man and his cheerful smile the opportunity to embark on the vaporetto of human rights. It departs from Lido San Nicolò and heads to the interstices of the world, facing all weather conditions and turbulences. The academics and practitioners know its route. It was and still is an incredible journey for all those aboard, as it educates the souls, minds and hearts to the knowledge, dissemination, and protection of human rights and democratic values. Dear Professor Papisca, Your departure leaves us sad and lonely. I like to imagine you taking part in the upcoming E.MA 20th anniversary celebration in Scuola Grande di San Rocco, looking down on us from above, disguised among the painted ceilings by Tintoretto - teasing the bottom-up approach for once- and delighted by a virtuoso violinist playing during the awards ceremony. Be assured that we all take your endeavours, commitment, and energy as testimonials and we will continue spreading and defending human rights and democratic values in the interstices of this globalised world. Thank you for this Masterpiece!

Corinna Greco (alumna, 1998/99)



A big thank you

to the staff at EICU for making our time in Venice so special

E.MA current staff picture

First row from left to right:

Elisabetta Noli, Stefania Saccarola, Anna Zenz, Manfred Nowak

Second row from left to right:

Giulia Ballarin, Veronika Haász, Isotta Esposito, Paola Gesmundo, Angela Melchiorre, Chiara, Altafin, Elena Battaglia, Alberta Rocca, Valentina Abita

Third row from left to right:

Serena Caterino, Karolina Podstawa, Caterina (Kasia) Fantoni, George Ulrich, Luigi Comacchio, Manuela Torri, Alessandra Silanos, Elisabetta Zennaro, Nicola Tonon, Enrica Lot, Wiebke Lamer, Cristina Moras, Elisa Aquino.

Missing in the photo:

Luca Fantinel, Isabella Vianello, Dania Ferrarese, Giacomo Ottonello

other administrative staff working for E.MA students over the past 20 years:

Nicoletta Boccuzzi, Gioia Cappello, Caterina Cecconi, Silvia Del Fabbro, Lucia Fanicchi, Corinna Greco, Fiorenza Longhitano, Elisabetta Noli, Evelina Russo, Alessandra Silanos.



Former E.MA Programme Directors: “What makes E.MA special?”

Dr. Anja Mihr (2006/2007-2007/2008)

The amazing thing about being EMA Programme director is the fact that EMA students have always inspired me more than I could ever give in return. I hope they keep on going seeing the world as a place where everyone can fully enjoy hers and his human rights.

Dr. Angela Melchiorre, E.MA Alumna 1999-2000 and E.MA Programme Director 2011-2013

There is a powerful aspect in teaching and learning at E.MA: it makes us realise that human rights do not just happen to us; we make them happen. I have reflected on these aspects before, as an E.MA student (1999-2000) and throughout my career. Never before, however, has this proved as valid as when I was E.MA Programme Director (2011-2013). It was an honour to ‘return’ what E.MA had given to me and a joy to work with colleagues and masterini in order to be proactive rather than simply reactive in defending human rights.

Dr. Andraz Zidar (2015-2016)

E.MA is, in my experience, the best master programme on human rights and democratization in the world: it accommodates enthusiastic and talented students, features an excellent academic college and situates theoretical knowledge in the practical context. But above all: it is a personal path towards humanity.

Prof. Koen De Feyter (2004-2005)

EMA was: peering behind a pillar in the Aula Magna to see a voice challenging most beautifully what you just said.

Prof. George Ulrich (2016-2017)

Being EMA programme director is like trying one’s hand as a stage master, whose main aim is to facilitate a rewarding encounter between performer and audience, teacher and students, and bring out the best in each actor while continually paying attention to the total effect. It’s fun.

Dr. Piero Sullo (2013/2014-2014/2015)

In the E.MA Programme the passion disclosed by the students makes human rights education a lives-changing, unforgettable adventure.

Prof. Fabrizio Marrella (2008/2009-2009/2010-2010/2011)

“First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me” .

The face(s) of the E.MAlumni Association - the Board members we could not do without



Tessa Schrempf, President of E.MAlumni
Michael Merrigan, Vice President of E.MAlumni
Raphael Ruppacher, Treasurer
Denise Venturi, Board Member
Kersty McCourt, Board Member
Silvia de Benito Ruiz de Azua, Board Member
Charlotte Campo, Board Member
Cyprien Munazi, Board Member
Véronique Lerch, Board Member

2014-2016:

Lydia Malmedie, President
Daniel Toda-Castan, Vice-President
Laura Pasquero Secretary General
Krisztina Damjanovic (appointed interim treasurer)
Carlotta Giordani – Treasurer
Denise Venturi, Treasurer
Tessa Schrempf
Kerstin McCourt
Lenka Homolkova
Erin Barbara Koenig
Emilia Venetsanou
Sofia Branco
Jose María (Chema) Arraiza
Saionara König-Reis

2012-2014:

Cristiano Gianolla | President)
Lydia Malmedie Vice-President
Andrea Petkovic Executive Officer
Alba Marcellán Fernández
Krisztina Damjanovich Treasurer
Corinna Greco
Iva Tsekova
Lynn Schweisfurth
Monika Alpoegger
Sofia Antunes
Vera Martins de Almeida

2010-2012:

Giorgos Kosmopoulos President
Corinna Greco Vice president
Christiane Schwausch Treasurer
Filipa Guinote
Lydia Malmedie
Sara Melkko
Sophie Mirgaux
Victor Bojkov
Igor Vorontsov substituted later by Monika Alpoegger

Our (former) Vice Presidents: "Why did you dedicate your precious free time to the E.MAlumni Association?" "



Michaël Merrigan Vice President 2016-2018

"Being involved with E.MAlumni is both an honour and an incredible opportunity. Staying in contact with so many interesting and energetic people from across the world, and being part of the effort to strengthen this unique network... it's a lot of fun and incredibly rewarding!"



Daniel Toda Vice Presidents 2014-2016

"Serving at the Board of the E.MAlumni Association was a hard but exciting experience that gave me the opportunity to contribute my bit to the consolidation of the Association. The results of my contribution as a Board, the things I could learn from the experience and the ties to my Board colleagues are the precious fruits of my involvement at the Board and I thank those who worked together with me in our endeavour to make the E.MAlumni Association and the Global Campus Alumni Association better."



