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CURRICULUM FOR THE
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN
**COMPARATIVE SOCIAL
POLICY AND WELFARE.**



Joint Master's Degree Programme
Comparative Social Policy and Welfare in English,
organised jointly with
Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania) and
University of Tampere (Finland)



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§ 1 Aims and Profile of Qualifications

(1) The Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare has been designed to supplement students' academic credentials and enhance professional career prospects as highly qualified analysts and applied researchers within national, European or international social policy organizations in the areas of welfare management and social policy development. Graduates will be able to apply acquired skills in support of evaluating social programmes. Students will have an opportunity to acquire expertise in an academic environment designed to encourage challenging ideas as well as both critical and creative thinking with regard to contemporary welfare issues and social policies currently in place within various European countries. The program can strongly benefit experts and experienced professionals in the field who wish to continue academic studies as well as strengthen and update professional expertise in this field.

(1.1) Programme Objectives

Educational objectives in the field of social science studies include (but are not limited to):

- a) Understanding the European dimension of social policy and welfare.
- b) The ability to engage in open and critical examination comparing fields of social policy and welfare.
- c) Expertise in understanding theories of social policy and welfare.
- d) Acquiring information and understanding how to successfully apply and conduct research in fields of social policy and welfare in countries with different welfare systems.
- e) Knowledge and understanding of methodology and sociological research methods.
- f) Knowledge and understanding of comparative and interdisciplinary welfare and social policy research and social data research.
- g) Intercultural competence skills.
- h) The ability to express oneself clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing in order to develop, complete and defend academic papers and participate in lectures.
- i) The ability to meet various professional demands in the fields of social policy, welfare, social and welfare statistics, social security systems, labour policy, poverty, gender studies, etc.
- j) To support academic mobility and job opportunities for social policy experts in Europe throughout the programme.

In addition, the programme supports strong proficiency in English.

(1.2) Professional fields and programme relevance for the labour market and further academic study

Potential career opportunities: professions in the field of social sciences; social research and analysis, NGO and NPO sectors; the public sector; European and international institutions; publishing; the cultural sector; international co-operation; and preparation for further graduate study.

(2) Concept for the Joint Master's Programme

The curriculum for the Master's degree programme was jointly designed by three partner universities: Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania), Johannes Kepler University Linz (Austria) and the University of Tampere (Finland). The development of the Joint Master's degree programme development was financed by the European Union.

§ 2 Admission

(1) In compliance with § 54 para. 1 of the Universities Act, the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare is part of the area of Social Sciences.

(2) The designated partner university refers to each university participating in the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare: University of Tampere, Mykolas Romeris University and Johannes Kepler University Linz. The designated home university refers to each student's home university where the student was first enrolled. Admission to the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare requires official admission to study at all three partner universities.

(3) Admission to the Master's degree programme requires the successful completion of a Bachelor's degree programme in Social Policy, Social Work, Political Science or an equivalent degree in one of the Social Sciences (Bachelor or Master's degree or Diploma degree program). An undergraduate level background of university studies at the Bachelor's degree level in the area of social policy/welfare and qualitative/quantitative methods is required.

(4) Successful completion of a Bachelor's degree in Sociology or Social Economics at the Johannes Kepler University Linz meets the prerequisites for admission to the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare in any case.

(5) Applicants who successfully fulfil the admission requirements may apply for admission to the Joint Master's Programme of Comparative Social Policy and Welfare at one of the partner universities. Admission will be based on the applicant's educational background and strong proficiency in English. Applicants must submit certificates of English courses taken (level C1 or C2) or must submit a score from one of the following tests: TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

(6) As the admission procedure is organised jointly with each partner university, the number of university spots is limited, and each university will apply the admission criteria correspondingly. Admission requirements are stated in the joint agreement. Students will be asked to submit the following: the completed application form, a letter of motivation, a current curriculum vitae, certificates (in the original and translated into German or English), proof of proficiency in English (certificates from English language courses level C1 or C2 or TOEFL - Test of English as a Foreign Language - or IELTS - International English Language Testing System - scores), a recent passport-size photo, and a photocopy of the ID page in the applicant's passport.

(7) Registration and tuition fees will be regulated and charged by the students' home university. Students from the partner universities enrolled in the programme are required to pay the Austrian Student Union fee at the Johannes Kepler University Linz.

§ 3 Structure

(1) The Master's programme comprises 120 ECTS credits and corresponds to a period of study of at least four semesters, or two years, in compliance with the corresponding regulations determined by governing partner institutions.

Notation

Mandatory Subjects / Modules	75 ECTS Credits
Master's Thesis	30 ECTS Credits
Master's Thesis Seminar	10 ECTS Credits

Internship / Practicum	5 ECTS Credits
Total:	120 ECTS Credits

(2) The recommended course schedule to complete the programme is shown in annex 2 (part 1/part 2).

