

COSOPO student's experience: Felix Wohlgemuth

Looking back on what I experienced and learned in the Comparative Social Policy and Welfare programme (COSOPO) it is difficult to believe that this is only the third semester I am in now. I applied after my Bachelor in political science and some internship experience in the labour market policy field, however, I knew less about what is happening in social policy outside Germany and Austria. The COSOPO sounded like an interesting and different way to study societies, politics and social policies other than the one of my home country. Now I can say that it is. A master programme organised by three universities and studying together with students from even more countries taught me more than just the academic knowledge about social policy fields, methods and welfare theories. I learned how to work and study together in an intercultural environment, and that mostly over quite a long distance.

I can also recommend everybody who wants to study the COSOPO Master to plan an exchange semester at one of the two partner universities. I stayed for one semester at the University of Tampere, where I learned more about the Finnish society and its social policy than through reading articles and books. It was also very interesting to experience the Finnish university system, and getting to know other Finnish professors and students outside the COSOPO programme. Because of that, I decided to write my Master thesis jointly at both universities and thereby get supported by two supervisors, one in Tampere and one in Linz. The COSOPO offers a range of these possibilities that you cannot find in an average Master programme. For instances, having in one semester a seminar by an Austrian professor about the European Union, a seminar by an Lithuanian professor in family policy and a seminar by an Finnish professor in labour market studies.

I enjoyed studying COSOPO and still do. I can recommend it to everybody who is curious about how the state and societies interact in social topics across the European countries.