Corina Greco E.MAlumni Vice-President 2010/2012 and Board member 2012/2014

I dedicated my precious free time to the E.MAlumni community because I wanted to continue what was started when I co-signed the Statutes creating the E.MAlumni Association in 2006, establish friendly and collaborative bonds across E.MA generations, share skills and benefit from team working with great fellow Masteroni create opportunities to promote the programme and therefore bridge, support E.MA partner universities, put students and alumni interests forward at the light of the developing programme, contribute to the launch of the Regional Masters Alumni associations in view of the Global Campus Alumni network, see the human rights seeds planted by Prof. Papisca blooming in the interstices of our soul, work and world. I was and will always be proud of this great community of human rights professionals, experts and defenders E.MAlumni Association



Our wonderful staff: Secretary Generals without whom we wouldn't function and what made their time as SG special

Sara Pastor Alonso and Moana Genevey



When we graduated from the E.MA, two years ago, we were barely aware of the strength and power of our alumni community. As soon as we started having more professional contacts, we realised that E.MA alumni were all over the place!

In Brussels, where we both are based, we would bump into random masteroni at every human rights event, every pro-human rights demonstration, and of course at many parties and social gatherings.

There is something that unites us no matter where we are and regardless of our graduation year. Besides sharing a common cause, we share a common life experience that, even if different every year, fosters connections across borders and generations. That is what builds our alumni community.

Working as the Secretaries-General of E.MA Alumni and of our umbrella global association, the Global Campus Alumni, has opened our eyes even more: we belong to a network full of potential, and our challenge as Secretaries General is to help further unleashing this potential by creating the means for alumni to connect, interact and exchange - through the GCA website and through dedicated projects such as the Mentoring Programme or the Alumni Initiative Hub.

The E.MA experience changed our lives, and being the Secretaries-General of all E.MA alumni is an exciting opportunity to further discover our community and interact with alumni from all generations.

We couldn't be happier to be playing this role at a crucial moment when the E.MA is turning 20 years old! We are happy to help keeping the dynamic going for outgoing Masterini but also for all the Masteroni community.

Laura Pasquero



"When I think of the time I was the SG for the E.MA Alumni and the GCA I can just think of what an inspiring journey it has been. Shaping a new position and interacting with the extremely diverse reality of our Alumni were the two aspects that I certainly enjoyed the most since the first day I took up the role. I was, and still am, inspired by the huge potential we E.MA Alumni have, both as individuals and as a network - being part of the same 'family' gives us this privilege of continuing the E.MA path on a different level, by growing together and supporting each other both as professionals and as friends. We Alumni can and should also continue building a strong alliance with the EIUC and the E.MA new generations; because Human rights is such a living field, we practitioners always have a lot to give back and contribute to by sharing our experience, and a lot to learn too.

I also very much enjoyed working with the other GCA alumni associations and building bridges across continents, areas of expertise, dreams, ideas; the incredible expansion of the GCA network over the last years is such a promising sign of the ever growing diversity of the global dialogue on human rights, and we alumni have all a role to play in this if we want to."

Further former SGs: Anna Widegren (2015-2016) and Andrea Petrovic (2011-2013)



The 54 pioneers' were the first to be sent on an E.MA field-training mission. Destination - Bosnia and Herzegovina - just a couple of years after the war.

Rather than Alitalia business class, we were strapped into a military transport plane. No seats or windows – but after all we weren't tourists. Whisked through a tense Sarajevo in SFOR buses, it was clear how much damage had been done. The serious nature of our training was underlined in meetings with Government ministers, international organisations and NGOs, battling to secure a fragile peace...

"The strained Orange seats and the whiff of diesel didnt bother us"

...but half way to Mostar, the distinct smell of burning was less welcome. At first we assumed that Patrick was building another cigarette, but as the smoke grew thick and black, our unease escalated.

"Pioneers, we have been indeed. Acting as guinea pigs, we set the tone for future improvements of the programme."



1997 and 1998 were also marked by pioneering events. At the time, isolated on the Giudecca island, we probably did not take the full measure of the changes taking place in Europe. In 1998 Europeans agreed on a single currency, the European Central Bank was established in Frankfurt, Germany, the Erasmus programme celebrated its 10th anniversary, the Maastricht Treaty came into force, the European Court of Human Rights jurisdiction and the right of individual petition were made compulsory and permanent. Those key milestones were to shape our continent for decades. At the EU level, hope for a greater integration felt tangible. For the CoE, the Court reinforcement was paving the way towards more efficiency in rights protection. Not to be forgotten, at the universal level, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court establishing four core international crimes was also adopted in 1998.

98

1998 was the year that marked the inception of our Master's adventure. An adventure that continued after our graduation and still goes on, with a group of Supranational Masteroni all over the world working on human rights related issues and carrying out their assigned mandate of "penetrating-into-interstices" as the Master's founding father, Professor Papisca had taught them.

1998 was also the year marking the 50th Anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The masterini human rights community decided it was an event to mark in a memorable way...to raise sustained awareness of the fundamental rights and freedom every human being is entitled to.

And to do so, this group of motivated young naïf master students was capable of organising something really special, something the city that hosted them was involved in – at all levels - with its students, its institutional representatives, its civil society organisations, its citizens, visitors, tourists.

On 10 December 1998, a vaporetto left the Lido...it was a very special one...a human rights vaporetto full of masterini waving peace flags and chorusing slogans through the waters of Venice.

At 5.00 p.m. sharp of that rainy and foggy afternoon, the bells of the Basilica of San Marco and other churches started to ring majestically ...singing in a chorus the same song to commemorate the adoption of the Declaration and to wake up consciences on the importance of promoting and protecting human rights.

The Masterini left a human rights token to the city and its inhabitants: a pedagogic dossier entitled Human Rights Atelier for school teachers to speak about human rights to their students. Though it was drafted in Italian for facilitating its use by its main beneficiaries, it was the result of a joint effort of the Master's students who went to visit several schools in Venice to talk about rights, to share experiences related to human rights issues, to infuse a human rights culture into the minds and hearts of young teenagers. It was not just commemorating...it was increasing the awareness of human rights in the city that hosted us for a whole semester.

99





In 1999/2000, we conducted a monastic life of study and prayer, guided by Papisca's Interstices Theory, which none of us really understood, starting from the word "interstices". We lived in the warm intimacy of the monks' cells – which at the time we shared – and daily filled our hearts with the spirit of human rights.

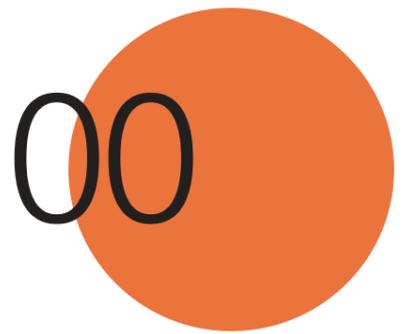
The only distraction to our mission was a glass of wine for dinner at the E.MA canteen, which was served for free. One glass of white, one of red (we have always been against racism). Sometimes two of each (just to be sure). Exceptionally three or more (a scientist must always pursue widespread and systematic empirical verification). Eventually we learned some human rights and forgot all our maths.

