



Middle East Studies Programme

Spring 2026

The programme

The Middle East Studies programme at NVIC targets second and third year bachelor students of the humanities, social sciences or related fields. The interdisciplinary programme aims to familiarize students with various topics on the region with a particular focus on Egypt. The programme consists of 5 modules, three of which explore political, economic, and cultural issues taught in English (6 hours per week) and two Arabic language modules (8 hours per week) at various levels.

Please note: MA students may apply to this programme, but will need permission from their university first. Content modules will be tailored to suit requirements of MA level study.

The programme consists of the following courses:

<i>Course module</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>ECTS</i>
	<i>/w</i>	
1. Historical Geographies in the Middle East	2	5
2. Gender in Egypt	2	5
3. Imagining Egypt	2	5
4. Egyptian Colloquial Arabic	6	10
5. Modern Standard Arabic	2	5
TOTAL	14	30

Important Note: Please be advised that the content courses (1-3) are subject to change. All modules will be based on Middle East politics, history, and culture.

Module Summaries:

Middle East Studies Content classes: 5ECTS X 3

In these modules, students will have the opportunity to learn more about the political, economic, historic, social aspects of the Middle East with a focus on Egypt. Egypt continues to be a central player in regional and world politics, facing issues that are both global and local. Egypt also continues to play a significant role in cultural production and political intellectual thought. Through an interdisciplinary approach, which also includes a series of excursions and guest lecturers from academics and practitioners, students are exposed to some of the most salient issues impacting Egypt and the Middle East.

Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (three entry levels): 10 ECTS

The focus in this module is to develop the student's spoken Arabic. Egyptian colloquial Arabic is the most widely understood dialect in the Middle East. Students will be placed in classes depending on their individual levels.



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Modern Standard Arabic (three entry levels): 5 ECTS

The focus in this module is to develop reading and writing skills. There will be a focus on media and reading. Students will be placed in classes depending on their individual levels.

Language Level

Students will be placed in classes depending on their level of Arabic. Levels start from beginners.

Admission

Admission to the programme is subject to the following conditions and is divided into two parts

- The student has successfully completed at least three semesters of a relevant programme;
- The student has permission of a lecturer or study coordinator at their home university to join the programme;
- The student is registered at one of the affiliated universities during their stay in Cairo
- For international students not from one of the affiliated universities, please see the tab for admission for international students,

If maximum capacity is reached, an admission test will be organized.

Spring semester 2026 dates

(1 February – 4 June)

1 February: Orientation Day

2 February: Classes begin

15-19 March: Mid-term exams

22-26 March: Eid al-Fitr break

29 March: Alexandria trip

5 April: Classes for a week

12-16 April: Easter and Sham al-Nessim break

19 April classes resume

24-28 May: STUVAC

31 May – 4 June: Final Exams

Costs and charges

Participants are charged EUR 250 at the beginning of the programme for course and study materials as well as excursions within Cairo. Additional costs may be incurred for excursions outside of Cairo.



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About NVIC

The Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo (NVIC) is an academic institute located on the island of Zamalek, in the heart of Egypt's bustling capital. It is one of five Dutch Scientific Institutes Abroad (NWIB) and is supported by the Research Fund–Flanders (FWO–Vlaanderen). NVIC provides services to six Dutch and three Flemish universities. It offers undergraduate and graduate programmes in Arabic & Islamic Studies, Middle East Studies, and Egyptology & Archaeology. For more information on NVIC, its staff, its activities, and its teaching programmes, visit <http://www.institutes.leiden.edu/nvic/>

Security and safety in Cairo

In all its activities, NVIC adheres to the security and travel advice of the Dutch and Belgian Embassies in Egypt. We forward any travel or security notice to the students. The student's stay in Cairo is, however, voluntary and their own responsibility. NVIC is not accountable for any harm or damage caused by students to third parties during their stay in Cairo, nor for any physical harm or material loss or damage suffered by the students during their stay. Upon arrival, participants of the programme will be required to sign an indemnification statement. Participants also agree to inform NVIC of any physical or psychological condition that could cause problems during their stay in Cairo or harm NVIC in any way. This information is treated confidentially. Travel and health insurance are not covered by the programme. Please inquire with your public or private insurance provider and take the necessary measures.

Application/registration

Application forms on our website must be submitted by 10 November.