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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 847596

## 1. Vacancy announcement

You are invited to apply for a PhD position on *Scrutinizing Externalization of Migration Management and International Protection Responsibilities*. This PhD project will be carried out within the framework of the project "LIMES – the hardening and softening of borders". The duration of the research project will be four academic years. This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 847596, and brings together different faculties of Maastricht University. The PhD project is co-financed by the Faculty of Law of Maastricht University.

The PhD candidate will receive extensive training, including regular supervision, and training offered by both the LIMES consortium and the Graduate School of the Faculty of Law.

### Application (eligibility criteria and application requirements)

The application must be submitted [by e-mail](#) and in English, and consists of:

- the [application form](#) containing: personal details (including language proficiencies), the LIMES project targeted, and a research proposal and a work plan which responds to the relevant project description (max. 1.000 words). The research proposal must elaborate on the project description as set forth below. (cf. template)
- [Annex I](#): A letter of motivation stating the candidate's qualifications and reasons for interest in the position.
- [Annex II](#): Curriculum vitae, outlining relevant work experience and research output (where applicable). Applicants who have taken a break in their career should indicate this in their application (and in their CV), so it can be taken into account during the selection process.
- [Annex III](#): Ethics self-assessment, based on the standard ethical research principles and the ethical principles of H2020 (cf. template)
- [Annex IV](#): Copy of Bachelor (BA) and (Research) Master (MA) degree and transcript (including GPA)
- [Annex V](#): Proof of proficiency in English (for applicants who are neither native speakers of English nor have followed an English-taught BA or MA); see below for the expected level
- [Annex VI](#): One academic paper (course paper; thesis; academic publication)
- [Annex VII](#): contact information of two references (including e-mail; phone number; mailing address; and relationship to the applicant)

Following receipt of an application, the Programme Office (PO) carries out an eligibility check. In addition to the completeness of the application file, the PO also checks compliance with the [Marie Skłodowska Curie Action \(MSCA\) requirements](#) (1), [minimum standards of academic performance](#) (2), and [language skills](#) (3).

### (1) Marie Skłodowska Curie Action (MSCA) requirements

Early-Stage Researchers (ESR) must on **10 March 2021** be in the **first four years** (full-time equivalent research experience) **of their research careers** and not yet have been awarded a doctoral degree.

Full-Time Equivalent Research Experience is measured from the date when a researcher obtained the degree entitling him or her to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the researcher is recruited, even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged.

**Mobility Rule:** Researchers may not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the Netherlands for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before **10 March 2021**.

Time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention<sup>1</sup>, compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.

### (2) Minimum standards of academic performance

LIMES requires that applicants have reached an overall average Grade Point Average (GPA) of the completed Bachelor of at least 3.4 and completed their Master study with a GPA of at least 3.5 (MA)<sup>2</sup>.

### (3) Language skills

For applicants who are neither native speakers of English nor have followed an English-taught BA or MA, the PO accepts certificates from:

- IELTS test: minimum score overall 7.0 and minimum writing score 6.5
- TOEFL test: overall, internet-based minimum score 100 and minimum writing score 25
- TOEFL test: overall, paper-based minimum score 600
- TOEFL test: overall, computer-based minimum score 250
- A Cambridge certificate: C or higher for the CAE (Certificate in Advanced English).

In case of ineligibility, the PO notifies the applicant by e-mail within ten working days after the receipt of the application.

Maastricht University is committed to nurturing an inclusive culture and a welcoming atmosphere. This inclusiveness strategy has resulted in a very diverse representation of nationalities and cultures. We strongly believe that diversity (including, but not limited to ethnicity, gender, age and (dis)ability) is to our advantage. Creating an inclusive working climate in which students and staff feel a valued member of the UM community is

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<sup>1</sup> 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol.

<sup>2</sup> GPAs are represented on a 1-4 scale, with 4 being the maximum score. The minimum thresholds are in line with the requirements of the major Dutch PhD funding schemes in the SSH sector (Research Talent / PhD in the Humanities). See the FAQ section for elaborate explanation and reference.

therefore a top strategic priority. UM values diversity within its community and encourages you to apply if you are qualified for this position.

