

Master of Science **Urban Management & Development**



Programme description & features

The MSc in Urban Management and Development is a 1-year English-taught multidisciplinary programme featuring two master tracks offered by IHS, Erasmus University Rotterdam, providing students with the knowledge and skills to tackle complex urban challenges and shape sustainable, resilient cities.

Cities are constantly evolving. By 2050, more than two-thirds of the global population will live in urban areas, generating social, economic, environmental, and spatial challenges. The programme prepares students to analyse these dynamics and contribute to inclusive, forward-looking urban policies worldwide.

Students can deepen their knowledge through one of two specialisations while tailoring their studies to their own interests through diverse focal points within each track. This flexible, transdisciplinary structure allows students to design a programme that fits their professional goals and engage with the urban issues they are most passionate about.

A key feature of the programme is its comparative and practice-oriented approach, which connects theory with real-world cases from cities around the globe. Students develop analytical, communication, and data skills to tackle contemporary urban challenges and apply their learning in hands-on contexts, preparing them for leadership roles in urban development worldwide.

Facilitators

Together with its partners, IHS works at the forefront of urban development, advising governments, training public service staff, and contributing to global discussions on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Collaborating with international leaders such as UN-Habitat, Cities Alliance, ICLEI, and top universities worldwide, IHS brings a unique mix of academic expertise and practical experience into teaching. Students benefit from faculty insights drawn from real-world urban projects, gaining exposure to global trends and local solutions preparing them to implement solutions for city-level challenges worldwide.

International

The IHS classroom is highly diverse, with students from over 35 countries and multiple disciplines, including architecture, planning, engineering, economics, and social and environmental sciences. Many participants bring experience from public and private sectors, NGOs, and international organisations, creating a rich environment where multiple perspectives intersect. This global mix fosters cross-cultural collaboration, peer learning, and professional networking, equipping students to develop adaptable, context-sensitive solutions to urban challenges worldwide.



Photo by Rotterdam Partners

Specialise further

The two specialisations below are part of the MSc Urban Management and Development. Within each specialisation, you get to choose from a number of modules to define your own learning trajectory.

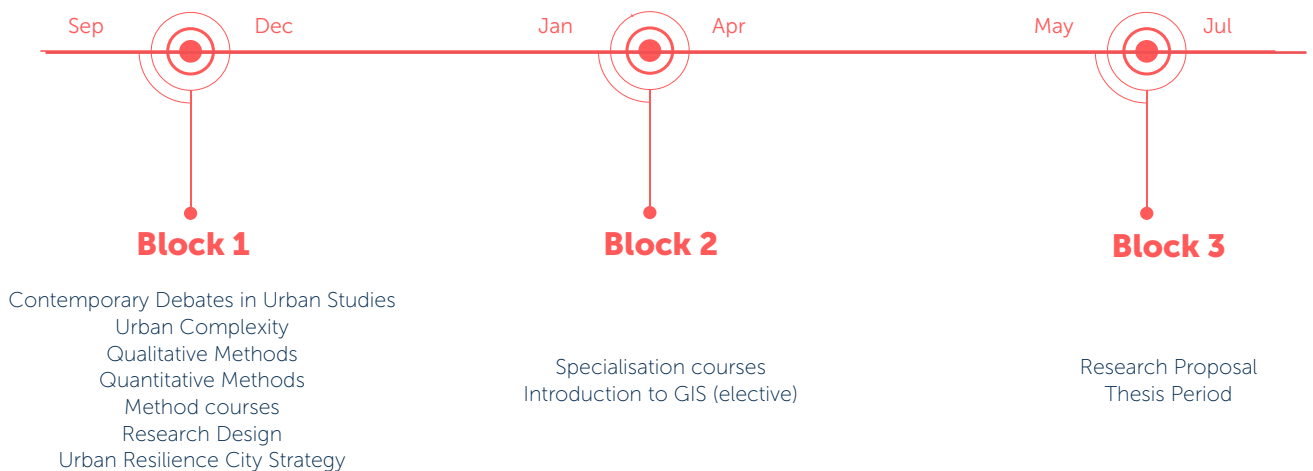
Urban Socio-Spatial Transformation

Urban Environment & Climate Change



SCAN ME

Year structure



Teaching methods

IHS teaching combines theory, research, and practice to equip students with the skills to analyse and manage complex urban systems.

Faculty bring insights from real-world urban projects worldwide, while students learn through lectures, case studies, simulations, group projects, and written assignments. The programme emphasises evidence-based planning using urban data, preparing students to tackle contemporary urban issues. Students also benefit from collaborative exercises that simulate real urban decision-

making processes, fostering problem-solving, critical thinking, and teamwork skills.

A key feature is the project-based master's thesis, with opportunities for fieldwork in Chennai, India, or Nairobi, Kenya. Field visits and projects in Rotterdam provide hands-on experience with city planning, governance, and sustainability, linking classroom learning to tangible urban transformations. Students graduate ready to apply practical, analytical, and collaborative skills to urban development challenges around the world.

