

# **About the programme – MA Comparative Public Governance**

The double degree master programme **Comparative Public Governance** starts from the premise that many of the most pressing societal problems today have local, regional, national and global repercussions, that these repercussions typically do not stop at the borders of individual local authorities, regional entities, or nation states, and that they often affect both public and private actors. Effectively tackling these problems thus requires collaboration between public authorities from different countries and different levels of governance as well as with civil-society actors that may contribute critical resources. For example, channeling refugee flows requires international co-operation between authorities in countries that are geographically most affected by refugee inflows and countries with higher capacities of refugee intake. Dealing with the absorption and integration of refugees, in turn, is much facilitated by collaboration between local authorities and civil-society organizations providing not only additional manpower but also other crucial types of resources like language skills, knowledge of religious habits, or ties to local homeowners and employers. Effectively tackling the causes of refugee flows, finally, calls for international co-operation between authorities in rich receiving countries and those in poor, often war-torn sending countries, and this co-operation is likely to become much more effective if it also involves private organizations engaging in development aid as well international governmental organizations such as the World Bank or the European Union. Issues ranging from climate change, marine pollution or toxic waste shipments to terrorism, organized crime or human trafficking have similar problem structures and thus require similar political approaches to reaching viable solutions.

Borders have thus become increasingly porous, and traditional jurisdictional boundaries as well as the neat separation of public authorities and private actors have become increasingly dysfunctional for solving the grand societal challenges of our time. Under these conditions of increased transnational, inter-jurisdictional and public-private interdependence, the public sector had to open itself up and reach out to private organizations as well as to public authorities in other countries and at other levels – from the local to the global. The study of public governance seeks to understand how collectively binding political decisions are being made in such networks involving public and private actors from different levels and different jurisdictional backgrounds.

This network-type structure of public governance fundamentally challenges the work of both scholars and practitioners. Chains of democratic accountability and control become blurry when actors from different levels and different jurisdictions closely work together in developing strategies for solving intricate societal problems. Who can be held responsible for policy failures under these conditions? Who can legitimately claim the credit for policy successes? How do elected office-holders keep track of the decisions thrashed out in such networks of administrative and private actors? And who decides which actors are being invited to such informal task and who is being excluded?

The overall aim of the master programme “Comparative Public Governance” is to enable students to address the current and future challenges in public governance and to develop a critical perspective on the intricate issues related to democratic accountability and control associated with public governance. In this context, the identification and articulation of public challenges and the design and management of effective, efficient and legitimate policies to tackle these challenges are of utmost importance. Considering its conceptual perspective, the programme has a focus on Europe,

but also encompasses institutional and regulatory structures at the local, regional, national, international and global levels, and it seeks to compare public governance at different levels and in different jurisdictions with each other.

The jointly developed introduction module offered in Twente and Münster during the first year of study plays an important role in achieving the overall aim of the programme. It encompasses two courses, one taught in the first semester at the University of Twente, the second in the second semester at the University of Münster. The module not only familiarizes students with the logic, rationale and structure of the programme but also defines public governance and provides an introduction to the field of public governance in comparative perspective, including its major actors, processes and institutions, and it offers a discussion of some of the current and future challenges of comparative public governance. By providing students with general as well as programme-specific information, knowledge and skills, this core module paves the way for the remainder of the study programme, which gives students the opportunity to deepen, enhance and practically apply the previously acquired knowledge in the context of specific topics, questions and problems of public governance.

The domain of the programme is the study of public governance in a comparative perspective. We pursue an approach that is particularly based on multi-actor and multi-level analysis of dynamic public challenges and aims at solutions that meet both functional (effectiveness, efficiency) and procedural criteria (rule of law, legitimacy, legality, and democracy). Moreover, systems of public governance consist of the institutions and interactions (between public as well as private actors) that determine a society's capacity to adequately solve collective problems and create societal opportunities. We approach public governance in four different ways that form the conceptual foundation of our thinking on comparative public governance and that formed the basis for the design of the programme.

*A. Using different levels of analysis.* We distinguish between three levels of analysis:

1. The operational and strategic levels of analysis, where issues regarding social problem solving and opportunity creation are at stake. At this level, the analysis focuses on the formulation and implementation of policies.
2. The institutional level where the analytical focus is on the institutional context that sets the stage for the formulation and implementation of policies. At this level of analysis we deal with:
  - a. the description of institutional arrangements;
  - b. the explanation of changes in institutional arrangements and the explanation of cross-sectional differences in institutional arrangements;
  - c. the effects of various institutional arrangements on the performance of socio-political institutions.
3. The meta-level of analysis focuses on the normative issues that are inevitably associated with problem solving at the first or the second level of governance. At this normative level of analysis, the central questions relate to the definition and conceptualisation of what constitutes "good" (i.e. effective, efficient and legitimate) governance.

