wcm260 - Comparative Research and Planning Practice

The aim of this course is to compare planning systems, practices and cultures in different countries (with a focus on Europe and Asia) and to draw lessons from such comparisons. A supplementary aim of the course is to provide students with the methodological tools (e.g. lesson drawing; policy transfer) to do international comparative research. Comparative analysis allows students to determine the possibilities of transferring planning (best) practices from one specific national/planning context to another, to critique different systems as well as to draw other generic lessons from the comparisons.

After completion of the course students will be able to (6A) (6B):
1. Compare the historic, cultural and political contexts that shape different planning systems (2I) (5C)
2. Describe how specific planning tools and techniques operate within a particular context (3A) (3C) (3D)
3. Apply concepts, tools and techniques from ‘lesson drawing’, ‘policy transfer’ and ‘comparative research’ (1B) (2K) (2L) (5C) (6C)
4. Evaluate the opportunities and challenges for cross cultural learning with regard to particular themes/tools/techniques (1B) (3D) (3F)
5. Collaborate in a systematic way in planning and presenting results of a comparative research project and evaluate comparative analysis produced by peers on their completeness, accuracy and relevance and critically reflect on own research process and outcomes (3E) (6C) (D).

Assignment: After completing this assignment, the student is able to (2D) (2E) (2F) (2G) (2I) (2L) (4A) (4C) (4D) (5A) (5B) (6B):

- Develop a sound problem definition that expresses the relevance and urgency of analyzing a specific spatial planning problem in an international context (1A) (2A) (3G) (4B)
- Assess to what extent a comparison of planning system, policies and practices between two countries is feasible and reliable (1D) (2B) (3A) (5C)
- Compare the historic, cultural and political contexts that shape different planning systems (1F) (5C)
- Describe how specific planning tools and techniques operate within a particular context (1F)
- Identify opportunities and barriers for successful policy transfer (2K) (5D) and Collaborate in a systematic way in planning and presenting results of a comparative research project and evaluate comparative analyses produced by peers on their completeness, accuracy and relevance and critically reflect on own research process and outcomes (3E) (6C) (6D)

Module contents

The aim of the course is to provide students with the methodological tools (e.g. qualitative comparative analysis, case study approach, lesson drawing, policy transfer) to do international comparative research. Comparative analysis allows students to better understand planning systems and practices in their country of origin, to determine possibilities for drawing lessons from planning systems and practices in other (national) planning contexts, to critique different systems as well as to draw other generic lessons from across the borders. Spatial planning practices—including environmental and infrastructure planning ones—remain highly diverse among different countries. Important issues can vary as a result of physical circumstances, institutional designs and national history. National cultures can be supportive or unsupportive of a planned intervention. The institutional context of spatial, environmental and infrastructure planning is closely related to national judicial traditions and constitutional make-up of the state. As a result, strategies to influence spatial development are contingent to national circumstances. The CRPP course will provide an overview of related planning practices, systems and their institutional design. In order to set the context and to explain the history and development of a particular planning system, one individual country is at the focus of each so called ‘case’ lecture. Within the context of each country subsequently the key institutions, powers, limitations and strengths of the planning system are explored through an examination of particular tools, themes and techniques that operate within. Alongside, in the ‘methods’ lectures an introduction is given into qualitative comparative analysis, case study approach, lesson drawing and
policy transfer as useful methods to analyze, understand and draw inspiration from different national planning systems and practices. In addition to completing a written exam, students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of doing comparative research by completing a group assignment with the focus on transferring a (successful) policy/drawing lessons from one national/institutional/cultural context to another while being sensitive and critical towards national/institutional/cultural differences, opportunities and limitations.

Reader’s advisory
Journal articles will be supplied.

Links

Languages of instruction

Duration (semesters)
1 Semester

Module frequency
unlimited

Module capacity
This course is part of the second year of the Double Degree Master Water and Coastal Management and takes place in Groningen.

Reference text
See https://www.rug.nl/ocasys/frw/vak/show?code=GEMCOMPRPP for more information about this course.

Modul level
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Modul art
je nach Studiengang Pflicht oder Wahlpflicht

Lern-Lehrform / Type of program

Vorkenntnisse / Previous knowledge

Examination
Final exam of module
Type of examination
Examination with open questions, Group assignments (and pitch & video/presentation)

Course type
Seminar

SWS
Frequency
Workload attendance
0 h