As we started gaining weight, some decided to take drastic measures, such as playing football in the mud, attempting a diet of some sort, risking a heart attack jogging on the beach, or organising table soccer tournaments. These proved beyond any reasonable doubt the incompatibility between a human rights brain and any sort of eye-hand coordination. The most courageous even decided to study the whole night in an attempt to burn more calories. It is not clear whether we became wiser, for sure we became fatter.

As we all left for the second semester we were all very sad. But the most desperate of all was the night guard, who would not receive any more some special gifts (liquid and alcoholic) as a motivational tool to open the door after the curfew (yes there was a curfew) without reporting the fact to the management.

The 90s were a period of high instability, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the post-cold war uncertainty. In the Balkans, it led to an unthinkable conflict at the doorsteps of the European Union. The conflict between Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia officially ended in 1995 with the Dayton peace agreement. However, shortly after, tensions started growing between Serbia and Kosovo.

When we started our Master in 1999, the war in Kosovo had just ended, leaving the scars of ethnic cleansing, destruction of property, extrajudicial killings and many other horrors. The conflict ended after a series of NATO airstrikes against Serbia. During one of such attacks, the headquarters of the Serbian State Television was destroyed, killing 16 civilians. The case was brought to the European Court of Human Rights, which dismissed the case on the basis of its lack of territorial jurisdiction. In the years that followed, the human rights accountability of countries outside their national territory – particularly in case of occupation – will become one of the main issues of debate.



00

Malamocco. Monastero. Hotel Golf Residence. Acqua alta. "Oh, refugee law!". The Green Bar & the Vodka Bar. The Third Basket. The green olive in a Spritz Aperol. Hercules. Vaporetto Masterini. Papisca. Santa Maria Elisabetta. ...
To bring us back, viscerally, to a particular time and place, which was for some a point of departure, for others a shift, a change, a u-turn, for others a suspension. But were any of us left untouched by these months in the Lido? Who found friends, a meaningful cause, the breakthrough of interdisciplinary thinking, language immersion, inspiring ideas, a career, the love of their life?
Who were those dumb kids and serious human rights professionals cramming into Yann's car to save a bus ride on the Linea A? Complaining about the pasta al pesto? Breaking into the monastery of San Nicolò with girlfriends or boyfriends who stayed clandestine for days or weeks, and climbing the balconies of the Hotel Golf Residence? Drinking so many Spritz Aperols ... and trying to pay for them with Qui tickets? Wading chest-deep in Piazza San Marco for Acqua Alta tourism? Illegal spaghetti-cooking in the hotel. Hitching rides back from the Querini Stampaglia on local guys' freezing boats. Flirting with the legendary Sergio. Little brick bridges. Dancing with the townspeople of Malamocco. Exiting the Hercules aircraft to see the sign "Sarajevo" through the fog. Parties in drag. Salsa lessons. Exclusive tiramisù. Gender imbalance. The smell of garlic for breakfast in the bus. Burns' night. The flasher and the Carabinieri. The American professor who partied with us until he was sick. The smell of the lagoon. The baby foot triumphs. The plastic cups of coffee. It was us, we were there.

From the Lido we visited Bosnia, understanding how mines can be made out of coca cola cans, buying hats knitted by the widows of Srebrenica, singing for the Alpini soldiers of SFOR ("su per i monti pacificar, ui la la!"), imagining the bombardment of Gorazde, getting wine and dined in the Austrian embassy. Soon after we left the Lido again, applying all our game theory skills to achieve our first, or second, or third choice of the 15 participating universities, and mixing up the friendships and countries of origin and thematic interests once again.

And before we knew it – now we know how short a year is – leaving the Lido for good. Becoming the human rights practitioner we did this Master for, or not. Becoming bureaucrats, or volunteers, or spouses and parents, or expats, or judges, or academics, or advocates, or project managers, or officials, or field staff, or social workers, or more than one of these, or none of them at all. After coming from who knows where in Europe and beyond, we've scattered to who knows where all around the world and in Europe. We've changed, we've even died, we've lost each others' threads.

What we will never lose is that unforgettable semester in the year 2000, in the Lido. We were there.

01



01



A few days before the students gathered in Venice in September 2001, the 9/11 attacks changed the world as we knew it. From being regarded as primarily a national or regional issue, terrorism became a global threat to security. The immediate reactions such as the introduction of strict anti-terror laws, the establishment of Guantanamo Bay prison camp, and the invasion of Afghanistan evoked questions about the balance between human rights and the mitigation of terrorism.

For the students of the E.MA., the programme for the initial days that September 2001 was changed to focus on global terrorism and possible effects on human rights. One of the first assignments we were tasked with that autumn was to draft an international convention against global terrorism. We struggled with the definition of terrorism to start with. Eventually, the terminology and definition became clearer and is present in our everyday vocabulary.



Around the corner, destiny has mercy. The enticing doors of Osteria Paradiso Perduto in the Fondamenta Misericordia welcome them. They enter abruptly and jump on the spaghetti vongole and red wine with no shyness. The cook, Maurizio, smiles. After swiftly befriending the group, an adventurous, Veneto wine-inspired idea comes to his mind. A boat ride into the night. Hours later, the group rocks on Maurizio's boat from side to side. Maurizio is not as good with sailing as with pasta, but he tries his best to achieve balance.

"They enter abruptly and jump on the spaghetti vongole and red wine with no shyness. The cook, Maurizio, smiles."

02



03

"The 6 months on the Lido are still burned into my mind. It all started with the most peaceful, amazing and decadent opening ceremony on the balcony of the Palazzo Ducale on the 15th of September 2002"

A few days earlier on the 11th of September 2002, a year after 9/11, an Italian frigate anchored just in front of the palace with the missiles out on deck ready to be fired up to the sky. The frigate was still there, I believe. The air was full of collective anger, disbelief about what had happened then and what happened since that day and readiness to strike back at whatever target would present itself. And there we were, many friendly faces, drinking Champagne, eating parmesan cheese one story above the (ordinary) people on the square, ready to dive deeply into human rights, learn about the dignity of each individual, hear about ways to establish more equality or how to disentangle conflicts. It promised to be a thrilling experience with endless paradoxes.

02





We often reminisce about the many extra-curricular activities we undertook. From the day we met at the monastery, we had dinners and parties at each other's houses (we all lived in shared apartments on the Lido). Some of them resulted in evictions by the landlords or the police asking us to stop the noise. The 80's party, Halloween and the "George Awards" gave us all a chance to dress up, which was quite a challenge given the limited amount of clothes we had with us, so part of the fun was in getting ready for the party.

As if the days in class were not enough, we also organised film screenings, thematic evenings, aerobics, yoga, pilates, art classes, Italian lessons, excursions, traditional holiday celebrations like Sinterklaas and Santa Lucia, and a X-mas Variété, which gave every student an opportunity to showcase the "best" their country had to offer.

" The Portuguese celebrated poetry and the Greek gave us a dance lesson, the Scandinavians portrayed a typical night of getting drunk and the Dutch had everyone participate in a game of "spijkerpoepen". All of the above contributed to a great sense of community and created friendships that last until this day"

The invasion of Iraq, it's legality under international law, and subsequent civil war stands out. There was lots of debate in the UN and the US legal mandate and we all made predictions on what would happen geopolitically. Most have come true, sadly. Another important event was the enlargement of the EU in 2004 from 15 to 25 members. 75 of our 90 masterini came from the 15 EU member states, 5 from outside Europe and 10 came from EU candidate member states.

This meant that some of the masterini became EU citizens on 1 May 2004 and we all knew someone who was personally affected. There were celebrations everywhere. Looking back now, our British student representative noted how he had a EU flag draped around his shoulders at the time and how very different the situation is in his own country now, sadly at the reverse side of the process.



There is one memory, though, that sums up what it meant to be part of a community of like-minded people who cared about human rights, and about each other. The 2004/5 Field Trip to Kosovo was, for some of us, our first encounter with the (after-)effects of war; for others, conflict had already been a part of personal and professional experiences for many years. The things we saw and the people we met there left a mark on us all. One day that stands out in particular is the day we visited the divided and badly damaged city of Mitrovica, said to be a symbol of ethnic divisions in Kosovo. Many of us had the chance to meet with refugees and internally displaced people, and to see first hand the challenges facing them as they sought to rebuild their lives. We were quiet on the way back to Pristina; reflecting on it all. It was hard not to feel despondent, overwhelmed by the complexity and sadness of what we had seen over the last few days. As we arrived in Pristina, the snow still on the ground, a group of us decided to go for dinner - a meal that turned into a evening of dancing and singing and laughing. At some point, our Kosovan hosts joined us. I remember thinking: 'isn't it wrong to enjoy ourselves after a day like that?' But it was clear then, as it is now, that the dancing and singing and laughter wasn't just meaningless fun, it was something much more important: it was us - friends, colleagues, fellow human beings - reminding each other that we were there to support each other, and that hopelessness should never have the final word.

So many memories stand out from the E.MA class of 2004/5, both individual and shared. Here just a few: wading through the acqua alta on San Marco; night-time dancing on the beach; being sung to by Nordic angels for Santa Lucia; atmospheric reading at Querini library, playing Foolsball with the carabinieri and, of course, the ubiquitous Spritz - partner to many long conversations in the winter sunshine.



For human rights/geopolitical incidents that shaped our year, I remember: A spontaneous snowball battle in Pristina that broke out during our visit there and which only ended after the successful intervention of KFOR. On a more serious note the Israeli/Lebanese 2006 conflict which broke out in July." And this is how our tall, gentle, full of kindness and humour Pieter started bringing back memories... And then we all reappeared, joining in from different parts of the globe, contributing with joy, mastering technical and organizational skills, making cheerful comments, sharing lyrical talents and sentimental poems. Reminding us all the E.MA class of 2005-2006.

Which other class had as Student Representatives the famous Gin & Tonic (Greg & Teresa)? And was there again a Teabag movement at the Monastery? One that taught us about showing appreciation and concern to those around us, even when atmospheres become tense? What about orange-bags-in-Kosovo artistic expression? We even created our own Masterini Alphabet, particularly useful when 33 different nationalities are brought together in a Monastery in Lido!!!

As very well put by Daniel: we all learned a happy lesson about the cultural divergences existing within our continental union and community... Sometimes it felt as though we were all part of a sociological experiment conducted in order to determine what would happen if you place one hundred or so young foreign people on a quiet island populated mainly by Italian senior citizens. Nevertheless, we certainly made the most of it!

After 11 years we all surely miss what Sebastien had so well described: campfire beach parties and singing contests; dancing, fine humour and jokes, guitar concerts, international table-soccer tournaments and so many other good moments.





07

So many stories! We are all still smiling about them. Love affairs, heartbreaks and fruitless seduction attempts, which our non-existent gender balance (70 girls and 17 boys) and the infamous Lido seclusion made even more tense. Of course, we can't share any of these due to privacy and data protection rights, but there are some less sensitive stories that we could indeed say more about.

You have all thought about it at least once while walking along the Venetian canals late at night, but it did actually happen to one of us. One evening, after a long, fun outing and while trying to make some silly pictures on our way to the vaporetto stop to get back to Lido, a masterina fell in the canal! She suddenly slipped and the next thing we saw was her having grabbed a nearby boat and shouting for help. The whole thing lasted only a few seconds, but it was absolutely hilarious. After we helped her out, she was soaking wet from the waist down and had to bear her beautiful canal scent all the way to Lido.

Another really funny story was when we got to the airport for our field trip to Kosovo. We were, of course, all very excited about it and couldn't wait to board until... oops, two masterini had forgotten their passports! We thought, ok, maybe there is still enough time for them to go quickly back to Lido to get them and come back to the airport. But no... they had actually forgotten them in their home country! Well, geographically speaking, Kosovo belongs to Europe so why can't we get there with a simple ID? It all ended up well though, they got their passports by courier the next day and they both joined us in our Kosovar adventure.

During our first semester, we got very excited about the upcoming ratification of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was eventually adopted on 13 September 2007. We loved the week with our Spanish professors, which was dedicated to indigenous people and we learnt all about the importance of the declaration, the criticisms and the opposing states.

Another historical incident from our year was the execution of Saddam Hussein. Although we were away for the Christmas break when it happened, it certainly triggered some difficult discussions afterwards and broadened our understanding of the situation in Iraq.

Last but not least was our fieldtrip to Kosovo, which took place one year before Kosovo's declaration of independence. It was definitely a very interesting period to visit Kosovo, amidst the last rounds of negotiations and in-between the old and the new era of this Balkan hotspot.

06

07

During our year, one main political topic were the events in Myanmar. In September 2007, protests arose against the dictatorial regime that has governed Myanmar for many years. The protests were repressed in forceful and undemocratic ways, including the killing of protesters and other human rights violations. Masterini of the year 2007-8 participated in two events to raise awareness of the violence.

On the 4th of October 2007, a group of masterini expressed their disapproval of such violations, on the Accademia bridge along with others, as part of a sit-in for Myanmar, which was organized by the "Center for Peace" in Venice. As part of the sit in, masterini and joined by others lit candles as a sign of solidarity with those oppressed in Myanmar. They were also able to talk to and inform people walking by about the events in Myanmar. Most people were engaged and listened with interest. Even without the help of a guitar, the human rights students still sung important songs such as "Redemption Song" and "Imagine."