*B. Using multi-actor analyses.* Public governance, as it is used in the double degree master programme, reflects the paradigm shift from government to governance. This paradigm shift involves a growing involvement of private actors in the making of collective decisions. This process is driven by effectiveness criteria, since private actors command key resources that are needed for public policies to work, and it responds to the growing demands of private actors, especially organized interests, for participation in the making of policies that affect them and their members. On the one hand, this may be seen as a positive development as democratic regimes derive legitimacy from their responsiveness to the preferences of their citizens. On the other hand, it implies that a whole new range of actors without direct democratic legitimacy have become part of key decision-making networks.

For our students it is crucial to understand the implications of the involvement of these new types of actors – industry representatives, civil-society actors, lobbyists, scientific experts etc. – for both the effectiveness and the legitimacy of public governance. Since private actors seek more involvement “from below”, the political-administrative system with its tradition of top-down chains of command and control, needs to be adjusted in order to retain accountability and legitimacy. In this context, we can observe a shift towards output legitimacy: the effort to gain acceptance and support through the effective delivery of public services and the implementation of policies that aim to promote the common welfare of citizens. At the same time, there are debates about the input legitimacy of such decision-making modes as excluded actors may challenge the democratic credentials of networks they may perceive as closed shops.

Thus, the multi-actor dimension is clearly visible in the programme and returns in at least three different ways. First of all, public governance these days is about the cooperation between different public actors. We will address the roles different public authorities have at different levels of governance as well as their horizontal and vertical cooperation (from governmental cooperation in international organizations to a ‘global parliament of mayors’). Second, the multi-actor dimension is also visible in the many non-state actors that act in both domestic and transnational regulatory regimes. This leads to ‘informal lawmaking’ on the basis of which many of the domestic and transnational rules are being created. In other words: public administrations, governments and parliaments are no longer the main rule-makers. Instead, private actors increasingly define public governance. Third, the increasing role of non-state actors contributes to the legitimacy of public governance, but it may at the same time also be the source of protests against the outcomes of what excluded actors may perceive as closed-shop decision-making. This element will in particular return in our module on Political Participation on ways in which stakeholders are involved in scrutinizing (or designing) policy decisions. Altogether, however, the multi-actor dimension is part and parcel of our concept of comparative public governance and will be addressed in virtually every module. Both in Twente and in Münster scholars have already been working together in many of these fields and the results of our own research and that of others will play a key role on many of the modules.

*C. Using (vertical and horizontal) comparative analyses.* Public governance as we understand it involves a plethora of interesting questions concerning the interplay of actors and governing arrangements at different levels of governance (vertical dimension of comparison) and the interdependencies as well as efforts at collaboration of authorities and non-state actors from different jurisdictions at the same

level of governance, such as different local authorities, federal entities, countries, or even different international or supranational organizations (horizontal dimension of comparison).

Students will learn how public and private actors work together across jurisdictional boundaries and levels of governance. They will discuss to what extent policies diffuse across countries or from one level of governance to the other (both in a bottom-up and a top-down direction) and what the reasons for such processes of policy diffusion may be (learning, competition, imitation, etc.). They will learn what impact policies developed at the global or European level have at the national, regional or local levels and to what extent such policies are actually implemented “on the ground”. They will scrutinize to what extent organizational principles of public administration and public-private interaction differ between countries and levels of governance and to what extent these institutional arrangements are transformed in the course of growing interaction between levels and jurisdictions. And they will discuss what implications the growth of a horizontally and vertically interwoven network of public authorities as well as private actors has for questions of democratic legitimacy, accountability and control.

*D. Using a multi-disciplinary approach.* It is a truism that public governance needs insights developed in (at least) political science, legal studies, sociology and economics. Indeed, most public administration programmes these days do include multi-disciplinary perspectives. However, it is important to stress that interdisciplinarity in the programme is not an end in itself. Instead, interdisciplinarity seeks to supplement the perspectives of the programme’s main disciplines, which consist of the two closely-related fields of political science and public administration. These core fields are complemented by contributions from law and economics, which serve two main purposes: (1) they allow students to address public governance from disciplinary angles that provide important additional insights to the overall understanding of public governance, and (2) they offer students the possibility for specializations in fields that are highly relevant to public governance. By making use of the expertise of two excellent institutions with partly overlapping, but also very specialized research areas, we are able to provide our students with the best of both worlds. While both collaborating departments in Münster and Twente have an excellent reputation in general questions of governance, public administration and general societal questions, there are also areas that are less-developed in both institutions, e.g. allowing Münster to bring in the political science perspective (modules 1, 7, 8, 10, 13) and Twente the legal (and economic) dimension (modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 13).

