

A young man with dark curly hair, wearing a white shirt, is sitting at a desk and typing on a laptop. A young woman with dark curly hair, wearing a maroon sweater, is leaning over his shoulder, pointing at the laptop screen. They are both looking at the screen with interest. The background is a warm, yellowish-orange wall with a white pillar.

COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY AND WELFARE STUDIES

Master of Social Sciences

The welfare state in the 21st century

Why are some societies more equal than others? How can we explain soaring unemployment and budget deficits? Why do women participate in the labour market as much as men in some countries but less in others? Why do healthcare, childcare and other public services differ in their quality across developed societies – and how do these differences matter? Answers to all these questions relate to the welfare state – more specifically, to public policies and welfare studies.

The development of the modern welfare state profoundly transformed societies in the 20th century. In the Western world, the welfare state laid the foundation for peace and stability and helped to establish fundamental principles such as gender equality and social mobility. More recently, Asian and Latin American countries have embraced the concept and developed ambitious welfare state programmes.

At the same time as welfare states fundamentally shape the functioning of societies all over the world, they are also subject to intense political conflict and to multiple pressures for change. This helps explain why there are different types of welfare states across advanced societies.

Understanding the development and reform of the modern welfare states, as well as their effects and main challenges, is essential for people interested in the future of our societies. This is the knowledge we provide our students with – students who want to have a say in shaping the world of tomorrow as policy advisors, consultants, decision-makers, civil servants or scholars.

➔ Is studied in: **Odense**



Career opportunities

The two-year MSc in Social Sciences in Comparative Public Policy and Welfare Studies links directly to current global and national challenges, such as ageing populations, changing family models, and economic crises. The programme provides you with a broad, high-level set of skills and competencies enabling you to contribute to the development of sustainable and democratically legitimate solutions to such challenges. You will be an attractive candidate to multiple international and national agencies, as well as to governments. You will be involved in policy analysis and in devising policy solutions for achieving social and economic goals.



Careers

- Researchers - PhD
- Development consultant
- Research support officer
- Consultant (municipal administration)
- ESF-BAMF Field Personnel (Germany)
- Fundraising team leader - Save the Children
- Research analyst
- Head of procedure (EU coordination rules) at Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund
- Program leader - Training for Learning (UK)
- Various positions in private sector

“What can explain trends in longevity, fertility, or the flows of migrants – and what are the effects of such trends for the well-being of individuals and the sustainability of welfare models?”



Programme content

The two-year MSc in Social Sciences in Comparative Public Policy and Welfare Studies has four semesters.

Courses in the first three semesters are organized to maximize synergy between courses and progression between semesters:


- The first semester courses give you an overview of the development of welfare states and their challenges as well as possible reforms of welfare states and labour markets.
- The second semester involves in-depth study of public administration, the welfare state and the labour markets – and comparative methodology and data.
- In the third semester you receive specialized training in methods, as well as in analysing policies and politics. You may also be able to participate in an ongoing research project or have a semester abroad in a think tank, government agency or another university.
- Courses run in three thematic tracks – crafting analysis, comparative policies and comparative politics – over the three semesters to maximize progression from basic knowledge to specialized analytical skills and high level competencies.

During the fourth semester, you write your Master's thesis on a topic of your choice.

Study abroad and/or internship

You have the option of studying at another university, in Denmark or abroad, for one semester during the third semester of the study programme. You can also choose to spend a part of the third semester carrying out a company project or other project-oriented work.

Programme structure

	Track		
	Crafting analysis	Comparative policy	Comparative politics
1. Semester Basic courses	Quantitative methods (10 ECTS)	Comparative welfare state policies (10 ECTS)	Development and reform of the welfare state (10 ECTS)
2. Semester Applied courses	Research Design (5 ECTS)	Comparative public administration (10 ECTS)	Politics of labour market change (10 ECTS)
	Concepts & measurements (5 ECTS)		
3. Semester Specialisation	Specialised methods (10 ECTS)	Specialised policy analysis (10 ECTS)	Specialised analysis of reform politics (10 ECTS)
	Study abroad and/or internship		
4. Semester Independent work			

The figures indicate the work load of each course in ECTS points.