In case of equally qualified applicants for the same position, we favour candidates from underrepresented groups in case of comparable qualification. There will be a check of the final selection results for gender and diversity balance and a possible redress.

**The deadline for submitting your application is 10 March 2021.**

Please send your application electronically to [limes@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:limes@maastrichtuniversity.nl).

### **Selection process**

All applicants will be notified by **17 March 2021** at the latest as to whether they have been selected for an interview with the LIMES Cluster Committees. The interviews are expected to take place in the week of 22 March 2021. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, interviews will be held digitally. Please see the application procedure on the website for more information.

### **What we offer**

We offer a dynamic and challenging job in an internationally-oriented organisation where people receive an advanced education and scholars conduct exciting research. You will be part of an international network of top universities and renowned scholars within the field.

We offer a 4-year full-time appointment as PhD candidate in one of the research projects under the umbrella of LIMES. The first year will be a probation period, after a positive assessment the position will be extended with another 3 years.

Remuneration will be according to standard salary levels (CAO VSNU) for PhD students starting with a salary of € 2.395,- with a yearly growth to € 3.061,- gross a month in year 4 (based on a full-time appointment.)

Each year the standard salary is supplemented with a holiday allowance of 8% and an end-of-year bonus of 8.3%.

You have to be willing to move to (the vicinity of) Maastricht. You will be eligible for an allowance for moving costs. You may also be eligible for an allowance for alternative housing. Other secondary conditions include e.g. a pension scheme and partially paid parental leave.

You will be provided with shared office space and a PC.

Maastricht University's Terms of Employment are laid down in the Collective Labour Agreement of Dutch Universities (CAO). Furthermore, local university provisions apply as well. For more information please see the website:

[www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/support/UM-employees](http://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/support/UM-employees).

Estimated starting date: May 2021

## Information

Further information is available on the website [www.limes.maastrichtuniversity.nl](http://www.limes.maastrichtuniversity.nl):

- Application form and instructions
- Host institution, partners involved, employment conditions
- Set-up of the Programme, staff and contact points
- Training and secondment programme
- FAQs

## 2. Selection process

- **Step one: Eligibility check: 10 February – 10 March 2021**

Following receipt of an application, the Programme Office (PO) carries out an eligibility check. In case of ineligibility, the PO notifies the applicant by e-mail within ten working days after the receipt of the application.

- **Step two: First selection round: 11 March – 16 March 2021**

All eligible proposals are assessed by the relevant Supervision Teams. The Supervision Teams create a shortlist of at most four candidates per available position. All proposals are scored on the basis of the selection criteria explained below. The Supervision Teams complete the shortlists as soon as possible, and at the latest by 17 March 2021.

The selection criteria include:

1. Quality of Curriculum Vitae (CV), including study results, and (where applicable) publications
2. Quality of the research project: Topic, coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, innovativeness and feasibility of focus and method, match with candidate profile, appropriate consideration of ethical issues, the project's potential for dissemination and communication
3. Substantial piece of writing (such as master thesis)
4. Compatibility of the research project with research focus of the host unit and external partner

### *Scoring*

A scoring of candidates is made on the basis of the respective criteria.

An **assessment summary report (ASR)**, based on the evaluation criteria and summarising the findings of the supervisors and the reasons behind their decision is provided to rejected candidates by the **end of March** at the latest. A redress possibility is provided and will be explained to rejected applicants together with the ASR.

Up-to-date information about the selection procedure will be posted on the project website.

All proposals shortlisted in the first round are submitted to Maastricht University's Ethics Review Committee Inner City faculties (ERCIC) for an assessment of the proposal and advice on possible risk-mitigating actions. If the ERCIC gives negative advice, the application will not be considered any longer. A replacement candidate will only be invited if there is an eligible applicant with almost equal qualifications, as ascertained by the shortlisting process of the ST.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed of the outcome of the ERCIC advice.

