



**European Association for  
Public Administration  
Accreditation**

## **EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report**

2016

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of the Public Administration Master's Programme of the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle East (TODAIE).

In consideration of the Self-Evaluation Report of the above programme, the Site Visit Report of 12 August 2016 of the EAPAA Site Visit Team for this programme, and the response of the programme to the draft of the Site Visit Report, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee, at its meeting in Utrecht, The Netherlands, has evaluated this programme against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.

### **1. Accreditation Criteria**

<b>2. Applicability/Eligibility</b>	
2.1 Domain	TODAIE's objectives, in relation to its Public Administration Master Programme, are to help the civil servants specialise in a variety of areas within administrative sciences, to address the needs of administrators and to help training of instructors in the field of Public Administration.
2.2 Geography	Turkey is a Member State of the Council of Europe since 9 August 1949. The geography criterion is thus fulfilled.
2.3 Programme longevity	The programme fulfils the longevity criteria.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	The programme is delivered in partly different formats and to different target groups. The MA curriculum in PA offers a variety of intertwined variants. These are all offered in TODAIE's own spacious building in the centre of Ankara very close to all government buildings. The students who are serving outside Ankara stay in the student home next to TODAIE's main building.
4 Category of accreditation	Although TODAIE asked for accrediting its programme as a second cycle degree, it was agreed during the site visit that the programme is actually more in line with an executive/mid-career MA programme in Public Administration. All students have a first degree and several years of professional civil service experience, and they return to their civil service jobs after graduation. From the point of view of the length and intensity of the programme, but also on the basis of its contents and target groups, TODAIE's MA programme is a typical mid-career programme for public officials working in the government sector.
<b>5. Standards</b>	

5.1 Domain of public administration	This MA programme is clearly in the domain of public administration. A great majority of courses are on subjects linked to public administration and specific public policies.
5.2 Mission of the programme	The mission of this programme is very strongly linked to the history of TODAIE itself. A precise set of credible educational objectives is formulated. The implementation depends largely on the concrete supervision of the students by professors and other faculty members. The programme states its educational philosophy and mission and has an orderly process for developing appropriate strategies and objectives consistent with its mission, resources, and constituencies.
5.3 Level	The submitted program is on the level of a Master programme.
5.4 Practice and internships	The relations with civil service practice are strong due to the specific jurisdiction of TODAIE as an arms-length institution of the Turkish government.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components	The core PA component of the curriculum is very modest. The size of the core curriculum is insufficient to cover a range of topics and disciplines usually considered as core elements of a PA curriculum. The wide range of elective courses, for students with very diverse educational backgrounds, carries the danger that students' knowledge on core PA may remain incomplete. During the 2009 EAPAA accreditation, the TODAIE programme had four compulsory courses. The EAPAA accreditation report requested that TODAIE "should expand the scope of compulsory courses dealing with the most relevant issues of public administration." Despite such explicit recommendation, the programme has taken an opposite direction and reduced the number of core compulsory courses.
5.5.1.2 Other Components	Different variants of the MA programme are clearly communicated. However, in the light of the problems described above, the specialized elective courses are likely to substitute for core PA courses.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme	Didactically, the courses rely on a broad range of methods and modes of delivery. Both the teaching methods used and the "size" of the course load correspond to the needs and specifics of the target group. The high dropout rate reflects some concerns related to study load.
5.5.1.4 Intake	All students are civil servants with at least 4 years of civil service experience. The entry into the programme is very competitive and therefore the general level of incoming students is high. At the same time, the academic (not practical) knowledge of PA of the incoming students may be relatively modest.
5.5.2 Length	The length of the MA curriculum in TODAIE is in line with national legislative requirements as well as international standards.
5.5.3 Results	The programme lives up to the expectations of key stakeholders in terms of the final qualifications of the graduates. While the employers are

