



**Agreement on the
Joint Master's Programme in Political Science – Integration and Governance (PoSIG)**

Approved by the Coordinators Board 25 April 2023 in Salzburg

between

University of Salzburg (PLUS)
Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje (UKIM)
European University of Tirana (UET)
University of Tirana (UTIR)
University of Business and Technology (UBT) - Pristina
University of Sarajevo (UNSA)
Sarajevo School of Science Technology (SSST)
University of Trieste (UTri)
University of Prishtina (UP)
University of Montenegro (UMO)

In order to develop international opportunities for students of the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) listed above, and in order to strengthen international ties between these institutions, this agreement establishes a Joint Master's Programme in PoSIG.

In this cooperation, the listed HEI are referred to as "PoSIG University Partners" (PoSIG-UP).

1 Objectives

This agreement provides students of PoSIG-UP the opportunity to receive a joint diploma from at least two and at most four PoSIG-UP, as follows

- the academic joint master's degree in Political Science – Integration and Governance (PoSIG) as well as
- the rights pertaining to them under local law as graduates of the two to four PoSIG-UP.

The prerequisite to obtaining the diploma is the successful fulfilment of the requirements indicated in this agreement and in the PoSIG curriculum (see Appendix A).

The number of degree-awarding PoSIG-UP (min. 2 and max. 4 POSIG-UPs) depends on the offered qualification tracks students can choose to complete the required specialization modules and courses, as set in the curriculum (see Appendix A).

The objectives in terms of the students' employability, the society, the scientific community, and the labour market are elaborated in detail in Article 2 (3) of the curriculum, Appendix A)

2 Admission of Students

Students are selected and registered as joint degree candidates by the Coordinators Board (see Article 6) based on shared admission criteria (see Appendix B).

As students are required to attend at least 4 terms at least at two different PoSIG-UP, in their application, candidates must select ...

- their modules of specialisation, and
- the POSIG-UPs they will attend during their first year of studies (both semesters).

Registration as a regular student is valid for the full study cycle at all POSIG-UPs the student will attend during his/her studies (min. 2 and max. 4).

Registration of PoSIG students is documented by the PoSIG coordinators (see Article 7).

This registration substitutes the need for records of the general as well as the special university entrance qualifications and legalisation.

The nomination process is explained in Appendix B.

Joint degree candidates shall be subject to the standard rules, regulations, and enrolment procedures of the host institutions. They shall register with the host institution only for those parts of the PoSIG programme which will be carried out under the responsibility of that host institution.

Students in the PoSIG programme shall, in terms of the registration procedure and supporting services (supervision, language training, rooming, social integration etc.), be granted all privileges of candidates of “mobility programmes.”

3 PoSIG Courses and Teaching Staff

Coordinators of the PoSIG-UPs nominate their PoSIG courses based on joint course- and module standards to the Coordinators Board (see Appendix A).

Instructors whose courses are listed in the PoSIG course programme are automatically nominated as examiners for these courses, as well as for master’s thesis supervision and defence in the course module.

Instructors and their courses have to comply with the following criteria in order to be accepted for the PoSIG curriculum:

- Proof of research and/or teaching experience in the relevant field.
- Involvement in international activities such as staff exchange, participation in workshops and conferences.
- Full compliance of the course with the requirements of the PoSIG curriculum in terms of subject, teaching methodology, learning outcomes and assessment methodology/examination rules as defined in the curriculum and the PoSIG Teaching Handbook (see Appendix A and F and Article 4; ESG 1.2; ESG 1.3).
- Full participation in all required quality management activities and the PoSIG-UP’s eLearning environments (eLearning platforms, eLibraries, plagiarism control for all student papers, ePortfolio).

PoSIG-UP offering their services in the same town or region can jointly offer their PoSIG courses (i.e., joint courses and/or instructor mobility). In the event of such a cooperation, the partners have to agree on which HEI will be the degree awarding PoSIG-UP among them. Partners have to propose their plans for regional cooperation to the Curriculum Board one year in advance.