Why join this programme?



Benefit from flexible study pathways



Study in Rotterdam, a living urban lab



Gain first-hand experience through fieldwork abroad



Study in a diverse classroom, with over 35 nationalities



Learn from experts with real-world experience



Join a global alumni network with 13,000+ members

Skills graduates gain

- Identify and analyse contemporary urban trends across both the Global North and South.
- Monitor and evaluate urban management policies, considering actors, performance, and local context.
- Design multidisciplinary policies and strategies that integrate physical, economic, environmental, and social dimensions of urban spaces.
- Apply creative problem-solving and strategic planning to improve quality of life in cities.
- Manage diverse stakeholders, communicate effectively, and navigate complex decision-making processes.
- Develop evidence-based policies and actions grounded in applied research and context analysis.
- Conduct academic, applied, and commissioned research on a wide spectrum of urban topics.
- Collaborate with international, cross-sector teams, integrating multiple disciplines and perspectives.
- Use up-to-date methods, digital tools, and data analysis techniques to inform decision-making.



#28

worldwide for Development Studies Top Universities (QS)



#1

worldwide for Public Administration Shanghai Ranking



#5

for Planning & Development Center University Rankings (1000)



#107

worldwide Times Higher Education (500)

Rotterdam: a city with daring urban vision

Iconic architecture, pioneering urban planning, and a celebrated multicultural population have positioned Rotterdam as a global hub of urban innovation. IHS is proud of its long-standing connection to the city, contributing to its rebuilding and reinvention after the devastation of the Second World War.

Set against a striking skyline, Rotterdam offers excellent local and international transport links, safe bicycle paths, and vibrant neighbourhoods, making it easy to explore both the Netherlands and the rest of Europe. Home to more than 170 nationalities, the city's diversity enriches student life and provides a truly international environment. English is widely spoken, ensuring smooth integration for international students. As one of Europe's hub for sustainable urban development, Rotterdam offers students a unique opportunity to observe real-life innovations in resilience, mobility, and climate adaptation.

Rotterdam's motto, "Make it happen" reflects the city's spirit of creativity, innovation, and social impact: values that align with IHS and Erasmus University, providing students with a unique urban learning environment where theory and practice intersect.

Campus

IHS, Erasmus University Rotterdam is located on the Woudestein campus, just 15 minutes by bike from the city centre. The campus offers:



State of the art university library



Theatre



Fitness and sports centre



Tennis court and sports fields



Supermarket, bike repair, salon



Grand café, food court, bar & coffee



International student housing



Metro and tram stops



Funding

On our funding options page (www.ihs.nl/scholarships), you can find information about the following and other scholarships:

- Early Bird Tuition Fee waiver (€ 2000)
- Joint Japan/World Bank Scholarship Programme (JJ/WBSP)
- NL Scholarship Programme (partial, 1 awardee per year)
- Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP)
- Sallie Mae
- COLFUTURO
- CONACYT
- Jean Monnet Scholarship
- The Social Hub Foundation
- La Fundación Mexicana para la Educación, la Tecnología y la Ciencia (FUNED)

More information on funding:

www.ihs.nl/scholarships

Note: Letters of Acceptance (LoA) from IHS often must support scholarship applications. For this purpose, IHS will grant conditional admission to qualified candidates. Funding application procedures take time. Please approach donors and funding bodies at least six months before the start of the course.



Facts & figures

Duration	1 year
Start of studies	September
Credits (ECTs)	60 ECTs
Language	English
Accreditation	Accredited by the NVAO
Part- or Full-Time Status	Full-time
Faculty	Erasmus School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (ESSB)
Tuition fee	EU/EEA & Non-EU/EEA students (institutional fee): € 19,750
Application deadlines	Early Bird deadline EU/EEA & Non-EU/EEA students: 15 April Regular deadline EU/EEA: 1 July & Non-EU/EEA students: 1 June
Course information & application procedure	www.ihs.nl/umd

Early bird

Want to save
**€2.000 on your
tuition fee?**

Then be an Early
Bird: apply before
15 April & submit
your fee before
15 May.

Admission requirements

- A relevant **bachelor's degree*** from a recognised university with a minimum GPA of 6.5 (Dutch grading system), 3.0 (out of 4.0), second class lower, B or an equivalent.
- Evidence of a **sufficient command of English****
- **Working experience** in a relevant field is considered an important asset during the selection procedure.

* Please note that **relevant backgrounds vary per specialisation.**

** More details can be found on our website: www.ihs.nl/umd

Partners



POLIS University
Albania



Renmin University
China



Wuhan University
China



Shanghai Jiao Tong University
China



Xiamen University
China



Sun Yat-sen University
China



Gadjah Mada University
Indonesia

disclaimer

© IHS, Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam. The content in this prospectus is subject to change, therefore no rights can be derived from this text.