§ 4 Mandatory Subjects/Modules

(1) The curriculum including all mandatory subjects:

Code	Bezeichnung	ECTS
929INTR17	Introduction to Master's Thesis Writing	5
929PRAC17	Practicum / Internship	5
929TAPS14	Theoretical Approaches to Social Policy and Welfare	15
929NSWP14	National Systems of Welfare Production	25
929RASP14	Research Areas of Social Policy	15
929ERMM12	Empirical Research Methodology and Methods	15

(2) Practicum / Internship

Each student is required to complete an internship / practicum at an EU institution or (European) NGO / NPO or another organisation engaged in fields related to the Joint Master's degree programme. In accordance with the programme and upon approval by the university, the student may complete his/her practical training at a working organization of his/her choice. The university can provide a list of possible organisations to apply to in order to fulfill the internship / practicum requirement.

§ 5 Lectures

(1) Formal Programme

1. The Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare has been designed in accordance with the corresponding regulations governing partner institutions. Each partner university's regulations apply to the joint degree programme.
2. The names and the types of all courses at JKU as well as their ECTS points, their duration in hours per week, their codes, their registration requirements and their admission procedures (in case of limited availability of places) are described in the study handbook of JKU (<http://www.jku.at/studienhandbuch>). The possible types of courses as well as the examination regulations are described in §§ 13 und 14 of the JKU statute (Section "Studienrecht").

(2) Educational Methods

The online learning environment will be held in "Moodle". Each university will use its own Moodle platform. In addition to distance learning classes, partner universities will jointly conduct intensive programmes each semester which will take place at one of the partner universities.

§ 6 Master's Thesis

(1) Students are required to select a thesis supervisor, officially submit a Master's thesis topic, and submit a Master's thesis to the home university. Students may opt to complete a thesis under the supervision of a second advisor from a partner university.

(2) Students may opt to select one of the following areas for the Master's thesis: Theoretical Approaches to Social Policy and Welfare, National Systems of Welfare Production, and Research Areas of Social Policy. In compliance with the content of the Joint Master's programme, the topic should include a comparative perspective and focus on a field in welfare and social policy. In consultation with a thesis supervisor, students are advised to select a Master's thesis topic by the end of the second semester.

(3) The Master's thesis is worth 40 ECTS credits (30 ECTS credits for the Master's thesis and 10 ECTS credits for the Master's thesis seminar).

(4) The Master's thesis will affirm that the student has acquired the ability to work independently and address scientific questions and issues. The thesis should reflect the student's capacity to conduct independent study and research.

§ 7 Examination Regulations

(1) Learning Agreement

In order to facilitate the programme's learning objectives and guarantee an efficient academic process, universities may opt to implement a Personal Study Plan. A Personal Study Plan must be signed by both the student and the responsible advisor for the Master's programme and will be in effect for the duration of studies. The student can make approved changes in the proposed learning agreement. The Personal Study Plan serves mainly as a tool for the student to plan and organize his/her programme of study. The detailed distribution of credits for each university is depicted in the ideal typical course of studies on page 2 in Annex 2.

(2) Examination Methods

Grading will be determined by numerous methods including written and oral examinations given in accordance to corresponding stipulations governing partner institutions. For examinations at the partner universities the examination regulations of each partner university apply. The regulations for subject examinations and course examinations at JKU are described in the study handbook of JKU.

(3) Master's Degree Examination

The Master's degree programme will be determined as successfully completed after all required subjects - including the Master's thesis seminar and the Master's thesis - have been successfully passed.

(4) Grading

The national grading system, in accordance with the international grading system, will be used to assess and evaluate academic work completed and submitted by students (transcription enclosed; Annex 1).

§ 8 Academic Degree

(1) Upon successful completion of the Master's degree program, students enrolled in the programme will be awarded the following academic title by the student's home university.

The academic degree awarded by each partner university is as follows:

Lithuania	Master of Sociology
Finland	Master of Social Sciences
Austria	Master of Social Sciences (MSSc or MSSc (JKU))

(2) Students will be awarded a Master's degree (certificate/diploma) and a diploma supplement by his or her home university in compliance with corresponding national legislation in effect at that university. The certificate has to express that the Master's programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare is a joint study program of the Johannes Kepler University, the Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania) and the University of Tampere (Finland). In addition, students will receive a Joint Degree diploma issued by each university. This document will contain the names of each partner university and will be signed by each university. The document will indicate that the degree was issued in compliance with the completion of a Joint Master's degree programme offered at each university.

§ 9 Implementation

(1) This curriculum comes into effect on October 1st, 2014.

(2) The curriculum for the Joint Master's programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare in the version published in the official newsletter of Johannes Kepler University Linz on June 27th, 2012, 25th piece, item 218 expires by the end of September 30th, 2014.