Opportunities for instructor training are part of the POSIG-UP activities. The PoSIG-Coordinators are in charge of ensuring that local instructors participate in and take advantage of such opportunities (annual teacher training and quality weeks, teaching handbook, exchange with other instructors, etc.; ESG 1.5).

4 Exams, Master’s Thesis and Master’s Thesis Defence

The assessment criteria and method, as well as grading criteria, have been published in advance at www.posig.info (ESG 1.3).

Course and module examinations shall be organised under the responsibility and regulation of each POSIG-UP offering the course/module. POSIG-UPs impose their individual examination and grading regulations. In order to convert local grades into a common grading scale, a grading convention agreed upon by all POSIG-UPs is used following the ECTS grading scheme (Appendix C).

The master's thesis is supervised by two instructors from two different PoSIG-UP who teach courses in modules related to the topic of the thesis.

The final master's thesis defence takes place in front of an examination board, organised, and headed by the local coordinator of the PoSIG-UP in which the student completed their studies. The examination board consists of both thesis supervisors along with two examiners who teach in the student's field of specialization. The members of the examination board represent all the POSIG-UPs that will award the joint degree. The examination board decides by mutual agreement

- on the final grade of the master's thesis in countries where only the master's thesis is graded (based on the thesis itself and on its defence, and
- on both grades in countries where the master's thesis and its defence are graded separately.

In case an examiner or coordinator cannot be present during the defence, he or she can participate via video conference.

Details are defined in the curriculum in Appendix A.

5 Awarding the Joint Degree

The joint degree shall only be awarded after the student has completed his/her studies in accordance with the PoSIG curriculum by attending two to four POSIG-UPs (90 ECTS from courses of the programme, 30 ECTS for the master's thesis and its defence).

The joint diploma will be issued

- as an official legal record of awarding by the last POSIG-UP the student attends, i.e. the POSIG-UP where the master's thesis is completed and the master's thesis defence takes place. It includes the diploma supplement (according to Article IX.3 of the Lisbon Recognition Convention from 11 April 1997) which contains a detailed overview of the student's achievements at all POSIG-UPs attended.
- additionally, as a certificate containing the logos of all POSIG-UPs and signed by all POSIG-UPs the student has attended during their PoSIG studies.

The PoSIG Executive Director (see Article 6) shall be in charge of the diploma-issuing process. He or she will be provided with all the necessary documents and information by the PoSIG coordinators of all POSIG-UPs attended by the student.

6 Multilateral Programme Coordination

In order to establish a multilateral, transparent and effective management for the PoSIG curriculum, each institution will nominate a Programme Coordinator responsible for the implementation of the programme in accordance with the terms of this agreement. Each institution may name a Deputy Coordinator. Each Programme Coordinator will provide the partner institution with all the necessary information for the promotion and implementation of the programme.

Coordinating Institution:

As stated below, the coordinating institution is the home institution of the elected Executive Director, i.e., the Head of the Coordinators Board.

Coordinators Board (CB):

The CB consists of persons nominated by the POSIG-UPs as coordinators. The responsibilities of the CB are:

- academic and strategic coordination of the PoSIG programme including the recognition of courses, decision on the annual course programme and its publication.
- selection of prospective students (regulated in Appendix B);
- allocation/award of scholarships, if available.
- application for national and international projects and funding supporting the implementation and development of the PoSIG programme (e.g., Erasmus+ joint degree mobility grants, Jean Monnet networks etc.);
- financial management.

For student issues, the CB has to consult the Student Board, and for quality issues, it has to consult the Quality Assurance Board as defined below.

Quality Assurance Board (QAB):

Each Coordinator nominates the PoSIG quality manager for his/her institution. The quality managers of all POSIG-UPs meet in the Quality Assurance Board.

The QAB acts independently from the CB. The responsibilities of the QAB are:

- supervision of the CB regarding the coordination of the PoSIG programme and the criteria for the selection of students and instructors.
- review of the design and management of tools supporting high-quality teaching practices and learning
- continuous evaluation of courses, master's thesis supervision and all examination practices.
- preparation of QA reports.
- preparation of reports addressed to external reviewers in cooperation with the CB.