	unquestionably satisfied with the level of education provided by TODAIE, there are some concerns about the academic level of graduates. The academic quality of the Master theses is rather low.
5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment	While the governance framework seems to provide a clear structure, it is dominated by the General Director's role. This might limit the influence of academic / scientific considerations in decision making. On the other hand, the key decision making bodies of TODAIE are composed mostly of TODAIE academic staff. The decision-making mechanisms of TODAIE allow for relatively fast and flexible decision-making without much red tape.
5.6.2 Curriculum Development	The bodies and decision-making mechanisms mentioned above are used to guide the continuous evaluation and development of programme curriculum. In addition, consultations with key public administration institutions are used to guide curriculum development: in 2014, for instance, the Migration and the Disaster Management specialization were launched in response to demand perceived on the part of the relevant government agencies.
5.6.3 External Reviews	Because there is no national evaluation system that TODAIE has to be part of, the EAPAA accreditation process is the only external evaluation of the programme (first in 2009, and currently in 2016). however, some principal recommendations of the previous EAPAA report have not been fulfilled.
5.7 Student Assessment	The assessment of students' performance with regards to individual courses is usually implemented by a balanced scheme of mid-term and final exams. A wide variety of assessment methods are used. In general, therefore, the student assessment process and practices are in line with the EAPAA guidelines.
5.8 Programme Jurisdiction	The jurisdiction of the MA programme under review is adequately organised.
5.9.1 Faculty nucleus	There a sufficient number of qualified faculty members to cover the different variants of the curriculum and specialisations.
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications	Selection of personnel to academic positions is organized through an open competition tailor-made for a certain pre-selected candidate, which seems to be a broadly accepted practice in Turkey. There is extremely little faculty mobility internationally. Research activities of TODAIE carry a national focus. As a rule, TODAIE faculty members do not participate in competitively funded research projects either internationally or nationally, as their research funds are allocated by the Turkish government. Research activities of the faculty tend to be overshadowed by teaching and administrative obligations (including the administration of entrance exams into Turkish civil service and ad hoc tasks from the government).
5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities	The gender balance is good. There is no information available on the representation of ethnic minorities in the faculty.

5.10 Admission of Students	The admission of students takes place in a transparent, fair and highly competitive manner, based on a standardised written test.
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities	The supportive services and facilities are adequate to realize the programme.
5.12 Student Services	There is a system of tutoring of students, which seems to be adequately developed. Students were generally positive about the services of TODAIE.
5.13 Public Relations	There is no a special PR unit. As TODAIE is well-known among the Turkish public sector and all students come from the civil service, there is no need for too extensive public relations among target groups.
<b>6 Additional Criteria Score: N.A.</b>	Not applicable.

## 2. Conclusion

Based on all material and especially the report of the EAPAA site visit team, the Accreditation Committee has evaluated your programme.

TODAIE is an important entity in the Turkish civil service, and plays a substantial role in the development of public administration in the country. The MA programme under review is a well-established and highly recognized study programme within the Turkish administration. The arms-length status of TODAIE from government ensures the (financial) sustainability of the MA programme and of the entire TODAIE. At the same time, the academic activities of TODAIE remain quite independent from political/administrative influence. TODAIE has a high degree of autonomy and flexibility in developing its MA programme.

Although TODAIE asked for accrediting its programme as a second cycle degree, it was agreed during the site visit that the programme is actually more in line with an executive/mid-career MA programme in Public Administration. From the length and intensity of the programme but also from its contents and target groups, the TODAIE's MA programme is a typical mid-career programme for public officials working in the government sector.

The MA programme under review has several positive features that satisfy or even exceed the respective evaluation standards. Students, employers and alumni alike are very satisfied with the MA programme. The students are eager to participate, and they belong to the top of the new graduate students in the country when they enter the programme. Admission regulations are transparent and fair, and ensure a high quality of students. Classes are very small (up to 25 students per class) which allows for the use of interactive teaching methods and an individual approach to students both in the teaching and assessment process. Students receive thorough and personalised feedback for their work.

A great asset for TODAIE are its close relations with the practice of public administration. The core faculty is well-known in Turkish administration and public sector employers value highly education received from TODAIE. The fact that all students are civil servants enables them to learn not only from faculty members, but also from each other. Some of TODAIE's alumni are among the top civil servants in Turkey. Employers also support the way the MA programme is provided in two variants: as a daytime programme and evening programme. This is a good way to fulfil the mission of the programme in improving the knowledge and skills of Turkish civil servants.

The facilities and services are mostly sufficient and in some cases good. TODAIE's location is excellent in the middle of several central government institutions. The building and affiliated student hostel

provides a good venue for educating civil servants from central government as well as from outside Ankara (and from abroad). The library has some deficiencies but is functional.

However, we identified three problematic aspects of the programme: the curriculum structure, the insufficiency of the research basis, and the high dropout rate of students.

First, the curriculum is generally of good quality and students have a lot of choice to adapt the programme to their specific needs and interests. This strength of the programme is also its weakness: the large freedom in composing the programme by individual students may lead to a risk that students compose a rather one-sided programme. The core PA component of the curriculum is very modest; all students must take only one course in PA: Public Administration (plus two electives from a category 51 “Public Administration”). The size of the compulsory core curriculum is insufficient to cover a range of topics usually considered as core elements of a PA curriculum. There is an inadequate role for traditional courses in PA curricula such as public finance, public policy and public management. The compulsory PA core of the curriculum must be strengthened in these fields. It is unacceptable that TODAIE did not follow an explicit recommendation of the previous EAPAA accreditation and even moved to an opposite direction by reducing the number of core compulsory courses in the curriculum.

Second, although the teaching staff is highly committed and TODAIE has a strong faculty nucleus, its research activities remain insufficient. Publications are in most cases in Turkish language and published by Turkish national publishers with only a handful of articles published in international peer-reviewed journals in PA. This means that a great majority of faculty members are unknown in international academic community in PA, and their research has not been peer-reviewed and acknowledged by international peers. This is further cemented by the evidence that TODAIE faculty members do not participate in competitively funded research either internationally or nationally, as their research funds are allocated by the Turkish government. All in all, research activities of the faculty tend to be overshadowed by teaching and administrative obligations. These problems are also recognised by the leaders of TODAIE but their existing incentive system does not sufficiently value internationally published research in top PA journals. Questionable scientific basis is also reflected in the teaching process (as the course syllabi and MA theses do not contain globally recognised fundamental texts of PA) and in the descriptive character of MA theses (instead of demonstrating critical thinking as well as theoretical, analytical and methodological skills of graduates).

Third, a weakness of TODAIE’s MA programme is related to a high dropout rate – also fully recognised by TODAIE leadership. A high dropout rate reflects some concerns related to study load. For thesis-option students, writing a thesis after a formal year of studies, in parallel with full-time work, is clearly a bottleneck on their way towards graduation. But even more than this, we are concerned about the format and substance of final theses. The length of the thesis is unprecedented (200-250 pages) which clearly contributes to the dropout problem. In general, neither theses nor term projects seem to have clear standards: no minimum and maximum word limits, and no standards for the content.

The biggest challenge for the further development is related to a changing mission of TODAIE. The objective is to become more internationally-focused by the creation of programmes for foreign students, by opening branches in other countries, by offering financial support (travel and grants) to students from Africa, Middle East and Balkans. More Turkish-speaking foreigners will be admitted also into the Master’s programme under review. This will require structural reforms from the management of TODAIE, recruiting additional staff (both academic and support) with language skills;

changing the curriculum towards a more international/comparative approach; the use of international teaching materials; faculty members will have to improve their expertise in comparative administration and specific countries/regions in particular; and the national background of faculty members will need to go beyond Turkey. This will also provide a higher requirement for research activities of TODAIE staff, and for faculty mobility.

**Based on the above evaluation of the specific criteria, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee concludes that this programme meets the criteria for accreditation conditionally, for three years.**

**Of the several recommendations from the site visit report, the following must be addressed for the accreditation to be extended beyond this period:**

- 1. Curriculum revision with the aim of strengthening the compulsory Public Administration core of the curriculum.**
- 2. Increasing the exposure of the faculty to the international scientific community in the fields of Public Administration, Public Management, and Public Policy, with the aim of strengthening the international visibility of the faculty's research.**
- 3. To systematically address complex issues related to a high dropout rate, for instance, by revising the standards for the Master theses and term projects.**