

Erasmus Mundus: International MSc in Rural Development

Information sheet

The aim of the IMRD program is to train specialists worldwide in integrated rural development, focussed on socio-economic and institutional aspects, through a 2 year master program (120 ECTS) jointly organised by seven European leading institutes in agricultural economics and rural development. Graduates are awarded the International MSc in Rural Development, a joint diploma issued by four European universities.

Partners

Ghent University (Belgium), Agrocampus Ovest (France), Humboldt University of Berlin (Germany) and the University of Cordoba (Spain), in collaboration with Wageningen University (The Netherlands), the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra (Slovakia) and the University of Pisa (Italy).

Learning outcomes and objectives

IMRD brings together leading universities and research institutes in Europe and offers the opportunity to **study the European vision on rural development** and to **experience the diversity of approaches and applications of this European paradigm**. Graduates will have a competitive advantage when working in international organizations who deal with issues of global development, food trade and production of bio-resources, international food policies and so on.

Course structure and mobility

Teaching will be divided into five main modules. The modules are organised over four study periods (2 academic years) and contain a minimum total of 120 ECTS or credits. Students are expected to study in at least three partner institutes of the consortium.

- A **basic module** (in Ghent University, Belgium) with theoretical formation in basic agricultural economic and development theories and methodologies.
- **Two specialized modules** in the 2nd and 3rd study period (in other partners of the consortium), consisting of a range of obligatory courses, combined with elective courses that represent an advanced study in specific competence domains, linked to the Master Thesis topic.
- A **case study** during the summer semester where students and scholars from different institutions and backgrounds share visions and approaches.
- A **Master Thesis** in one of the major disciplines of rural development economics or policies, written during the final period of study.

1st YEAR IMRD	Semester 1 21st September 2009 Ghent University - Belgium Basic Module		
	Semester 2 Ghent University, Belgium Rural Economics and Management	Semester 2 Cordoba University, Spain Sustainable territorial approach to Rural Development	
CASE STUDY	Case Study Pisa University, Italy	Case Study Nitra University, Slovakia	
2nd YEAR IMRD	Semester 3 Wageningen University, Netherlands Rural Sociology and Development	Semester 3 Humboldt University, Germany Institutional and Resource Economics	Semester 3 Agrocampus Ouest, France Sustainable agriculture and Rural Development
	Semester 4 Master Thesis One of the institutes visited previously		

Funding and Scholarships available for students

The Erasmus Mundus (EM) program of the European Commission offered in the previous years approximately 20 scholarships for non-European students to follow the IMRD program per academic year. At the moment the European Union has not decided yet if, and how many, Erasmus Mundus scholarships will be available. Students can however apply and we will contact each of the applicants when more information is available from the European Union. The application for the **Erasmus Mundus scholarship** does not need to be done separately, the IMRD coordination selects the top students from the applicants and passes these names to the European Commission.

The previous scholarship program represented monthly payments (after arrival in Europe) of 1.600 EUR for 20 months.

Students who receive academic admission to the program, but are not offered the EM scholarship can enrol in the program on **other financial means** (private funding, an alternative scholarship, etc.).

Fees and costs

The current tuition fee is 8.000 EUR for 2 years, subject to the yearly approval of the Management Board. The tuition fee covers the institutional subscriptions and the costs for organizing the international master. Other costs (insurances, private language courses not part of the curriculum or the requirements of the program, mobility and educational use of library, informatics or other services) are at the charge of the students.

Admission criteria

The programme offers admission to applicants who appear to have the highest potential for graduate study and who, with the benefit of a graduate education, are the most likely to contribute substantially to their academic or professional fields through teaching, research, or professional practice.

The minimum graduate admission requirements are:

1. A **Bachelor's degree of minimum 3 years with good overall scores** (at least a second class or equivalent, preferably higher) from a university or recognized equivalent. Candidates are expected to have basic science training (demonstrable in the transcripts) in the following fields: **(1) mathematics and/or statistics, (2) agronomy and/or biology and/or environmental sciences and (3) social sciences and/or rural development**. Candidates who cannot present a combined training of these fields will be evaluated on their aptitude, based on experience and knowledge of these fields, as demonstrated by CV or other evidence.
2. The main language of instruction and communication is **English** but elective courses are available in Spanish, French, German and Dutch. Command of the English language is a very important criterion for admission. Applicants must be able to prove their proficiency in English with a recent TOEFL or IELTS certificate or by proof of at least 1 academic year of comprehensive English instruction (all courses of the bachelor or master year in English) at a university or recognized equivalent.

Application procedure for non-EU students

Applicants apply through **an online application form** and send **a full student file by regular mail** to the central coordination, containing all elements to evaluate the candidate (full academic background, diploma's, diploma supplements, obtained grades, language skills, motivation, letters of recommendation, copies of all documents to support the information delivered). The International Management Board makes a selection of students who can be academically admitted and out of this list selects the best students to be proposed for a scholarship.

More information:

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