It was an emotionally intense atmosphere. On the one hand, there was the sadness knowing that some many were suffering because of oppression and injustice. On the other hand however, there was hope, knowing that there were so many sitting on a wooden bridge, giving a voice to those who were being treated in such an undeserved manner. There was the feeling that a solution was possible and that everyone had the right to take part in creating it. A few weeks later, a group of 9 E.MA masterini were also among the 200,000 activists marching for peace from Perugia to Assisi Sunday, 7th of October 2007. The slogan of the march that year was "Tutti i Diritti Umani per Tutti" (All Human Rights for All), and a central issue was, of course, the troublesome situation in Myanmar.

08



08

EMA is about a number of little anecdotes that make up a Lido-life less ordinary? Like one of the highest acqua altas in recorded history on exam day (flooding even Viale Santa Maria Elisabetta and other parts of the Lido, and bringing the ground water up through the monastery courtyard!), like seeing our friends from the southern hemisphere experience snow for the first time, like those endless days in the mercilessly cold Aula Magna, like filling countless plastic bottles with the red wine we got for free every lunch time (in no way connected to the fact that later years no longer had wine with their lunches). It's about huddling together in the corner of an apartment room to get the wifi of a guy named Nikolai (and sheer panic when he apparently left on vacation... ohno..thank God...he didn't, he's back!). It's about cutting the hair of vain Latino men for lack of an affordable barber on the island, celebrating birthdays in open air in December, being threatened and almost stabbed with screwdrivers by nasty neighbors and getting water poured at in staircases. It's about morning espressos during bike ride breaks on route to the monastery. And for some, then being late - every single day.

We set foot upon the Lido just as Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy. Low on money (not necessarily because of the impending crisis) but high on ideals, we witnessed crises unfolding, but also glimmers of hope. From riots in Greece to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty to policy changes in countering Terrorism, from the ICC indictment of Omar al Bashir of Sudan to the United Nations World Conference Against Racism (Durban review Conference) to another war in Gaza: our academic year was a year rich in legal and political developments that directly implicated human rights and triggered passionate late night discussions over Spritz. We had the opportunity to throw a birthday bash for good old UDHR that turned sixty (and – like any Lady – is getting only more interesting with age). Supported by Lido locals and grass root initiatives, we read out her thirty articles in as many languages and had a torch relay across Lido to her honour, and some Spritz on many more successful years for her to come.

We were also a bunch of people for whom staying up all night watching the votes being counted is the geekiest/most democratic kind of joy. Thus, what could have been a greater pleasure than watching the US presidential elections together in the TV room of the Monastery? The US playoff between two versions of the American Dream: A Vietnam vet and his lipstick-toting bulldog running mate v. Barack Obama, son of a Kenyan and American and senator for only four years and his running mate – some guy from Scranton, Pennsylvania, then pretty much un-featured in European coverage (mind you, we are speaking 2008, a time before internet memes, and before the Biden-Obama bromance!).

It seemed that swing state after swing state would fall evenly for republicans and democrats, but crunch time came at 3.30 am when, finally, Ohio was called and the democratic victory was clear.

For us in the Monastery a new battleground opened up: between those who thought the world would change and the ones saying "Come on people! Do you really think that is going to happen? No way!" In hindsight, the world has changed since. Not necessarily for the better.

09



09



10



The class of 2009/2010 immediately felt like family; an incredibly diverse and passionate family: loud and full of energy. From heated human rights discussions, endless beach- Halloween- and other theme parties to a widely-celebrated foosball tournament, the year was an intense learning curve on both an academic and social level. Many of us have kept in touch over the 7 years that have passed since and we are overly excited to reunite on the Lido!

10

One of our masteroni - who used to sing in a gospel choir in Cameroon - managed to spread his love for music and the human rights cause, as he directed a choir with a dozen Masteroni singing at the Christmas celebrations. The rehearsals of the Christmas Carols quickly became a place of exchanging popular influencing music. We performed a very popular activist and human rights song that used to be sang in South Africa during the Apartheid: Nkosi si nkeleli Africa "God bless the Children of Africa". When Mandela was in prison this song became the emblem of the Anti-Apartheid fight around the world breaking barriers and bridging cultures and continents. Coming from different countries and having experienced various contexts we all shared our love for music celebrating human rights, freedom, peace and justice.

In the aftermath of Iran's 2009 disputed presidential elections, many Iranian student activists were imprisoned for opposing the election results. For merely engaging in grievances against these results, students were arrested, convicted, and sentenced to terms of imprisonment of up to 10 years. As masteroni, we were deeply bothered by the news of these draconian prison sentences, so we decided to add our voices to the debate in solidarity with the activists. We organised a demonstration, as we marched from the boat to Palazzo Ducale with the names and photographs of more than 20 imprisoned Iranian students hanging from our shoulders. On the way, we explained to passer-by's about the Iranian government's human rights violations. Iranian student-rights websites published the news of the protest, praising the masteronis' efforts. This protest was one of the many demonstrations around the world to express sympathy and solidarity with the Iranian people and activists who struggled to obtain basic freedoms. The demonstrations were largely successful: facing pressure from around the globe, the Iranian government ultimately released most of the imprisoned students.

In December 2010, we organised the 2 day film festival "Building Bridges: Connecting through Diversity". An impressive collection of short films, documentaries and movies addressing human rights topics, and in particular covering the topics of xenophobia and minorities, were shown at the Ca' Foscari Auditorium and at Laboratorio Morion. The producer of one of the films came to speak to the participants and discussion rounds were organised after other films. And of course we also arranged for some free wine!

11





11

In the context of our field trip to Kosovo in January 2012, we visited the Orthodox Monastery of Decani, located in the municipality of Pejë/Pec. At the end of our visit, one of the monks of the monastery, in signal of gratitude offered us to taste a glass of the monastery's home-made Rakia. In that moment, a masteroni (at that time masterini) who had amazing (and unforgettable) oratory skills raised his glass for a toast, leading to a never-ending speech that went on, and on, and on... Meanwhile, all of us just waited to taste the Rakia, and with our glasses up, started to worry that the speech would never get to an end... but when he finally started to graciously conclude, he made a final statement that stayed with us as one of our main inner-vocabulary expressions: "Thank you for this UN-FORRR-GETTABLE experience. UN-FORRR-GETTABLE." Uuuunforgettably, we are still recurring to that moment in some of our conversations.

So there we were, in the morning of the Moot Court, clutching huge pieces of colored cardboard with mighty exaggerated slogans in defense of the imaginary trespasser Osman, a Somalian pirate about to lose his right to asylum on Italian soil. As the jury entered, we mounted the desks, shouting slogans, to the great amusement of our fellow spectators and to the amazement of the honorable jury. We were later declared "disturbers" by none other than the honorable judge E. Myjer, who denied our right to an "opinion of the public" at the end of the trial. All in all, after the emotional start, I enjoyed every minute of the Moot Court, admired the way both my colleagues from the side of the defense and that of the prosecution argued their case, and of course wondered what I would have done in their shoes, since the judges were as severe as they could have been on a real trial. It was an unforgettable experience."(Yoanna Mincheva)

On 20 and 21 October 2011, the Masterini and their "entourage" descended upon the Biennale, one of the world's most renowned contemporary art exhibitions, en masse. This worthwhile field trip was a suggestion of Angela's and a first in the history of the programme. The two day visit culminated in a workshop in the spectacular surrounds of the Biennale library where each group made a presentation on their impressions from the exhibition. The highlight of which was indisputably Esse and Nuuti's photo powerpoint presentation of the "Finnish delegation". Their take on a day in the life of a Biennale visitor commenced at the monastery with visuals of some of the masterini braving the inclement weather conditions to attend and culminated in a sad end – the closure of the Finnish pavilion due to storm damage. American Anna's sincere attempts to convince us of the profound meaning of an exhibition on socks, also deserves a mention if only for the sceptical looks she received from the audience.

12



“We were eating drinking, dreaming, showering human rights in a surrealistic bubble of passionate and sometimes naive students, lost in time in Lido” (Nora, class of 2012-2013). What seems to have marked us most memorably about our experiences as E.MA students were the debates that pervaded all aspects of life that year. Discussions concerning “humanitarian conflicts, identity politics, racism, [and] sexism” (Ellen) ranged from friendly commiseration over home cooked meals and endless bottles of Italian wine, to heated debates in the classroom, and even outright quarrels. Arnaud was “delighted that [his] flatmates, who had more than a knife at their disposal in the kitchen” didn’t use it to end a quarrel (or his life for that matter). All of this lead to “a special kind of tired, when someone else says something that I really really wanted to disagree with, but I was simply too worn out to even begin...” (Nils). The debate over Israel and Palestine was one of the topics that incited the most fire. Vladislav found his European classmates’ perspectives on the issue valuable, “especially as it showed [him] just how one sided was the information they had been given about the conflict.”

We arrived to Venice in the wake of the Arab Spring and and the Occupy Movement. The series of world events since that time have seemed to spiral out of control at a rate that only seems to increase. From September 2012- September 2013, there were numerous events that shaped the world stage with regards to human rights. The civil war in Syria had been going on for a few months and the numbers of refugees fleeing the violence were already staggering. One day, we were assigned the task of solving the conflict in Syria; we were asked, “Why doesn’t the international community solve it already?” After a long day of deliberating, we had no solution. Melanie noted that this activity opened her eyes to the “Difficulty the UN and other international bodies face when dealing with so many different nationalities, cultures, ethnicities, and political motivations...it gave [us] a taste of what was to come... as [we] attempt to navigate cultural and political barriers in [our own] political careers.”

Notable events that personally effected members of our class include the decree issued in Egypt, granting Mohamed Morsi unlimited power. Egyptian and Tunisian activists in our midst (alongside other classmates in solidarity) took to the streets of Venice in protest. In continuation, the use of drones in the “War on Terror” escalated; the stark injustice of extraterritorial killings became apparent, and the question of where drone warfare might lead weighed on us. Additionally, in May of 2013, France voted to legalize gay marriage (not withstanding ideological battles on the streets of Paris and abroad).

Only two short months later, Russia signed a law stigmatizing gay people, opening the door for legal violence and persecution. Gay, lesbian, queer and other members of our class engaged in vulnerable and enlightening dialogue that opened the minds of uninformed hetero classmates. Our Venezuelan sister spoke fervently of the dangers of the direction that Venezuela was taking at the time; still today, peaceful protestors are killed by the government and there is a media blackout on any material critical of the government save social media outlets. Finally, acknowledgement of the struggle for women’s rights was always present, regardless of the overarching issue up for debate.

In early November, 2012, we woke up early to watch the results of the U.S. Presidential election together. It was a lovely morning, not only because President Obama would serve another term, but also because we enjoyed a pile of pancakes you would have to see to believe. We would have never guessed that there would be a man named Trump in the White House only four years later...

13



“we’re all moved by the fact that freedom is indivisible, convinced that the denial of the rights of one diminish the freedom of others.”

14

...Along the way, a movie-club watching human-rights-related-movies in regular intervals was created, job-experience-sharing nights were hosted by different masterini to learn about interesting prior work experience of our colleagues, and one of the unfurnished rooms of the monastery was turned into a gym every Wednesday afternoon by one of our colleagues who happened to be a professional fitness instructor on the side. In addition to regular nights out on Campo Santa Margherita (many of us braved the weather for almost the whole semester) and at our beloved Morion (an indie bar/ concert venue in a squatted house), all of our self-created entertainment opportunities on tiny Lido provided us with more than enough distraction from the fact that we were living in a bubble on an almost deserted island. It was this feeling of creating something together out of nothing that made our time there all the more unique, bonding and memorable

While we were all standing for Human Rights in Venice, one of the major icons of Human Rights gave his last breath. Noble Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela passed away on December 5th, 2013. His fight against apartheid and his non-violent tactics were an inspiration for all of us. Mandela’s ideals were reflected in the hopes and dreams of all of us as young human rights activists coming from all across the globe, while guiding us on the path of unity and adding a moral vision to our commitment to defend human rights of all.

While we continued our path throughout the second semester, Crimea was unlawfully annexed by Russia. This action had a direct connection with our studies at that time, given the reports of wide-spread human rights and international law violations, discrimination and general violence. We were given tools to fight against this kind of illegal acts through our courses, mobilizations and involvement with the human rights community. Participation in human rights initiatives, seeking employment in the field of protection to challenge those political stands targeting the most vulnerable has certainly motivated most of us to continue our path in this field and to become actors of change as human rights activists, because through our master’s programme we learnt that things can be moved by people’s engagement and passion for human rights and democratization.



After the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attacks, the French girls of the Masters needed all the support they could take. We organised a minute of silence and a group photo with the “Je Suis Charlie” sign, just because we felt we had to do

Never again will we live in our Lido. I mean, you could easily live in Lido again, but it will never be the same. We lived on an island, isolated from the world, where we discussed real world human rights violations with some great thinkers of our time. We came together as strangers from all around the globe, from different backgrounds and cultures, having left behind all our friends and our family for a new adventure. We quickly bonded and became our own family. It seems like we only blinked after the last bus bar party and it was all over, but in reality it is only just beginning. Wherever life takes you, a little part of you will still be in our Lido, hurrying from the Santa Maria Elisabetta Station to the monastery, rushing to see your friends to debate big world issues, and to be the first in the queue at the kiosko for a cappuccino.