(3) § 4 para. 1 and Annex 2 as published in the official newsletter of the Johannes Kepler University Linz on June 29th, 2016, 29th piece, item 267 will take effect on October 1st, 2016.

(4) § 3 para. 2 and annex 2 as published in the official newsletter of the Johannes Kepler University Linz on June 23th, 2017, 33th piece, item 252 will take effect on October 1st, 2017.

§ 10 Transitional Regulations

Students who have completed all required mandatory subjects under § 4 of the Master's degree programme 2012 only have to complete the Master's degree thesis and the Master's thesis seminar for the 2014 Master's programme.

Grading systems

The international grading system is used for the assessment of the workload achieved by the students.

ECTS Grade	Definition (D)	Definition (E)	Equivalent Lithuania	Equivalent Finland	Equivalent Austria
A	ausgezeichnete Leistungen und nur wenige unbedeutende Fehler	outstanding performance with only minor errors	10	5	(1) sehr gut
B	überdurchschnittliche Leistungen, aber einige Fehler	above the average standard but with some errors	9	4	(2) gut
C	insgesamt gute und solide Arbeit, jedoch mit einigen grundlegenden Fehlern	generally sound work with a number of notable errors	7,8	3	(3) befriedigend
D	mittelmäßig, jedoch deutliche Mängel	fair but with significant shortcomings	6	2	(4) genügend
E	die gezeigten Leistungen entsprechen den Mindestanforderungen	performance meets the minimum criteria	5	1	(4) genügend
F	es sind erhebliche Verbesserungen erforderlich	considerable further work is required	1-4	hylätty	(5) nicht genügend

Courses

		ECTS	Offered by
1.	Introduction to Master's Thesis Writing	5	Each university
I1	Advanced Text Production (a)	3	JKU
I2	Advanced Text Production (b)	2	JKU
2.	Theoretical Approaches to Social Policy and Welfare	15	
C1	Theories of Welfare States and Comparative Social Policy: An Introduction (book examination)	5	MRU
C2	Welfare State Theories	5	JKU
C3	Comparative Research in Social Policy	5	JKU
3.	National Systems of Welfare Production	25	
N1	East European Model: Lithuanian System of Work and Social Security	5	MRU
N2	The Continental Model: The Austrian System of Work and Social Security	5	JKU
N3	Nordic Model: Nordic Welfare Societies	5	UTA
N4	The Liberal Welfare State	5	JKU
N5	European Social Policy: Content and Actors	5	MRU
5.	Research Areas of Social Policy¹	15	
R1	Gender and Social Policy ²	5	JKU
R2	Political Dynamics of Social Policy-Making in Select Fields ³	5	JKU
R3	Social Inequality and Exclusion	5	MRU
R4	Social Demography	5	MRU
R5	Family Policy	5	MRU
R6	Work, Employment and Welfare	5	UTA
R7	Optional Studies ⁴	5	Each university
6.	Empirical Research Methodology and Methods	15	
M1	Methodology of Social and Comparative Research (book examination)	5	MRU
M2	Quantitative Research Methods and Comparative Research Design	5	UTA
M3	Qualitative Research Methods and Comparative Research Design	5	UTA
7.	Practicum / Internship	5	Each university
P	Seminar for the Practicum	5	Each university
8.	Master's Thesis⁵	40	
MTS	Master's Thesis Seminar	10	Joint
MT	Master's Thesis	30	
	Sum ECTS	120	

^{1.} Students must choose three courses of a minimum of 15 ECTS from this list.

^{2.} The class will focus on gender in relation with special research areas of social policy.

^{3.} The class will focus either on health policy, or on pension policy, or on disability policy, or on social policy-making in supranational arenas.

^{4.} In accordance with the academic coordinator students can choose up to 5 ECTS from their home university's or the partner universities' regular Master's programs or from the Master's programs of other European universities.

^{5.} At UTA, the Master's thesis accounts for 40 ECTS and includes the credits of the Master's Thesis Seminar. At JKU and at MRU, the Master's thesis is worth 30 ECTS, and 10 ECTS are given separately for the Master's Thesis Seminar.

Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare**Ideal typical course of studies**

Allocation of ECTS	1st semester		2nd semester		3rd semester		4th semester		
	Course	ECTS	Course	ECTS	Course	ECTS	Course	ECTS	
MRU	C1	5	N5	5					
	M1	5							
	N1	5							
UTA	N3	5	M2	5					
			M3	5					
JKU	N2	5	C2	5	I1	3	I2	2	
	N4	5	C3	5					
Research areas of social policy*			Rx	5	Rx	5			
					Rx	5			
Practicum and Seminar					P	5			
Master's thesis					MTS	10	MT	30	
		30		30		28		32	
									Sum
									120

*Students must choose three courses of a minimum of 15 ECTS. These can also be "Optional Studies".