



[MECAM Papers Series: Guidelines for MECAM Authors](#)

The MECAM Papers series offers concise but well-founded analyses of social, cultural, and political realities in the contemporary Maghreb, covering the period since roughly 2011.

The MECAM Papers are an online series inspired by the MECAM's guiding theme: namely, seeking to explore the link between multidimensional disparity and the possibilities of building and negotiating future models of society in today's Maghreb. Interdisciplinary, transregional, and intergenerational, MECAM's research revolves around a central topic: "Imagining Futures – Dealing with Disparity."

The MECAM Papers series reaches out to a broader, interested audience, including the media, political foundations, NGOs, academia, artists, practitioners, and members of the business community, allowing authors to engage with a readership beyond just expert circles and to exchange ideas with different segments of society.

Each MECAM Paper is published in English, French, and Arabic.

MECAM Papers' authors come from the Centre's network, i.e. from among former and current members of the MECAM bodies and consortium partner institutions, short- and long-term fellows, principal investigators, staff in Tunisia and Germany, associated researchers and projects, as well as invited speakers for the various activity formats. If appropriate, external authors will be invited to contribute to the series, too. If you are unsure about your eligibility, please contact the editor or the MECAM office.

All MECAM Papers will be assigned a unique DOI and stored at the MENAdoc repository of the University and State Library Saxony-Anhalt in Halle (Saale), Germany, under <https://www.menalib.de/en/vifa/menadoc/mecam-papers/>, and linked on the MECAM and GIGA websites, see <https://mecam.tn/mecam-papers/> and <https://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/research-and-transfer/projects/merian-center-advanced-studies-maghreb-mecam-imagining-futures-dealing-disparity>.

The current editor of the MECAM Papers is Steffen Wippel (steffen.wippel@giga-hamburg.de), the MECAM publication manager at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg.



Please send your suggestions to the MECAM Papers editor. They should include a brief abstract with the guiding questions as well as a short bio of the proposed author(s).

Exposé

Authors are asked to propose a topic for publication in a short exposé (maximum one page) in English, which will be discussed with the editor. The better conceived it is, and the better coordinated with the editor too, the easier it will be to write the text.

Exposés should contain the following:

- **Thesis** – Show the relevance of the topic and situate it in a wider context.
- **Arguments** – Present the most important aspects and “evidence” of the thesis.
- **Context** – Put forward your perspectives and/or recommendations.

Structure

First Page

The first page stands alone. It summarises the relevance of the topic, the key points, and the recommendations.

- **Title (maximum 14 words / maximum 70 characters)**¹: The title should be concise, and eye-catching. It should make a statement and arouse the reader’s interest; therefore, please try to avoid using question marks and ambiguities.
- **Lead paragraph (maximum 60 words / maximum 400 characters)**: This should make the reader want to continue reading. Present the text’s thesis and explain the relevance and, where appropriate, the topicality of the subject.
- **Analysis (maximum 215 words / maximum 1,200 characters)**: In three to four bullet-point paragraphs succinctly state the article’s main findings and assessments.
- **Context (maximum 70 words / maximum 400 characters)**: Provide (policy) recommendations and/or perspectives on possible developments.

¹ This always includes spaces, footnotes, and bibliography.



- **Keywords:** Include the relevant country or region as well as three to four meaningful and commonly used terms on the topic. Keywords enable libraries to index the article.
- The first page does not contain footnotes, references, biographical information, figures, or tables.
- The first page is always provided in English and French, later to be translated in Arabic. Authors are requested to prepare an English and, if possible, a French version.

Main Text (10,000 characters, including spaces)

The language should be easy to comprehend. MECAM Paper articles are not academic texts and should thus be intelligible to the wider public. A MECAM Paper offers the opportunity to present relevant research findings to a broader audience and provide assessments of political, societal, and economic developments.

Style

- The MECAM Paper informs a general audience about research findings in easily understandable language and presents specific MECAM expertise without using excessive explanations or complicated technical jargon.
- Formulate clear and concise sentences. To help readers better identify who the relevant actors are, please use the active voice (“Researchers have found that...”) when writing and, when possible, avoid the passive voice (“It has been found by researchers that...”) and the nominal style (“The finding of researchers is that...”).
- Refrain from using loanwords and jargon. If you must use such terms, make sure to explain them so that they are understandable to a general audience. Try to avoid foreign-language quotes; only use them when absolutely necessary, and then translate them into the language of the paper.
- Use acronyms sparingly. When using an acronym for the first time in a text, please place it in parentheses following the spelt-out name/term it refers to (e.g. Middle East and North Africa (MENA)).
- Conclude the main text with observations that both highlight consequences and offer a perspective (and, if applicable, predictions, scenarios, “if...then...” assessments, etc.). Do not summarise the text here again. Statements like “it remains to be seen” are taboo.