Alumni & Student Board (ASB):

The Coordinator of each POSIG-UP supports students and Alumni to form an Alumni & Student Board.

The ASB represents students enrolled in the PoSIG programme and Alumni. The duties of the ASB are to

- represent students' rights and interests and to monitor whether these are taken into consideration by the POSIG-UP;
- support and review the suggestions and decisions of the CB and QAB.
- nominate one or two members of the SB to the QAB.

Decision-making:

The CB, the QMB, and the SB follow the same procedures for decision-making:

- The members of each board elect the Head and Deputy Head of the Board for a two-year period, beginning with the election. The Head of the Board is responsible for the organization of the Board's work and decision-making procedures. The Deputy Head assumes the responsibilities of the Head of the Board if she or he is not present or if the Head of the Board asks to be replaced for a specific activity.
- In general, decisions are made by consensus.
- If the consensual decision is not possible, the board members decide with a majority (50% +1).
- It is possible to carry out ballots via email. In this case, only responses arriving within 5 days are counted.

Executive Director of the PoSIG Joint Master's Programme:

The elected Head of the CB is the "Executive Director of the PoSIG Joint Master's Programme". She/he is responsible for the following:

- planning and managing the PoSIG Joint Master's Programme, including its business plan, communications and further development;
- assuring the maintenance of all information services.
- organising the student selection process.
- coordinating the PoSIG courses, coordinating among all PoSIG-UP
- keeping a schedule of all PoSIG master's thesis defences.
- organising the degree awarding process.
- supporting all boards of the PoSIG Joint Master's consortium and the execution of their decisions;
- presenting the PoSIG Joint Master's Programme to stakeholders.

Course Programme:

The nomination of courses by the CB follows the criteria defined in Article 3 of this Agreement. The course programme is published at www.posig.info and provides links to the PoSIG-UPs course registers and their place in the curriculum (see Article 7). The course descriptions are in accordance with the requirements defined in the PoSIG teaching handbook.

Recognition of Courses:

Recognition of courses for the PoSIG curriculum is granted in accordance with the PoSIG course program published at www.posig.info. Recognition of a course not listed in the PoSIG course programme needs the supporting vote of the coordinators of all POSIG-UPs attended by the student.

Quality Assurance:

Internal QA procedures (including ongoing monitoring and periodic programme reviews) follow the ESG and are defined in detail in the PoSIG Quality Management Handbook (Appendix D).

For external QA, every PoSIG-UP should apply for programme accreditation with the respective national bodies. Additionally – taking the European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes into account – they should apply for single accreditation via an EQAR-registered quality assurance agency.

7 Information, Service, Documentation and Transparency

Examination Book:

The PoSIG Examination Book (See Annex E) is used for record-keeping for each student. It is maintained by the Executive Director and can be made available, including a list of alumni, to the Coordinators Board. It keeps track of required courses based on the curriculum and is listing all courses recognised by the coordinators,

- the ECTS workload of courses, the grading, and the date of completion.
- internship records
- names of supervisors and required documents
- the MA thesis project and related records including the antiplagiarism check

Software and Communication

Each PoSIG-UP provides e-mail addresses and an eLearning platform including library access available for PoSIG students enrolled at their institution.

Each MA thesis project must undergo an anti-plagiarism check prior to its defence being scheduled. One of the student's degree-granting institutions makes the antiplagiarism software available.

Information about PoSIG

All PoSIG-UPs include the offered PoSIG degree programme in their regular information systems. Together, the PoSIG-UPs support the information activities organised by the CB. These information activities encompass:

- the design of printed materials to be used by the PoSIG-UPs;
- the continuous update of the website www.posig.info and an email service to all coordinators. The website contains information about the curriculum, learning outcomes, application procedure and selection criteria, possible mobility tracks, the academic profile of the PoSIG-UPs and their contribution to the course programme, as well as the policy for quality assurance of the programme and available grants for students.
- the presentation of the Joint Degree Programme at international study fairs and MA study programme databases.