Moreover, core electives within the third semester in Münster provide opportunities for students to: (1) further specialize in a discipline or interdisciplinary field of comparative public governance of their interest (elective module in Münster, module 10) or under the Erasmus Mundus programme or even at a university outside the EU such as the Hastings College, Nebraska, USA, (module 11), or (2) to address a real-life problem for an organization in the field of comparative public governance (module 9 internship). We believe that this combination of different academic perspectives, held together by a common interest in the effectiveness and legitimacy of policy solutions emerging from public governance, is essential for a proper understanding of our object study.

Furthermore, we aim to make use of these experiences, by asking students to combine different academic perspectives when they design policy solutions in their papers and by regular

meetings for the Twente and Münster teaching teams to make links with other parts in the programme and design multi-disciplinary assignments. The experience with the Twente Education Module (TOM), which is fully based on multi-disciplinary modules, will form the basis for our double degree master programme. We will set the stage for this in the introduction module, which will be taught jointly. Moreover, in the master thesis students will have to show their ability to combine different disciplinary perspectives and supervision will be done by professors with different academic backgrounds.

Last but not least, interdisciplinarity also makes an important contribution to the professional qualification of graduates of the programme. Experiences from the previous master programme European Studies, which has a similar focus on interdisciplinarity, suggest that the majority of our graduates have made a professional career in one of the following professional fields:

- International, mainly European organizations (e.g. the EU and its institutions)
- International profit and non-profit organizations
- Associations and other “umbrella organizations”
- Public sector
- Media sector

Since interdisciplinary knowledge and skills are of utmost importance in all of these fields, we are convinced that the programme’s interdisciplinary approach is a major asset with a view to students’ employability.

The double degree master programme Comparative Public Governance has five overarching qualification objectives. Students graduating from the programme are expected to be able:

- to systematically identify and analyse societal challenges in public governance at various levels of governance in comparative perspective;
- to incorporate several relevant disciplines and scientific methods in analysing socio-administrative problems and structures;
- to design effective solutions to societal challenges in public governance;
- to effectively communicate in the English language about the research and designs of themselves and others, both verbally and in writing;
- to efficiently and effectively collaborate with others, both in an academic and professional environment.

The programme consists of four semesters. Part of the programme is a one-year master programme on European Studies at Twente University. The overall (module) structure of the study programme is geared towards achieving the qualification objectives of the programme.

The first semester will take place at the University of Twente. The second and third semester will be held at the University of Münster. In the final semester tuition takes place jointly by teaching staff from the Department of Public Administration (UT) and the Institute of Political Science (WWU). From a conceptual point of view, modules 1-6 within the first semester in Twente primarily serve to impart basic knowledge, skills and competences of comparative public governance required for the

remainder of the study programme, which gives students the opportunity to deepen, enhance and practically apply these knowledge, skills and competences in the context of specific topics, questions and problems of public governance in the course of modules 7-13.

Graduates of the master programme Comparative Public Governance will hold two diplomas: a one-year Master of Science (MSc) degree in European Studies from Twente and a two-year Master of Arts (MA) degree in Comparative Public Governance in Münster. The one-year MSc European Studies in Twente can be done as a single degree, but the two-year double degree has a clear added value in preparing students as academic professionals for the broad interdisciplinary field of comparative public governance. This is reflected in the structure of the curriculum in the four semesters of the master programme (see module plan below).