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I currently work as a PhD researcher at the project “Cities of Refuge” at the University of Utrecht, investigating the role of international human rights as law, praxis and discourse, to how local governments in Europe welcome and integrate refugees. The MSc in Comparative Public Policy & Welfare Studies provided me with a toolbox of analytical skills and theoretical knowledge, which greatly helped me accomplish my career goals. I strongly recommend this study program to everyone interested in career in public affairs or academia.

*Tihomir Sabchev
from Bulgaria*

What are our students researching?

The Master's thesis is the culmination of the Master's degree program and reflects students' ability to conduct independent research. Here are some of the exciting topics that our students have chosen to explore:

- Atypical workers' experiences on the labour market
- The global economic crisis as a critical juncture for the Greek clientelistic system
- Employers' engagement in the successful integration of immigrants
- How a changed narrative on 'the ability to work' affects the perception of 'deservingness'
- Refugees experiences of integration
- Gay couples' experiences with medical system
- Social inclusion as a way to narrow the achievement gap between immigrants and natives
- How our societies face the challenge of technological change

Internship opportunities

An academic internship is your chance to test yourself in the job market during your studies. Here are some of the places where our students have done internships:

- Danish National Centre for Social Research
- European institutions
- Danish Research Office in Brussels
- Local municipalities
- World Health Organisation – Copenhagen Office



Learning

Teaching, coaching and supervision are provided by an international group of leading researchers in their fields of public policy and administration, political science, history, and sociology.

Most of these researchers come from the Danish Centre for Welfare Studies. There are also guest lectures by leading scholars affiliated with the centre or visiting.

➔ **See more at www.sdu.dk/welfare**

Lecturers, coaches and mentors use a variety of teaching methods to optimize learning outcomes for students, e.g. lectures, group work, lab work. Students get hands-on experience with different methods and data.

Dynamic student environment

The University of Southern Denmark provides a good infrastructure for students working in groups or alone centered at new facilities at the Department of Political Science. In addition to the formal teaching, students can engage in informal reading groups on classic or new texts, visit relevant institutions and much more.

There are social get-togethers with film evenings, cultural visits and other events.

The University of Southern Denmark is a modern institution offering education and research at the highest level. Every day more than 1,400 researchers and 32,000 students build on the University's reputation as a centre of academic excellence. This programme is offered at the largest campus which is located in Odense, the third largest city in Denmark. Lively and youthful, this historic city has a bustling social scene and is little more than an hour away from Copenhagen. Odense is known for being the birthplace of world-renowned storyteller Hans Christian Andersen.

Entry requirements

In the overview below you can see which bachelor degrees qualify you to the MSc in Social Sciences in Comparative Public Policy and Welfare Studies.

Degrees with direct admission

- Bachelor in Political Science
- Bachelor in Social work
- Bachelor in History
- Bachelor in Area Studies
- All Social Science bachelors
- Bachelor in International Negotiation
 - economics, language and culture

Application deadlines

Non-EU/EEA citizens: 1 February

EU/EEA and Swiss citizens and applicants holding a Danish residence permit:
1 March

Study start: 1 September

Find out more

➔ sdu.dk/comparativewelfare

Other degrees

Bachelor in Humanities if at least 20 ECTS points were acquired in social science disciplines.



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At the moment I work as a team lead for Danish customer service at Circle K. Both my BSc and my MSc are very valuable. From one I have the technical knowledge and from my MSc I have understanding on cultural differences, EU policies as well as statistics. I have been employed for more than 2 years and I am very happy about my work.

Kristina Freimane
from Latvia



profoundly in the Southern European countries and least in countries with encompassing welfare states.

Contact information

Follow the MSc in Social Sciences in Comparative Public Policy and Welfare Studies - SDU on facebook.com/WelfareStudies.

Questions concerning the study:
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Please see our homepage for information for international or Danish applicants, or for more details on entry requirements

➔ sdu.dk/comparativewelfare