The website www.posig.info is hosted by PLUS and UBT coordinates the content services in cooperation with the Executive Director.

8 Participation Costs and Business Plan

The PoSIG-UP applies its regulations on participation costs to all students registered in the PoSIG curriculum for the period of their active study at that institution, but not during study periods where students are attending another PoSIG-UP. Students can find information about the participation costs policy of all PoSIG-UP at www.posig.info.

Regarding the costs for the administration of PoSIG:

- The PoSIG-UPs agree to send their local coordinator, local QM expert, and one student to meetings of the relevant boards, as defined in Article 6, at their own expense.
- The coordinating partner hosting the Executive Director of the PoSIG Joint Degree Programme will receive 500 € per PoSIG graduate for his/her activities. Only PoSIG-UP in which the alumnus studied during the course of his/her studies contribute to this amount i.e. if the student was enrolled in four PoSIG-UP, the contribution will be 125€ per PoSIG-UP and term.
- The PoSIG-UPs agree to charge no costs for the operative management and technical support, application system, website and learning environment to the PoSIG-UPs consortium for the duration of this contract (see Article 9).

The PoSIG-UPs will apply for national and international funding to finance local services for the PoSIG Joint Degree Programme and for grants for students (and probably instructors) participating in the Programme (Erasmus+ Joint Degree Grants, Jean Monnet Network etc.).

The PoSIG-UPs must prove their capacity to fulfil the requirements of the PoSIG curriculum and this agreement.

9 Duration, Amendment, Review and Termination of Agreement

This agreement shall be in force from 1 July 2023 and be binding upon the parties until 30 October 2030. It shall be subject to revision, modification, or renewal by mutual written agreement.

The agreement may be terminated at the request of either institution, provided such a request is made in writing at least twelve months before the termination becomes effective for the PoSIG-UP. Any termination of this agreement must consider the rights of the students already participating in or accepted for any exchange to complete the parts of the study programme, which will be carried out under the responsibility of the host institution.

In the event of a breach by a consortium partner (defaulting party) of its obligations under this institutional agreement or the contract, which is irremediable, or which is not remedied within 30 calendar days of a written notice from the coordinating institution, the other parties in the CB may jointly decide to terminate this institutional agreement with respect to the defaulting party. All-access rights granted to the defaulting party shall cease immediately. The project work of the defaulting party shall be assigned to the other parties or those nominated by them and acceptable to the CB.

The CB can decide about the inclusion of another HEI to the PoSIG consortium based on a proposal of the coordinating PoSIG-UP.

An evaluation of this Agreement will be initiated by the coordinating PoSIG-UP at least twelve months prior to its expiration, to ascertain if the programme should be continued and, if so, how it might be improved.

10 Application of the Law

This institutional agreement shall be construed according to and governed by the law of Austria.

11 Conflict Resolution

In case of conflict between the POSIG-UPs resulting from issues regarding the implementation of the Joint Degree Programme, the parties involved shall make the effort to come to an amicable arrangement quickly and in the spirit of good cooperation. If no amicable solution can be reached, the POSIG-UPs will accept a mediation process. If conflicts cannot be resolved in this manner, the matter shall be decided in accordance with the jurisdiction of Austria.

Appendices

Appendix A: PoSIG curriculum

Appendix B: Criteria and procedure for student selection

Appendix C: Convention for the conversion of grades

Appendix D: Quality Management Handbook

Appendix E: Examination book

Appendix F: Teaching Handbook

including forms for course and module description

Appendix G: Student services and student elections

Appendix H: Diploma supplement

IN WITNESS THEREOF this agreement has been signed by the proper officers of each institution.

Institution: University of Sarajevo's Faculty of Political Science

Nominated PoSIG Coordinator: Professor Nedžma Džananović Miraščija, PhD

email address: nedzma.dzananovic@fpn.unsa.ba

Signature of the Rector or Chancellor:



Date:

10.07.2023.
0101-7426/23

Seal:

