

SocReg

Joint Doctorate in Sociology of Regional and Local Development

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History, profile and aims of the programme

The Ph.D programme in Sociology of Regional Development, leading to a Joint Doctoral Degree, is organised by the University of Zadar (HR – coordinating university) and the University of Teramo (I). It has started in the academic year 2010/2011 and is the first Joint Doctoral Programme offered by a consortium of an Italian and a Croatian university in the Adriatic-Ionian region on the subject of regional and local development.

Namely, in spite of the many regional strategies and the political efforts in the Adriatic Ionian Region, joint international post-graduate courses in sociology with a strong focus on territory and its development have not been organized in the region prior to this programme.

The doctoral programme organized by the universities of Zadar and Teramo is one of the first major academic outgrowths of the many initiatives stressing the importance of academic cooperation in the region from the 1990s onwards – such as the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, the Adriatic Euroregion, the Central European Initiative, the Adriatic-Ionian University Network and the Euro-Mediterranean University.

After several years of bilateral cooperation in the field of sociology and territorial development – which led to the implementation of the first International MA in inter-Adriatic Cooperation and Local Development (MIAC) in the academic year

2007/2008, the Department of Sociology of the University of Zadar and the Department of Theories and Policies of Social Development of the University of Teramo have established a doctoral study program, which involves three years of activities and discussions leading to a final dissertation and a joint degree issued by the universities of Zadar and Teramo.

Consistently with the requirements of the Bologna-reform, the workload of the doctoral programme amounts to 180 ECTS credits. In other words, the overall minimum duration of studies is six semesters, out of which a minimum of 30 ECTS have to be achieved at one of the two core partner universities (Zadar and Teramo). Students can also apply to spend an additional semester at one of the mobility partners of the programme.

The joint doctoral programme in sociology of regional and local development promotes mobility in the context of a well structured and rich programme of study. In addition to providing intercultural experience, it increases the international employability of graduates. The programme aims to be gender balanced and oriented towards equal opportunities.

Content of the programme

The main instrument of the programme are doctoral workshops and thematic conferences taking place at the universi-

ties of Zadar and Teramo, followed by intense individual work of the candidates with their dissertation supervisors.

In the workshops and thematic conferences the doctoral students will be exposed to the broad range of fields connected with contemporary academic approaches to the topic of regional and local development. These workshops and thematic conferences also include guest professors and experts from a number of Croatian and Italian collaborating institutions.

The subjects encountered by the students in the course of their studies or chosen as the field of their doctoral specialization include: Development in the Perspective of Sociological Theory, Theories of Regional and Local Development, The Influence of Europeanisation on the Local and Regional Self-Government, Theory and Policies of Decentralization, Social Transformation and Social Policy-Making, Regionalism, Multi-Level Governance, Policy Transfer, The Politics of Scale, Sustainability as a Development Horizon and Criterion, Sociology of Tourism and Mobility, Sociological Aspects of Urban Planning, Environmental Policies and Territorial Identities, Sociology of the Borderlands and Ethnic Minorities, Creative Cities and Learning Regions, Theories of Social Spaces and Transnational Mobility, Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in Development Research.

Target group and admission to the programme

The target group of the doctoral programme are highly qualified and motivated students interested in the issue of regional development and role of sociological knowledge in this process. Also emphasized is the international dimension of social policies connected with the processes of local and sustainable development. Moreover, based on the solid sociological foundation, the interested students should be willing and able to analyse and evaluate complex processes from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Admission to this Ph.D programme is normally only granted to persons who have both completed an academic degree of at least 180 ECTS credits and a graduate degree of at least 120 ECTS (bachelor's degree or equivalent programme of at least 180 ECTS, plus graduate degree such as Magistar for Croatia or

Laurea Magistrale for Italy). Applicants have to demonstrate research skills, basic knowledge of social sciences and general insights in the subject of local development and intervention strategies with special regards to the Adriatic-Ionian region and other maritime regions of Europe and overseas. Graduates from different forms and fields of studies can be admitted if the completed programme is judged to be equivalent in the regular admission procedure of the university for which the student applies.

Participating universities are equal partners, with the University of Zadar responsible for co-ordination. All participating universities are obliged to exchange information concerning the project quarterly.

Costs for participation in the Ph.D programme, travel expenses and costs for room and board must be covered by the students themselves. Financial subsidies can be applied for through existing and forthcoming mobility programmes and grants.

Scholarships are issued by each single university and are not under the responsibility of the consortium.

Expected outcome of the programme

The completion of the doctoral programme guarantees the students the acquisition of a high-level of professional competences in the field of sociology with special regard to the theoretical and empirical issues of regional and local development. Such competences will allow the trained candidates to develop a sound knowledge of the social, cultural, economic and political dynamics behind the regional development processes. The education tracks offered by the program maintain a special attention to the topics relevant to the Adriatic-Ionian regional development and to other similar areas.

The programme is conceived according to the internationally recognized standards and aims at the highest academic quality. Therefore, future Doctors in Sociology of Regional and Local Development are expected to be able to find employment not only in the academic sector but also within public or private bodies (both profit and not-profit oriented) operating in the strategic sector of development.