Text

- Please submit your text preferably in English. In exceptional cases, the contribution may also be submitted in French, but only after prior consultation with the editor.
- For English, use British spelling and hyphenation rules (if unsure, see Oxford English Dictionary, <https://www.oed.com>); “-ise” not “-ize” and “non-democratic” not “nondemocratic.”
- Use few and short subheadings in order to facilitate structure and help to guide the reader. Please use “meaningful,” content-explaining headings and subheadings (i.e. not “Introduction,” “Conclusion,” “Summary,” etc.).
- Avoid using too many footnotes.
- Keep literature and source references to a minimum (please note the maximum of 15 references). They are used to recommend additional reading rather than serve as evidence of scientific standards.
- Follow the Harvard Citation Style (see below) for references; for the in-text references use brackets in the text (Author Year or Author Year: Page[s]; e.g. Miller 1981: 22–28).
- Do not cite URLs in running text or footnotes, only in the reference list.
- Always ensure that figures/images are of good quality, are clearly distinguishable when printed in black and white, and can be formatted by the editor. Please send the illustrations as separate, clearly labelled files (preferably in .jpg format). Provide the titles and sources in the text, separate from the actual figures/images. You (the author) are responsible for obtaining permission to use copyrighted images.
- Be sure to tick the “Include textboxes, footnotes and endnotes” option in the “Word Count” dialogue box in Word to ensure that you do not exceed the character count.
- Please do not apply any pre-defined formatting styles to your paper. You may use italics for foreign-language terminology and formulations (e.g. transcriptions from non-European languages), but not for names of organisations, parties, agreements, and so forth. No other form of emphasis is permitted – the use of underlining or boldface is to be avoided.

Punctuation

- Serial comma (e.g. “one, two, and three”).
- Double quotation marks, with single quotation marks for quotes within quotes.
- Commas and full stops always precede closing quotation marks.



- Use rounded quotation marks (“...”) not "straight" ones. Please pay attention not to use German („...“) or French (« ... ») quotation marks.
- Quotes longer than 50 words should be set off from text. Source appears after the final full stop in the quote (e.g. ... the paper was submitted. (MECAM 2023: 19)).
- All quotations should follow the original text exactly in wording, spelling, and punctuation. Any additions by the author should be indicated by square brackets ([abc]). Indicate omissions by ellipsis points within round brackets ((...)).
- No space after a slash separating single words.
- En dash with spaces, not em dash without spaces
 - o Use en dash in date/number ranges (e.g. “2003–2010”) and when expressing connection or relation between two or more things (e.g. “Xi–Li administration,” “state–society relations”), as it can often signify “to,” “through,” “and,” or “between.”

Capitalisation

- Use “down” style except in direct titles (e.g. “the British prime minister,” “Prime Minister David Cameron,” etc.).
- Capitalise the full names of legislative and deliberative bodies, departments, bureaus, and offices.
 - o Lowercase the generic names for such bodies when used alone – for instance, in subsequent mentions (e.g. “The Ministry of Defence has awarded contracts worth GBP 3.2 billion for the upkeep of its navy fleet. The ministry said the deal would secure 7,500 jobs.”).
 - o However, “Congress,” “Parliament,” “the Senate,” “the Supreme Court,” and similar terms are usually capitalised, unless used in an overtly generic sense (e.g. “The agreement established a new national parliament”).

Years and Dates

- Inclusive year ranges are not abbreviated (e.g. 1989–1995).
- Slash (/) can be used to indicate the last part of one year and the first part of the next (e.g. “winter of 1966/1967”).
- The “2000s” cannot be used to refer to the period 2000–2009. Instead, use specific range (e.g. 2000–2004) or phrase (e.g. “first decade of the twenty-first century”).



- Decades: 1970s.
- Date format: 1 January 2009.

Latin Abbreviations

- The abbreviations “e.g.” and “i.e.” are not followed by a comma and can only be used in footnotes, tables, figures, and in-text references/citations. If used in running text, they should be confined to parentheses.

Headings and Subheadings

- Use headline-style capitalisation; as part of that, capitalise also the second word of all hyphenated compounds.

Figures and Tables

- Use headline-style capitalisation for titles; as part of that, capitalise also the second word of all hyphenated compounds.
- Separate date ranges from rest of title with a comma.
- Use usual sentence-style capitalisation for row and column headers.
- Order notes, source info, and significance values according to the Chicago Manual of Style.
- Figures takes a full stop after the number (Figure 1. ...), tables a colon (Table 1: ...).

Table 1: Number of Anti-Corruption Initiatives in Europe, 1997–2007

	...†	
		...*

Source/Sources: Place source info here (followed by period).

Note: Place notes that apply to the entire table or figure here (followed by period).

† Place notes that apply to specific parts of the table/figure here (followed by period). If there is more than one, they are listed on separate lines.

* If there is more than one note, they are listed on separate lines.