### Module plan MA Comparative Public Governance

Quartile 1			Quartile 2			Semester 1	UT	Year 1 – UT/WWU: 60 EC
Regularly Programme “European Studies” (Modules 2-6)								
Core Module Comparative Public Governance (M 1) Introduction to Comparative Public Governance 5 EC	Core Module The International and EU Legal Framework (M 2) 5 EC	Core Module International Relations and Politics (M 3) 5 EC	Core Module Regulatory Design and Implementation beyond the Nation State (M 4) 5 EC	Core Module Policy Design and Implementation beyond the Nation State (M 5) 5 EC	Core Module Academic Research (M 6) 5 EC			
Core Module Current and Future Challenges of Comparative Public Governance 10 EC	Core Module Top-down Perspective of Comparative Public Governance: Political Steering (M 7) Course 1: Master Seminar Course 2: Master Seminar 10 EC					Semester 2	WWU	
	Core Module Bottom-up Perspective of Comparative Public Governance: Political Participation (M 8) Course 1: Master Seminar Course 2: Master Seminar 10 EC							
Core Electives: Either Module 9 AND 10 (18 EC + 12 EC) OR Module 11 (30 EC)								
Internship (M 9) Internship (Workload: 504 hours, 5,000 word internship report) 18 EC						Semester 3	WWU	Year 2 – WWU/UT: 60 EC
Free Electives at Münster University (M 10) 2 Free Electives from the course offer of the Institute of Political Science (Erasmus) Exchange Programme (M 11) Via partner universities of the Institute of Political Science (WWU) 30 EC								
Free Elective at Twente University (M 12) Optional course from the course offer of the master programme Public Administration at the University of Twente 5 EC						Semester 4	UT/WWU	
Master Thesis (M 13) + Colloquium/Defence 25 EC								
Joint Tuition: WWU and UT		Obligatory Courses		Electives				

### First semester: Twente University

The first semester in Twente focuses on designing solutions for global and European challenges. It is divided in two quarters of ten weeks each. As part of the two-term introduction module, the first quarter introduces students to the key concepts of comparative public governance, e.g. governance, public value, institutions, comparison, performance, legitimacy, democracy, participation and steering (module 1). It also introduces the students to the main global and European challenges for which solutions have to be found, like safety and security, asylum and migration, social inequality, social and technological innovation, energy and water management, environmental pollution and climate change, which will be addressed in more detail within the second part of the introduction module during the second semester of study in Münster. These challenges have consequences for all levels of public governance (global, European, national, regional and local), for public as well as private actors,

and they are often of a cross-border nature spanning different jurisdictional boundaries. This means that designing solutions for these challenges also has to take into account these different jurisdictions, levels of governance and types of actors. In addition, the first quarter introduces students to the legal framework of comparative public governance (module 2). Students will learn about the legal implications of global and European governance. As governance is exercised in a multilevel and multi-actor context, understanding the legal relationships between different national, European and global legal and political systems and between public and private entities involved in governance is necessary for anyone who wants to work both in public and private management. They will also learn about the theoretical foundations of international relations, and apply this knowledge to the analysis of foreign policy, global governance and international institutions in concrete cases (module 3).

The second quarter of the first semester is on the design and implementation of solutions for the challenges discussed in the first quarter. Two core modules are devoted to two different types of public governance beyond the nation state: regulation and policy. One core module is about the design and implementation of regulation beyond the nation state, and the role of professionals in shaping it and coping with it (module 4). This module provides practical experience in all stages of the regulation process, covering all of the main ways that international institutions regulate, from strong delegated powers, to strong national powers with light coordination, to self-regulation by market participants that international institutions try to change by identifying and promoting best practice. Another module is about the design and implementation of policy beyond the nation state (module 5). The students will learn that some policies are enshrined in law, but that policies can also be derived from deliberative processes and policy coordination at various levels of governance (individuals, organizations, and different levels of government). This module will analyse how the 'soft' modes of governance operate and what kind of characteristics of policy issues call for specific forms of governance to make them work. The second quarter is completed by an academic research module, which prepares the students for writing their master thesis and is organized around the different stages of the academic research process (module 6).

### *Second semester: University of Münster*

Building on the definition and foundations of comparative public governance provided in the first part of the introduction module as well as the more general overview of public-governance-related issues taught in Twente, the second semester makes full use of the political science expertise in Münster. While the first part of the introduction module in Twente mainly focuses on the general outline, structure and issue of the overall master programme, the second part places stronger emphasis on current and future challenges of comparative public governance for which solutions have to be found not only at the global and European, but also at the national, regional and local scale (module 1). By means of selected case studies and topics, students will be enabled to address exemplary challenges that are derived from state-of-the-art public governance research and develop solutions to these challenges. The concrete topics discussed will be adjusted so as to react to current developments. For example, they may include issues such as the EU's economic and financial crisis, the UK's decision to



withdraw from the European Union (Brexit) or the ongoing refugee crisis and its implications for different jurisdictions and different levels of governance.