➤ **Step three: Final selection round: (expected in) week of 22 March 2021**

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, applicants will most probably be interviewed digitally by the LIMES cluster committee (LCC), checking the ability of the candidate to explain and defend the research project in a concise manner and to convincingly deal with requests for clarification. Taking into account the application dossiers and performance during the interviews, the LCC scores each applicant on the basis of the pre-defined evaluation criteria.

The resulting ranking list is submitted to the relevant dean for a final check and formal endorsement. At the latest by **early April 2021**, all applicants receive notification of the outcome of this round with a final Assessment Summary Report. The highest ranked applicants in each project are offered a position. The remaining qualified applicants are informed that they are placed on a ranked reserve list. A redress possibility is provided and will be explained to rejected applicants together with the ASR.

### **3. Information on the ethical and legal standards**

Maastricht University (UM) highly values integrity and ethically responsible research. The University strives to maintain scientific integrity and to base research decisions on high ethical standards. UM respects and honours the national and international laws, research standards and principles of professional scientific conduct, as well as encompassing the spirit behind these rules and regulations. Ethical environment at UM Dutch society has, in recent years, demanded greater accountability and transparency from researchers; internationally, funders and peer-review journals have also increased their requirements for research ethics reviews of all research with human participants that is not covered under the WMO legislation ('Wet Medisch-wetenschappelijk onderzoek met mensen' [Medical (scientific) research involving Human Subjects Act]). Regarding research not falling under the WMO, UM has responded to these requirements in the following ways:

1. UM has established its own 'Regulation for Scientific Integrity at Maastricht University'. UM academic staff is expected to adhere to the general principles of professional academic practice at all times.
2. Each discipline group has a Research Ethics Committee (REC). For the Humanities and the Social Sciences, UM has established the [Ethical Review Committee Inner City faculties \(ERCIC\)](#). It encourages researchers to submit their study protocols involving human participants or personally identifiable data for ethical review before the start of research activities. Review by ERCIC takes place on a voluntary basis.

3. A central Research Ethics Committee, UM-REC, has recently been set up by the President of the University to address research requests from particular external funders (particularly the European Research Council) and to serve interdisciplinary, interfaculty research projects. Along with serving these projects, the UM-REC also serves as a 'second chamber', for more difficult applications and appeals from the disciplinary RECs.

4. While the work of the RECs is focused on the ethics approval of research, a new Centre for Research Ethics and Integrity is being developed, dealing with broader questions of ethical integrity and UM policies. The aim of this centre is to bring together discussions on ethical issues ongoing within UM and to involve all researchers in advancing those debates. UM also aims to set up an Ethics Training Board, which can provide Ethics and Legal Trainings. It will provide a website with international, European and local legal and ethical standards (including, for example, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the relevant ethics rules of Horizon 2020). The website will also include FAQs and blogs and discussion boards where researchers can develop their own good practice in the University's research community.

LIMES applicants can consult the website of the Centre for Research Ethics and Integrity at the time of their application; in addition to the guidance on ethical aspects given on the LIMES web page.

The LIMES projects are described in general terms, but will be further developed by the candidate in consultation with the Supervision Team. The ethical issues of the projects can therefore not be foreseen at this stage.

It is expected that some of the projects will involve interviews with people whose existence or profession are affected by borders (for example immigrants), policy advisors from governments, interest groups and other stakeholders. Participants to the interviews will be told of any potential risks and can withdraw at any time. Informed consent will be used, personal data will be kept confidential and data will be stored safely.

Applicants are requested to address the ethical issues in the ethics preliminary assessment when submitting their application. Proposals that are selected for an interview are put forward to ERCIC for preliminary advice on the specific risks posed by the proposed research and mitigating actions that can be taken in the project in order to minimise the risks. The selected candidates are to submit their final research plan for full procedure to ERCIC in cooperation with their supervisors.

Selected candidates receive training in ethics at the first summer school. The ERCIC continues to be available to the candidate and the Supervision Teams for advice on ethical issues during the project.