After the Nepalese earthquakes, we launched E.MA 2014/2015 support for CWIN / NEPAL

“I was back in Nepal for the field work of my research at the time this unfortunate incident happened on Saturday 25th April 201 5” Shiva Bhandari

“Love it. Share it. Spread the word. And donate!” was our moto!

With a simple slogan and dozens of hearts united we were able to raise nothing less than \$7,300 in three weeks.

Inspired by Shiva’s strength, the E.MA family didn’t think twice – we got together sending caring messages and asking how we could (should) help his people. Under Shiva’s guidance we raised money for an experienced civil society organisation called Child Workers in Nepal. During three weeks our sole priority was to gather all the resources we could in order to facilitate CWIN to bring relief for children. Well, with this campaign we just wanted to help Shiva, but we got much more: we learnt a lot about resilience; we experienced to be human rights workers and we proved that we can truly make a difference in people’s lives with only few tools in hand and a lot of good will. Last but not least, we got amazed by human generosity, which reinforced our conviction that we’ve chosen the right career! “Carla Miranda

9 o'clock: a group of people are riding their bikes on the roads of a cosy island, as others are arriving by boat. It's getting closer to 9:15 now: around 90 bikes are locked in front of an impressive building that many call their second home. The owners of the bikes are attending fascinating classes during the day, and the lectures are only interrupted by a wonderful lunch together. At 6 o'clock, people get ready to ride their bikes to the beach of the island or to the amazing libraries of Venice. Does this sound like the perfect day? This is just an ordinary day for a group of very lucky E.MA students on Lido di Venezia. I was asked to write an anecdote I remember fondly, but instead of describing a specific story, I wanted to tell the most common memory we all shared every day for 5 life-changing months on Lido as the class of 2015/2016 E.MA students. Over the course of these 5 months, we had an exciting trip to Kosovo which was not only eye-opening but very inspirational professionally as well. After the 5 months passed,

During the academic year 2015/2016 the situation of migrants fleeing their war-torn homes remained an important human rights issue. In response to their situation, two students of our class, Laura Maria Calderon and Ioana Delapeta, decided to start an inspiring project called "Music for Human Rights." As part of the project, they organised two concerts, one in Venice where street and professional musicians performed and the second one in Greece, where Syrian and Iraqi refugee musicians performed together with the Philharmonic of Thessaloniki. This project envisions an array of activities, including fundraising concerts; music lessons for children; group music-making for adults; and training of professional and student musicians of the community and of the refugee camps to use music as a tool for building self-esteem, mutual respect, and community. This is happening nowadays in Thessaloniki and different refugee camps in Northern Greece, under the leadership of Laura Maria and the support of different musicians, organizations, volunteers, among others. Another way in which the situation of migrants influenced our year was that several students chose to write their theses about this topic, with which they contributed to a better understanding of the human rights aspects of the migrant crisis.

15





17

Members of the E.MA class of 2016/17 will attest that it is near impossible to come up with just one anecdotal story from our class, for together we have been a hilariously wonderful and wacky group who have produced an eternity of stories. I have 450 words left to try to capture this unique friendship, so here goes... Our moot court was interrupted with protests, anarchists, and a (fake) bomb planted in the Aula Magna- fortunately, Jack Bauer was on hand to diffuse it in time! The little Antoine went missing, but when he came back we couldn't get rid of him, and he has since managed to tour most of Europe to visit classmates in the second semester. We roped the entire EIUC community into a baking competition and ate a year's worth of cheesecake in an afternoon. We toured the whole of the Lido on apartment and pub crawls, spending evenings on the beach and our final days at the lighthouse. We made Lepanto our home and created queues at the kiosk. We salsa danced every Friday night. Our film festival was transformed into a cultural festival, filled with dance, theatre, poetry, photography, film and our Human Rights choir lead by the brilliant Georg. The display of talent, passion, enthusiasm, dedication (and dancing on the table in the Aula Magna) sums up the class of 2016/17 perfectly. We shared ideas and dreams and so much fun. A strange turn of events initiated from criticism for Brexit and an appreciation of Adam led to the formation of Person of the Week Committee, and we celebrated our wonderful classmates and E.MA staff through bizarre and comical photoshopped pictures and anecdotes. Our wonderful student reps Joelle and Hagen scared us all when they brought into the E.MA world a creature with the ability to strike fear and love into the hearts of all: Joegen. The result of an unfortunate Faceswap and ability to trick Facebook with fake accounts, Joegen has found a place in our hearts, and we wouldn't be the same without them. Kosovo was such an amazing experience full of snowball fights, political debates, and life lessons that we took over Istanbul airport sleeping on the chairs, trying to recover. We made best friends and connections around the world that will last a lifetime. Emma documented first semester in a film that still makes us emotional to watch. We celebrated successes and supported each other through difficult political events in our home countries, from referendums in Colombia, to protests in Turkey, and of course Trump. We became a family in the first few weeks on the Lido and remain family today - our super active WhatsApp, Facebook, and postcard exchange groups are evidence of that. We have done so much in a short space of time that our experience cannot possibly be covered in 500 words, but this summarises it for us all...

Home is wherever I'm with EIUC.

In Memory of Jenni Laxén (1974-2015)



The story of our year 07/08 that we will never forget is the story about our Jenni Laxén. Jenni came to Venice when she had just recovered from cancer and with all the energy she brought with her wherever she went, it was almost impossible to understand that she had recently been really ill. Jenni knew that life is too short for spending energy bullshit and she really lived like that during the time we had the privilege to know her. She was a great listener and really took the time to get to know the people around her, and she was probably the person of our class that knew most people in the group. Jenni had a glow that was inspiring and after E.MA she worked with the right to clean water at the Berlin based Water Integrity Network before she once again had to have a battle with cancer. Due to her sister donating stem cells, and her strong will to live, Jenni survived again. But 803 days later, her body couldn't struggle any longer and she died of her third cancer encounter on the 3rd of January 2015, two days before her 41st birthday. A few of us had the opportunity to visit her in the hospital about two months before her death and she was still the same happy, glowing and always joking Jenni. She still had the energy to ask all about our lives and she was as always genuinely interested. And she was still living according to her motto; "more life in the years than years in the life". We are all lucky to have met and got to know such an inspirational person as our beloved Jenni and we will never forget her.

In Memory of Stefania Barichello (1983-2017)

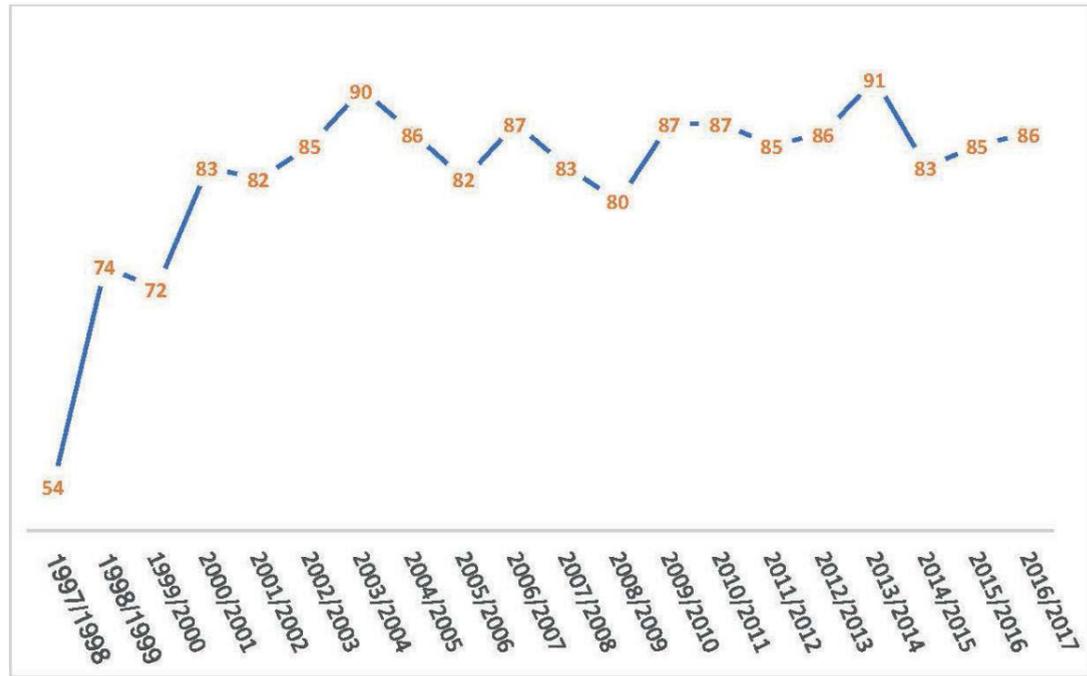


Stefania's life of study and work abroad began in 2009, after she finished her Master in Latin-American Integration at the Federal University of Santa Maria in Brazil. Right after the Master Stefania was selected to work at the Permanent Mission of Brazil at the United Nations in Geneva. Her second Master was at the University of Udine in Italy, with a period at the National University of Cuyo in Argentina, then going on to E.MA as her third Master, with a thesis entitled "Towards a Common European Asylum System: refugee protection in the EU and the need for a more comprehensive burden-sharing approach." By the time Stefania finished the E.MA degree, the issue of the responsibility towards refugees and the vision of their protection under the principles of solidarity and responsibility had already taken over her mind and her heart. She was currently in London carrying out her PhD in Refugee Law at the School of Advanced Study, University of London. The title of her dissertation is "Refugee Law in Latin America: a proposal for burden-sharing and complementary protection.", focusing on humanitarian visas as a paradigm which goes beyond burden-sharing, and pointing out the spirit of solidarity and responsibility towards other countries which has been being developed by Latin America, and consolidated by the term Spirit of Cartagena, which translates the regular revisions made in Action Plans since 1984, which show Latin America's uniqueness in dealing with refugees.

Some statistics on the E.MAlumni community

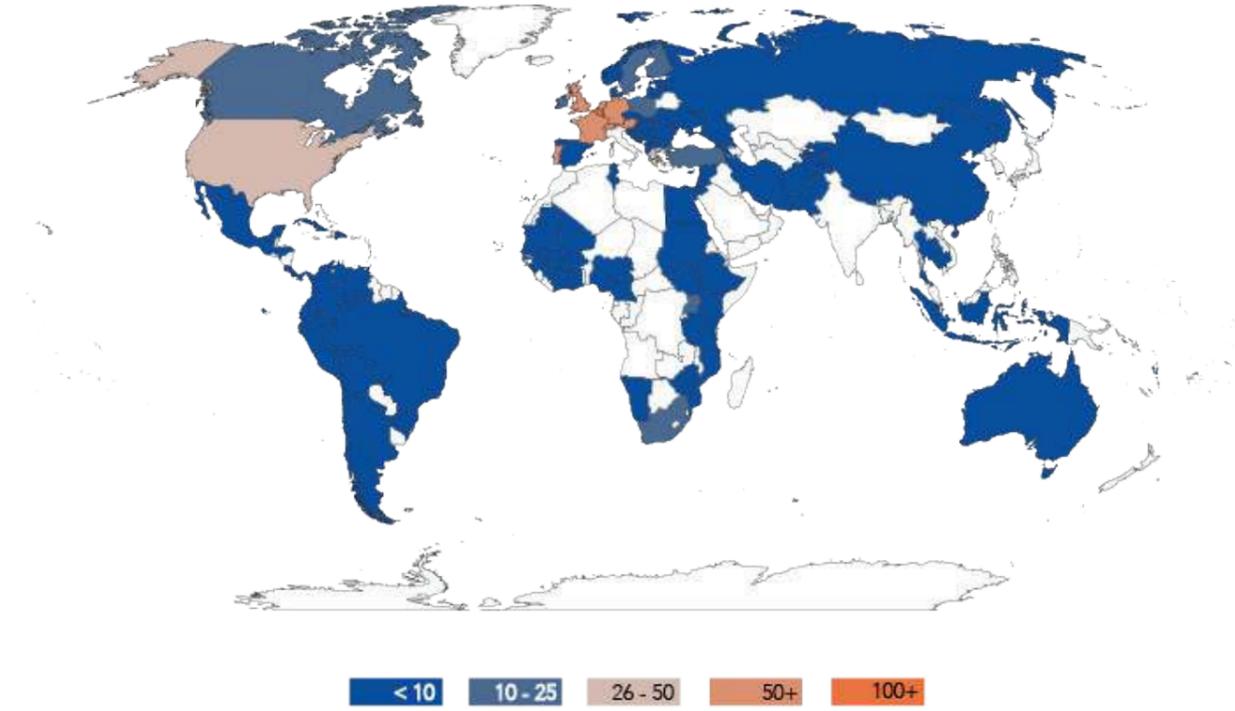
1648

EMA GRADUATES



WHERE WE ARE NOW

Where we are now



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