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Arab Master's programme in Democracy and Human Rights: first week of classes



After three years in **Venice**, the **Arab Master's programme in Democracy and Human Rights** moved this year to **Lebanon**. **Twenty students** from across the Mediterranean and the Middle East arrived to

Beirut to take part in it. It started with a presentation of the programme's four thematic sections: Democracy and Human Rights in the Middle East & North Africa, Governance, Rule of Law & Constitutional Process, Political Transitions to Democracy, and International Relations and the Global System of Human Rights. Students also discovered the programmes new features: the project management week, the project implementation week, the field research week, and the practical human rights week.

The Master's started with **Dr Dima De Clerck's** Historical Overview of the Arab World and was followed by **Dr Karim Bitar's** seminars on the Geopolitics of the Middle East and North Africa. That thematic week allowed students to understand the particular context of the region they are studying, and its historical depth.

After an intense **first week of classes**, students were taken on a hiking trip in Northern Lebanon, walking down into the **Qadisha Valley**, on the steps of Lebanon's highest mountain culminating at 3080 meters. After a five hours walk through the valley, the visit of its monasteries and caves, a walk over its cliffs, the discovery of local cuisine and a hidden waterfall, the students headed to MACAM, a **Museum of Modern Lebanese Art** that was launching the biennale of contemporary art. This day long trip allowed students and faculty to better know each other, breaking the ice while **discovering the country's natural beauty, its cuisine and its artistic expression**.

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