

LEARN ABOUT COMESA'S MASTERS PROGRAMME IN REGIONAL INTEGRATION



Trade is what drives economies. And there isn't a more sustainable trade than that with your neighbour. The surest way to achieve this is through regional integration. According to the World Bank, regional integration helps countries overcome divisions that impede the flow of goods,

services, capital, people and ideas. These divisions are a constraint to economic growth, especially in developing countries. African nations know this, with several trade blocs such as COMESA established in the continent over the decades. Yet, growth of intra-African trade has remained dismal. And central to

this uninspiring situation is the lack of local manpower to untangle all the technical complexities that need to be untangled for these blocks to work efficiently. Is this degree programme by COMESA the magic bullet? Likely.

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What is the Master's programme all about?

The COMESA Master's Degree Programme in Regional Integration is a postgraduate virtual programme done through a collaboration involving 22 universities in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).



What are the objectives of the programme?

It seeks to provide a sound conceptual, policy and practical training on regional integration, as well as extending access to research opportunities and higher education on regional integration in the COMESA region.

...and the scope?

The programme covers, among others, economics, trade, law, political economy, governance, finance, IT and innovation. It is designed to run for two years, comprising four semesters, ie three semesters of course work and exams, and the last semester for thesis writing/internship at COMESA institutions.



What is so unique about the programme?

It is the only university programme in the region specifically tailored to advance regional integration.

The programme offers tailor-made courses best suited for sound conceptual, policy and practical training to foster all areas of integration in COMESA, including economic, social and political integration.



Should I care about regional integration?

Yes, because integration encourages economic growth through regional trade agreements that reduce trade barriers between countries. And despite Africa having rolled out several blocs, their actualisation has remained sluggish with intra-continental trade being among the least developed in the world. Fully operational, bodies such as COMESA will help the continent change this to take maximum advantage of its fast-emerging market.

How will the programme speed integration?

The programme is designed to primarily address a critical cause of the slow progress of regional integration in the COMESA region, and in the rest of the African continent – limited skills and institutional capacity. Expanding the pool of local experts will not only solve the inability of countries to implement the numerous protocols, decisions and Acts but also strengthen the implementation of various commitments, including legal, economic, social and political areas in COMESA Member States.

How else will reducing human capital deficit help?

It will help speed up domestication of regional rules and procedures including many of those that have been agreed upon by member states, which are not always woven into or operationalised as part of the domestic policy process.

How was the master's programme idea born?

It all began in August 2010, when COMESA Council of Ministers decided to establish a COMESA Virtual University for Regional Integration. In October 2016, COMESA Heads of States approved 22 universities in the region to participate in the programme. COMESA, then, worked with the universities to develop the programme. Thus, COMESA citizens can apply to any of the universities (*see list on last page*).

How do these universities engage with COMESA?

A participating university signs a Memorandum of Understanding with COMESA which defines the scope of the collaboration in delivering the programme. The universities seek internal approvals from their respective Senates and Commission of Higher Education. The programme's platform is hosted by Kenyatta University. The other collaborating universities are free to use their own platforms or partner with Kenyatta University.





Are there specific target groups or it is an open class?

The programme is targeted at government officials working in divisions or units dealing with trade, integration and cooperation; students intending to work as trade officers, trade policy analyst, advisers, researchers, trade attaches; private sector trade practitioners; media practitioners specialising in business, gender, climate and trade.

Any other target groups?

Yes. The programme also targets chambers of commerce, manufacturer and consumer associations, consulates and other diplomatic missions, development organisations dealing with trade and integration issues among others, middle-level trade researchers and consultants.



What are the eligibility requirements?

Besides being in the target groups, applicants must have a 1st degree with 2nd class honours, upper division. Those with 1st degree, lower division, must have five years experience in trade or regional integration. All nationalities can enrol for the course. However, only nationals of the COMESA Member States are eligible for scholarships.



Tell me more about the scholarships...

A limited number of scholarships are available for successful applicants. The scholarship covers tuition fees only. To qualify for the scholarship, one must be admitted in one of the 22 universities, be 35 years old and below by the close of the advertisement for the scholarship. The amount of tuition covered under the COMESA scholarship is based on the tuition charged by each university. However, the scholarship does not cover accommodation, transport, food and other living and administrative costs.

Is my country eligible for the scholarships?

Yes, if it is among COMESA Member States that are also members of the OACPS covered under the Cotonou Agreement. These countries are: Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



How do I apply?

Advertisements for admissions are placed in the respective universities' websites as well as COMESA Secretariat website: www.comesa.int



Where are we now?

By June 2021, seven universities including: Kenyatta University, University of Mauritius, Open University of Mauritius, University of Zambia, l'Institut Supérieur de Gestion des Entreprise (ISGE) of Burundi, University of Zimbabwe, University of Malawi, have signed MoUs with COMESA on the implementation of the programme.

Kenyatta University and the University of Mauritius have already admitted students, while the University of Zambia has finalised arrangements to admit its first cohort of students.



List of participating Universities:

1. University of Burundi – **Burundi**
2. Centre for Studies and Research of Djibouti – **Djibouti**
3. University of Kinshasa – **DRC**
4. Cairo University – **Egypt**
5. College of Business and Economics – **Eritrea**
6. University of Eswatini – **Eswatini**
7. Catholic University of Eastern Africa – **Kenya**
8. Kenyatta University – **Kenya**
9. University of Nairobi – **Kenya**
10. Maasai Mara University – **Kenya**
11. University of Antananarivo – **Madagascar**
12. University of Malawi – **Malawi**
13. Open University of Mauritius – **Mauritius**
14. University of Mauritius – **Mauritius**
15. University of Technology – **Mauritius**
16. International University of Seychelles – **Seychelles**
17. University of Khartoum – **Sudan**
18. Kyambogo University – **Uganda**
19. Makerere University – **Uganda**
20. Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi – **Uganda**
21. University of Zambia – **Zambia**
22. University of Zimbabwe – **Zimbabwe**

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