

**Postgraduate  
doctoral study**



University of Zadar



University of Teramo

**JOINT DOCTORAL  
PROGRAMME IN  
SOCIOLOGY OF  
REGIONAL AND LOCAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

**Guide for students**

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## INTRODUCTION

Dear student,

The guide you are holding contains key information about our PhD programme in Sociology of regional and local development. This includes information on its structure and content, the supervision system, students' rights and responsibilities, quality assurance procedures as well as information on programme learning outcomes and enrolment requirements. Although we have tried to answer many of the questions you may have about the programme, we end the brochure with information on who you can contact for any further clarifications or questions.

Briefly, the programme in Sociology of regional and local development exposes you to a vibrant international academic community through which you can cultivate the theoretical and methodological tools necessary to conduct original and meaningful sociological research. The programme encourages you to critically engage with up-to-date research data and the latest scientific knowledge that deals with issues related to regional and local development, and its supervision scheme enables you to closely cooperate with staff whose research interests you share.

The PhD programme is jointly organised by the University of Zadar in Croatia and the University of Teramo in Italy. It was set up and accredited in both countries following several years of successful cooperation between the two institutions. It is the first international joint degree doctoral programme in the Adriatic-Ionian region on the topic of regional and local development which enrolled its first generation of students in the academic year 2010/2011.

We look forward to meeting you in Zadar and Teramo.

### COURSE COORDINATORS

Saša Božić, University of Zadar  
Emilio Cocco, University of Teramo

## INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The PhD programme is jointly organised by the University of Zadar in Croatia and the University of Teramo in Italy. The University of Teramo was founded in 1993 and one of the main reasons for its founding has been the promotion of regional and local development in the Italian province of Abruzzo. Since its establishment, this mission has been successfully accomplished. Today the University of Teramo is recognized in Italy and abroad for its many scientific contributions and transfers of knowledge to its surrounding community, particularly in the areas of agriculture and veterinary medicine. This includes facilitating the production of quality food and wine based on the traditional knowledge of the community. The University of Zadar is an ideal partner to the University of Teramo for this doctoral programme because its overall strategy is based on a similar vision of regional development. Its strategic research is focused on its surrounding islands, coast and regional hinterland, with an emphasis on the transfer of scientific knowledge to the local community. The Zadar area is also a potent environment for developing programs comparable to those in which the University of Teramo has achieved notable results.

Upon enrolment on the doctoral programme students attend lectures and workshops at both institutions. Students are also encouraged to spend part of their PhD programme in a mobility programme at the partner institution. Such an opportunity can be explored through international relations offices at each institution. Furthermore, students are encouraged to have supervisors and co-supervisors from the partner institution.

## CONTENT OF THE PROGRAMME

The aim of research in the field of sociology of regional and local development is to create knowledge that can be used to advance development strategies. The doctoral programme takes as its main theoretical and empirical focus a notion of development as fostering citizenship and subsidiarity. It offers an in-depth understanding of the social, cultural, economic and political dynamics connected with regional and local development processes, recognising in particular the important roles that a wide range of social actors across local government and civil society organisations, as well as individual citizens have for development.

Topics covered as part of the programme include: sociological theories of development, theories of regional and local development, the influence of Europeanisation processes on local and regional self-governance, theories and policies of decentralisation, social transformation and shaping public policies, regionalism, sustainability

as a criteria for development, sociology of tourism and mobility, urbanism, borders and ethnic minorities, creative cities and learning regions. The following research tracks are encouraged within the programme:

- ▶ Global transformations of culture and their impact on local culture.
- ▶ Dynamics of Europeanization and regional / local development (so-called 'multi-scale governance').
- ▶ Models of local development and in particular the 'Adriatic corridor' in the context of regional development policy.
- ▶ Ethical aspects of development policies.
- ▶ Applications of gender mainstreaming in local public policy.
- ▶ Women in local communities as bearers of sustainability.
- ▶ The role of social policy in enhancing competitiveness.
- ▶ The role of education in development.
- ▶ Models of social cohesion in the context of regional and local social policies.
- ▶ Civil society and its activities in local communities.
- ▶ Sustainable development and the evaluation of local community resources.
- ▶ Innovations in public administration, management and market innovation in networking companies.
- ▶ Classical and contemporary sociological approaches to the study of communities.
- ▶ Sociological analysis of paradigms of culture and identity.
- ▶ Normative and projective instruments of regional and local development-related processes.
- ▶ Methods and techniques of field-research in local development.