Furthermore, the second semester in Münster builds on the groundwork that was laid in the first semester in Twente. It addresses the specific political processes that take place in public governance. In doing so, it concentrates on two major perspectives on comparative public governance: a top-down and a bottom-up perspective. While the former is about political steering and highlights the output aspect (e.g. policy-making at various levels of governance), the latter is about political participation and focuses on the input aspect of public governance (e.g. participation of citizens, civil-society actors, political parties). Each of the two modules consists of two courses. The courses in the top-down module (module 7) deal with theoretical, normative and empirical questions of political steering as well as current debates on the role of the state and state-level organisations in democracies, autocracies and transformation states, but also on the international, European and transnational level. Students learn how political goals are reached and which instruments are applied for that purpose. In this context, students also discuss the role of political institutions. There is a specific focus on actors and their interests as well as their different modes of interaction at different levels of governance. The different courses in the bottom-up module (module 8) give the students a deeper understanding and a normative evaluation and critique of specific approaches to political and civic participation and political-decision-making on different levels, arenas or sectors of governance. The courses transcend the sphere of public institutions by focusing on the wider system of societal actors and ask whether and to what extent it is possible to enhance democracy and legitimacy through civil-society participation and deliberation. The focus is on non-state actors (like associations, social movements, religious groups etc.) and on market actors that participate in developing generally binding rules in politics and society, thereby using a number of different instruments.

The concrete topics addressed by seminars offered in modules 7 and modules 8 may vary according to current events and the proposals made by the relevant teaching staff, but the coordinator of the study programme at the Institute of Political Science in Münster will ensure that there will always be enough courses with a clear focus on the key questions of relevance for comparative public governance to ensure that students have an attractive and relevant set of courses to choose from.

### *Third semester: University of Münster*

The third semester offers students the possibility to broaden and deepen their knowledge and skills and to specialize by choosing between an (Erasmus) exchange semester (module 11) or a combination of an internship (module 9) and elective courses in Münster (module 10). Based on past experiences students might for example opt for exchange programmes specializing in international relations, international law, in peace and conflict studies, international business, European governance, or global governance. Students who want to go abroad have to demonstrate how the exchange programme they choose fits the overall focus of the double degree master programme. The Institute of Political Science has an Erasmus office that provides guidance on the foci of the available exchange programmes, and students are expected to contact the WWU programme coordinator to discuss the fit between their study plans abroad and the study programme on comparative public governance.

The same applies, by and large, also to the selection of internships. Relevant internships are possible at all levels of governance, including non-profit and for-profit organizations. Next to the internship, students can choose free electives in one of the three main research areas of the Institute of Political Science: Governance, Civil Society and Democracy, and Regionalisation and Globalisation. Many of the seminars offered in these research areas are thematically closely linked to public governance so as to ensure that students find relevant seminars that allow them to deepen their understanding of comparative public governance.

#### *Fourth semester: Twente University + University of Münster*

The joint fourth semester starts with an elective course in Twente to be chosen from the master Public Administration, e.g. a course on policy networks, legitimacy, deliberative governance, public safety governance or environmental policy (module 12). This will allow students to continue their strategy of specializing in a topic that is of particular relevance to their interests and career plans.

The core of the fourth semester is the master thesis, which is jointly supervised by lecturers from both universities (module 13). The thesis draws together all the qualifications and skills students have acquired throughout the programme. It thus forms the unifying element that binds together the individual elements of the programme in the final semester. Students are expected to demonstrate, that they are able to develop a relevant research question in the field of comparative public governance, apply theories from the field to this research question, and conduct original research to shed new light on the research question and/or generate an original solution to the practical problem addressed by their research question. The master thesis also offers further opportunities to specialize in a specific topic. The process will be accompanied by colloquia and research classes that help students prepare for their master thesis and defence and guide them through the process of writing.

*We think the double degree programme has a strong and distinctive position in the field of other master programmes. In the field of one-year master programmes in the social sciences in the Netherlands it offers the opportunity of an extra year with additional courses and an elective semester. In comparison to these master programmes it also offers an unique opportunity for intercultural experience, which is also an asset in the field of the two-year master programmes in Germany. Apart from its nature as a double degree the programme has a distinctive focus (different levels of analysis, multi-actor analysis, multi-level and comparative analysis, and a multi-disciplinary approach) that makes it attractive for students with a cosmopolitan orientation eager to address the challenges that face the world today.*

*Moreover, we believe the two-year double degree Comparative Public Governance offers a coherent programme and curriculum that enable students to address the current and future challenges in public governance. We also believe that the two-year double degree programme has a clear added value to the single degree in Twente by offering an additional semester on public governance in Münster and increasing the opportunities for a comparative approach. The third semester offers students an opportunity to broaden and deepen their knowledge and gain international and practical experience during their programme lacking in the single degree and the old 1,5 year double degree. Finally the programme builds on a longstanding and successful cooperation between the universities of Twente and Münster.*