Numbers, Percentages, and Currency

- Spell out “zero” through “nine”; write “10” through “999,999” as numerals.
- Examples: seven students; 386 signatures; 8,000 soldiers; 786,566 shipments.
- Spell out “million,” “billion,” and “trillion” when preceded by “one” through “nine,” “10” through “999,” or fractional quantities.
Examples: four million people; 4.7 billion tonnes; 999 trillion litres; 3,786,566 banks.
- Remember to maintain consistency when multiple numbers appear in the same sentence or paragraph and belong to the same general category.
Example: “The population is estimated to be between 4 million and 4.3 million.”
- Always give percentages as numerals with “per cent” in running text (e.g. 13 per cent); however, the symbol (%) can be used in figures, tables, and footnotes.
- Write currency in numerals (but use “million,” “billion,” “trillion”) and with ISO code in front of the figure (e.g. USD 2; CNY 47 billion; EUR 700,000).

Social Titles and Academic Degrees

- Mr., Ms., Dr., Prof. but BA, MA, PhD

Foreign Party and Organisation Names

- For the English text, either English term/translation (original-language term, abbreviation) or original-language term (English term/translation, abbreviation) – for example, Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT) or Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers’ Party, PT). Preference for the English term/translation or the original-language term should be applied consistently throughout the paper. Correspondingly for the other MECAM Papers publication languages.

Information about the Author(s) and Related MECAM Research and Literature

Please include all relevant author information (i.e. name; academic degrees; current activities, tasks, and areas of research; e-mail address; personal website) for the “About the Author” section. When necessary, the editor will complete these sections. The “About the Author” section is always provided in English, French, and Arabic.



References

Follow the Harvard Citation Style:

In-text citations

- Present in-text references as follows: (Author[s] Publication year) or (Author[s] Publication year: Page[s]) – for example, (Maihold 1996: 62–91; Johnson and Smith 2008; Cusack, Fitzgerald, and Hu, 2001: 356). If your source has more than three authors, only name the first author in conjunction with “et al.” – for example, (Dombois et al. 1997). If you cite different sources by the same author from the same publication year, distinguish them by adding lower case letters to the publication year – for example: (2000a, 2000b). Do not use “ibid.”/“ib.” or “ff.”/“f.” Instead, repeat the names and publication year and list the page numbers in full.

Reference list

- Please limit yourself to 15 references.
- List all (and only) cited authors (forenames spelled out) and sources in an alphabetical bibliography at the end of the text. Make sure that entries are complete! Do not forget to include access data for your Internet sources – for example, (DD.MM.YYYY). Single-digit dates do not take a zero (e.g. 1 January not 01 January). For titles in non-European languages, translate and place in parentheses. Please indicate further editions of works (e.g. a second edition) by placing a superscript number before the publication year – for example, “Meyer, Ewald (²1999).”

Book with multiple authors

Surname, Forename, Forename Surname, and Forename Surname (Publication year), *Title*, Place of publication: Publisher.

Edited books

Surname, Forename (ed.) (Publication year), *Title*, Place of publication: Publisher.

Example: Alcántara Sáez, Manuel (ed.) (2008), *Politicians and Politics in Latin America*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.



Articles in edited books

Surname, Forename (Publication year), Title, in: Forename Surname (ed.), *Title of edited volume*, Place of publication: Publisher, p–pp.

Example: Stone Sweet, Alec (2008), *Constitutions and Judicial Power*, in: Danielle Caramani (ed.), *Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 217–239.

Journal articles

Surname, Forename, and Forename Surname (Publication year), Title, in: *Title of journal*, [if in doubt: Place of publication,] Volume, Issue, p–pp.

Example: Hochstetler, Kathryn, and Margaret E. Edwards (2009), *Failed Presidencies: Identifying and Explaining a South American Anomaly*, in: *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, 1, 2, 31–57.

For journals, it is usually not necessary to specify the DOI or URL, except in the case of series that are difficult to find.

Internet documents

Surname, Forename (Publication year), *Title*, www.xxx.yy/zzzzz (DD.MM.YYYY).

Title of document, in: *Name of online newspaper or series*, www.xxx.org/zzzzz (DD.MM.YYYY).

Alternatively, give as much and as consistent information (author, title, institution, place and date of publication) as possible.

Note: Also compare previously published MECAM Papers as examples of structure and format requirements.



Publishing Procedure

- After agreeing on the topic, the author sends the first draft to the editor within the given submission deadline. Please submit separate files for page 1 and the rest of your text.
- If you would like a portrait photo for the GIGA website, please send it with your manuscript.
- The author revises the manuscript according to the comments and instructions within the given deadlines, if necessary several times.
- The MECAM Paper series is editor-reviewed; given the intended format and readership, external peer review is not envisaged, except in special cases relating to subject matter and content.
- Once the final draft has been accepted, the editor forwards the manuscript to the English copy editor and the author approves the final English version. (If the original text is in French, the procedure applies accordingly.)
- The corrected manuscript is then sent for translation into Arabic and French with the author's subsequent approval.
- Finally, the paper goes into production; final approval of the PDF is done in consultation with the author.
- The author signs the declaration of consent to make the document available on the MENAdoc repository of the University and State Library Saxony-Anhalt, before the text is uploaded to the MENALIB and MECAM websites.