Although the proposed programme belongs to the field of sociology, it is also open to other related areas of research and to interdisciplinary cooperation. The subject-matter covered by the programme includes insights from other social sciences, such as political science, law, economics, as well as various fields of the humanities, such as cultural studies.

The working languages of the PhD programme are Croatian, Italian and English.

## STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME AND ECTS POINTS

In line with Bologna process requirements regarding the structure of third cycle programmes, the length of the doctoral programme is three years of full-time study. Students who would like to combine doctoral studies with work have the choice to enrol into part-time study which is six years of study.

The doctoral programme consists of two main modules, with the first preceding the second:

- a) a scientific-teaching module aimed at supporting the set-up of PhD research work;
- b) a scientific-research module, aimed at supporting research work and the development of the PhD thesis.

**The scientific-teaching module** consists of a series of compulsory introductory lectures, workshops and consultative teaching during the first and second semester of studies. It covers knowledge and skills in theory, methodology and epistemology crucial for sociological research more generally, as well as specialised knowledge and skills to support the specific interests of each doctoral student. Importantly, the aim of this part of the PhD programme is not to provide students with an exhaustive account of knowledge from the field, but rather to provide entry-points into relevant literature and exemplify how this knowledge can be used as a resource for their own research.

Basic knowledge and skills are acquired through the following lectures:

Lectures	Hours of introductory lectures	Hours of individual work and supervisions	ECTS	Academic staff
Sociological theories and development	8	140	6	Prof. dr. sc. Inga Tomić-Koludrović Prof. Emilio Cocco
Theories of regional and local development	8	140	6	Prof. dr. sc. Vjeran Katunarić Prof. Rossella Di Federico
Quantitative research methods	8	140	6	Prof. dr. sc. Zvezdan Penezić Prof. Nico Bortoletto
Qualitative research methods	8	140	6	Doc. dr.sc. Karin Doolan Prof.ssa Agnese Vardanega
Research design	8	140	6	Prof. dr.sc. Saša Božić Prof. Daniele Ungaro



Specialised knowledge and skills are acquired through workshops where students are introduced to recent research conducted in the field of sociology of regional and local development. These workshops are held by researchers working in this field.

Lectures and workshops are organised at both the University of Zadar and the University of Teramo which gives students the opportunity to become acquainted with teaching and research in another locality and research tradition.

The aim of this initial part of the program is to also encourage the self-perception of students as researchers, which is seen as an important precondition for carrying out independent scientific research.

**The Scientific-research module** encapsulates the original research a student conducts with the support of his/her supervisor, as well as writing up, publishing activities, conference participation and PhD defence.

The students' workload as expressed in ECTS is presented below:

Student responsibilities	ECTS
Scientific-teaching	30
Individualised scientific-research	150
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>

The joint doctoral program has a load of 180 ECTS, whereby 1 ECTS is calculated as the workload of 25-30 hours of teaching or research. The ECTS load for students is divided in 30 ECTS credits for compulsory courses and 150 ECTS credits for individualized scientific research.

Within the teaching part of the programme, ECTS credits can be acquired by:

- a) attending introductory lectures and by taking exams, in the form of written working papers for the 5 compulsory subjects;
- b) participating in thematic workshops organized as part of the programme and in summer schools.

For the attendance and examination of compulsory subjects students can get a total 30 ECTS.

Within the research part of the programme, ECTS points can be acquired by:

- a) producing original scientific research in the areas explored during thematic workshops. Such tasks are considered completed when the student produces written work evaluated by a qualified teacher, who assigns a grade and a number of ECTS adequate to the time spent for that work. In this way a student can get a maximum of 20 ECTS per semester.
- b) preparing and publishing scientific papers on the topic of their doctoral dissertation. A publication in this sense is a text published in a scientific journal or - if the paper is based on a conference presentation – inclusion of the paper in conference proceedings (but only if the paper is published there in its entirety). Students are obliged to produce at least one publication of this kind in the course of the three years of the duration of the program. Assessment of this work and the determination of ECTS assigned is the responsibility of the supervisor. In this way, a student can acquire a maximum of 30 ECTS per semester.
- c) producing and presenting the synopsis of the doctoral dissertation (15 ECTS).
- d) producing and defending the doctoral dissertation (75 ECTS).
- e) undertaking other activities related to the topic of the doctoral dissertation (participation in conferences, roundtables, workshops, summer schools, trips to the partner or other foreign universities, teaching, seminars and colloquia, etc.). The number of ECTS assigned for these activities is determined by the supervisor, based on the assessment of the workload.
- f) undertaking additional activities. Students can achieve up to 5 additional ECTS per semester by undertaking other activities that the supervisor recognizes as necessary in the process of preparing the doctoral dissertation.
- g) implementing collaborative exchanges with other universities (mobility). The recognition of ECTS in these cases is proposed by supervisors and approved by the programme board.

## PROGRESS THROUGH THE PROGRAMME

### 1<sup>st</sup> semester

The first semester starts with introductory courses in ‘Development in the perspective of sociological theory’ and ‘Theories of regional and local development’. These are combined with presentations of research conducted within the sociology of regional and local development which are given by staff involved in the PhD programme who are also potential supervisors to the students. In this way, through workshops, the students are informed about the work of staff, and at the same time about the latest theoretical and methodological trends in their respective specializations. Importantly, students are encouraged to consult with lecturers on the introductory courses about the ways in which their written work for these courses can contribute to the development of their research ideas.

In order to enrol into the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester students are required to pass the two introductory courses and show evidence that they have undertaken other activities in accordance with a 30 ECTS workload. For this purpose students write a diary of activities relevant to the PhD course.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> semester

This semester starts with introductory lectures on ‘Quantitative research methods’, ‘Qualitative research methods’ and ‘Research design’. Like in the first semester, presentations of research within the sociology of regional and local development are given by staff involved in the PhD programme, who are also potential supervisors to the students.

During the second semester students are assigned supervisors. After the supervisor agrees to mentor the student, the PhD programme committee approves the selection. Supervisions include suggestions of literature, discussions, monitoring of the fulfilment of compulsory tasks and progress of work on the PhD dissertation topic. Assignment of a co-supervisor together with a main supervisor is also a possibility.

In consultation with the assigned supervisor and the lecturer who held the ‘Research design’ lectures, students prepare a research proposal outlining the main research questions of their proposed PhD study and then submit for official approval the topic of their PhD dissertation.

In order to enrol into the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester students are expected to pass the three introductory courses and show evidence that they have undertaken other activities

in accordance with a 30 ECTS workload. For this purpose students write a diary of activities relevant to the PhD course. A further prerequisite to complete the second semester is the signature of the supervisor confirming that he/she has approved the draft research proposal.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> semester**

This semester starts with thematic workshops in which the students explain their research proposals to other students and staff members involved in the doctoral programme. Once students have received approval for their research proposal, they go on to prepare the dissertation synopsis (in consultation with their supervisor).

The prerequisite for enrolment into the fourth semester is the signature of the supervisor confirming that he/she has approved the dissertation synopsis, as well as another signature of the supervisor confirming that the student has carried out other activities in accordance with a 30 ECTS workload.

### **4<sup>th</sup> semester**

This semester starts with the defence of the synopsis of the doctoral dissertation, taking place at a thematic workshop in front of students and a committee composed of three academic staff members appointed by the Council of postgraduate studies and the University Senate upon recommendation from the Council of the postgraduate programme. Through discussions taking place at this workshop, students receive feedback on the quality of their synopsis and suggestions on how to improve it.

If the defence is successful, during the fourth semester, students start gathering the data for their PhD thesis.

The prerequisite for entry into the fifth semester is the signature of the supervisor confirming that the student has carried out all activities in accordance with a 30 ECTS workload.

### **5<sup>th</sup> semester**

During the fifth semester, students continue to gather and analyse data, outline the final structure of their dissertation and begin work on its individual parts. During this time they continuously consult with their supervisor, and - when necessary - with other members of staff participating in the programme.

The prerequisite for entry into the sixth semester is the signature of the supervisor confirming that the student has carried out activities in accordance with a 30 ECTS workload.

## 6<sup>th</sup> semester

During the sixth semester, students are in the final stages of writing their dissertation. They continue consulting with their supervisor and - when necessary - with other members of staff participating in the programme. The studies end with the defence of the doctoral dissertation in front of a committee composed of three academic staff members appointed by the University Senate.

The supervisor's signature verifies that the text of the dissertation is ready for submission to the Committee for the defence of the doctoral work, which is appointed by the University Senate. With the defence of the doctoral dissertation, marking the completion of their study, students acquire the diploma and the academic degree of Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in social science, field of sociology.

### DOCTORAL DISSERTATION DEFENCE

When the text of the dissertation is complete and when a supervisor approves it with his/her signature, the students provide the committee that reviews the dissertation texts with the required number (three or more) of copies of the text. The committee may then ask the students to revise certain parts of the text. When the final text is approved by the committee, it is sent on to Academic expert council for the area of social studies of the University of Zadar or to the Doctorate Council of the University of Teramo for formal acceptance.

Once the Council of postgraduate studies at the University of Zadar accepts the assessment of the committee in charge of reviewing the dissertation, the Council of the postgraduate programme proposes the committee for the defence of the doctoral dissertation. The committee for the defence of the doctoral dissertation consists of three members, including one expert who is neither a member of teaching staff at the University of Zadar nor the University of Teramo. If required by the nature of the dissertation topic, the committee for the defence of the doctoral dissertation can be made up of more than three members.

The date of defence of a doctoral dissertation is published on the notice boards and on the web page of the University of Zadar and of the University of Teramo, ten days before the defence. The defence takes place before the committee for the defence of the doctoral dissertation and is open to the public. The dissertation is defended successfully if it is positively evaluated by the majority of the members of the committee.

Once the text is finally edited, taking into account remarks from committee members at the defence, the students need to submit ten bound copies of their dissertation signed by their supervisor.

## SUPERVISION SYSTEM

We see the quality of the supervision system as crucial for securing the quality of PhD research.

The system is based on flexible relations between supervisors and students throughout the PhD programme, with the supervisor having the following responsibilities: assisting students to choose the final topic of the doctoral dissertation, assisting and collaborating with students during their research endeavour and continuously following their PhD activities, cooperating in the preparation of research papers and supporting their publication, evaluating the student's research work by means of tutorial reports and evaluation of other activities, providing support for preparing the public presentation of dissertation results, as well as support in planning possible exchanges with foreign scientific research institutions. In their professional relations, students and supervisors are required to comply with the guidelines of the Ethical Codes of the University of Zadar and the University of Teramo.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CAREER TRACKS

After the completion of their doctoral studies, students will have empirical and theoretical knowledge enabling them to evaluate new developments in the field of sociology of regional and local development. Also, they will have the ability to transcend the limits of existing knowledge in the field and to contribute to the innovation of research activities. Furthermore, successful students will have the abilities to create, analyse and evaluate new research methods and instruments, as well as the skills to cooperate with persons of different cultural backgrounds.

Students will also have developed an independent attitude towards research, a sense of respect for others and a sound professional ethic. This means that students are asked to both commit to innovative theoretical and empirical research and also take responsibility for the successful implementation of the research plan, the social utility of its results and its potential negative consequences.

The program is designed so that it will ultimately result in original doctoral work from which students can publish articles in scientific journals with an international reviewing process. Upon completion of the doctoral studies, students will have systematic knowledge of their area of research work and of the methods used in the chosen discipline. They will be capable of acting as independent researchers, to possess appropriate communication and presentation skills, as well as skills in project management.

The PhD in Sociology of regional and local development educates future professionals who will be able to participate in interdisciplinary research teams, to provide assessments of theoretical and methodological problems and to give informed interpretations of research problems in which sociological expertise is necessary or desirable.

The joint doctoral study of sociology of regional and local development ensures the acquisition of different competencies for different career paths, both in the public and private sectors. The completion of the program provides the successful student with a wide range of career opportunities including academic and educational careers, as well as work in state administration, development agencies, social work, health and social care, journalism, advertising sector, consulting services.

## STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the right to:

- ▶ quality guidance from a supervisor supervising their doctoral research
- ▶ consult regularly with academic staff members
- ▶ access all institutional resources in the same manner as students enrolled at undergraduate and graduate levels
- ▶ support with organising mobility activities
- ▶ express their opinions about the doctoral programme and provide suggestions for improving it.

Throughout their studies, students are expected to:

- ▶ attend classes regularly and actively participate in them, fulfilling the responsibilities assigned by their teachers and supervisors
- ▶ submit written statements to the supervisor about their fulfilment of various activities that are a part of the PhD programme
- ▶ abide by the rules of the Code of Ethics of the University of Zadar and the University of Teramo
- ▶ cover the costs of their study.



## PART-TIME STUDY

Due to its intensive research oriented approach, the program is designed and primarily structured for full-time students. However, in case of enrolment of well-qualified candidates who - because of their professional commitments - are not able to study full-time, a special part-time curriculum is developed allowing for completion of studies within six years.

The rights and responsibilities of part-time students are the same as for full-time students, with the exception of the prolonged time frame needed for the completion of studies.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

The University of Teramo and the University of Zadar agree on common academic values and work together to develop an inter-institutional culture of quality. Both institutions agree that quality assurance and joint responsibility are key elements for the successful organization of a joint study program.

Each partner institution carries out quality assurance procedures for the joint PhD programme, according to the quality assurance system already in place.

The quality and efficiency of performance in the teaching part of the program is monitored through students' evaluations and during the presentation of their work produced during the semester.

In the research part of the programme, the main forms of monitoring the quality and efficiency of performance of the doctoral programme are public defences of dissertation proposals, public defences of doctoral dissertations, the evaluation of results of scientific research and the requirement to publish scientific papers.

The quality and efficiency of the programme is monitored by evaluating examination results, student surveys and by means of feedback from former students. When the results of examinations are evaluated, it is established whether the students have acquired the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities. Furthermore, after the end of the programme students are interviewed about the quality of the teaching and supervision. The results of student feedback are taken into account in curriculum changes and teaching and supervision practices.

## ADMISSIONS

A maximum of 10 students can be admitted to the programme. The criteria for enrolment into the PhD programme are as follows:

- ▶ Completed Master's degree in Sociology with a minimum Grade Point Average of 3.5 (on a scale of 1-5) for Croatian applicants, or equivalent for international applicants, or a minimum Grade Point Average of 3.0 (on a scale of 1-5) for Croatian applicants, or equivalent for international applicants, with the added condition of one published scientific article and two references from academic staff familiar with the applicant's academic record; OR
- ▶ Completed Master's degree in the social sciences and humanities or other related academic areas with a minimum Grade Point Average of 3.5 (on a scale of 1-5) for Croatian applicants, or equivalent for international applicants, with the added condition of one published article which indicates the applicant's ability to analyse social phenomena and the condition to pass supplementary exams;
- ▶ Good knowledge of English.

The decision on whether an applicant needs to take supplementary exams or whether the applicant's previous academic experiences can be recognised as part of the PhD programme is made by the PhD Programme Committee.

Applications should include a completed application form and:

- ▶ Copy of the master's degree certificate,
- ▶ Copy of the diploma supplement or official list of courses with grades obtained and grade point average,
- ▶ Completed form for the recognition of an international academic qualification (for students whose degree is not from a Croatian higher education institution),
- ▶ Two academic references (for students whose grade point average is below 3,0),
- ▶ Confirmation of English language skills,
- ▶ Copy of the certificate of nationality (for Croatian applicants),

- ▶ Copy of the passport (for international applicants),
- ▶ CV which includes academic and professional activities,
- ▶ Motivation letter that states the applicant's research interests and possible PhD research topic relating to the sociology of regional and local development (up to 3600 characters),
- ▶ List of publications and conference presentations (for applicants who need to meet the requirement of one published scientific article it is necessary to submit a copy of the article),
- ▶ Confirmation of payment of application fee made to the University of Zadar's bank account.

A first level selection is based on the review of submitted documentation, with a shortlist of candidates who qualify for an interview. The second level of selection is made by means of an interview with the candidate. Two members of staff involved in the PhD programme interview the candidate. The final decision on admission is made by the program committee and is based on the documents provided by the candidate and on reports about the results of the interview.

## CONTACT US

### COURSE COORDINATOR, UNIVERSITY OF ZADAR

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