

# Is the SEEP MSc program the right choice for me?

This document provides information on the SEEP MSc program to support potential students in determining whether SEEP is the right choice for them. The document starts with some brief hard facts, followed by the aims and contents of SEEP, potential employment opportunities for graduates, and finally, information on the composition of SEEP students.

**Language:** English

**Duration:** 4 semesters, full-time

**ECTS:** 120 (incl. 20 for the Master Thesis)

**Cohort size:** up to 60 students per year

**Semester abroad:** possible but not recommended

**Electives:** choose 2 out of 4 "topical" Electives (Social Ecological Economics, Globalisation and Social Policy, Globalisation and Multi-Level Policy, The Political Economy of Inequalities) and 1 out of 3 "methods" Electives

**Formal Pre-Requirements:** essentially none, candidates of most Bachelor programs can be accepted

**Informal Pre-Requirements:** a deep passion for sustainability as well as for social, environmental, political and economic issues; an openness to radical approaches and theories; an international orientation

**Contact:** [seep@wu.ac.at](mailto:seep@wu.ac.at)

## What is SEEP about?

SEEP is an interdisciplinary program with a highly critical approach that attempts to equip students with the knowledge to better understand economic, social, and ecological contemporary challenges and the interconnectedness of those challenges. The program welcomes multiple perspectives, which is why the program is particularly interested in attracting students with a wide range of academic and national backgrounds. It explores policy approaches and the diversity of alternatives with respect to issues such as climate change, social-ecological transformation, inequalities, and the current obsession of modern societies with consumerism and growth. It is meant to train you to be critical of traditional approaches to

economics and public policy and of the ideas that have materialized out of such approaches, e.g. concepts of sustainable development and green growth. Your professors will help you gain insight into subject areas including heterodox economics, social policy, ecological economics, degrowth, governance, economic geography, political ecology, and political science.



## ■ Structure and Content of SEEP

September before the first semester: optional bridging courses in economics, natural sciences, and social sciences

First Semester: mostly theoretical foundations; Courses include research and writing on contemporary policy challenges; the history and philosophy of science; international and European law, institutions and governance; economic growth and development.

Second Semester: mostly theoretical foundations in your chosen Electives and methods courses; Note that SEEP treats quantitative and qualitative methods as equally valid research approaches and teaches them in combination

Third Semester: applies the theories and methodologies encountered in the previous semesters to concrete projects and questions in your previously chosen Electives; a minor course called Service Learning focuses on teamwork and practical community engagement

Fourth Semester: Master Thesis, continuation of Service Learning

For a detailed and up-to-date structure, please visit this page: [wu.ac.at/en/programs/masters-programs/socio-ecological-economics-and-policy/structure-content](https://wu.ac.at/en/programs/masters-programs/socio-ecological-economics-and-policy/structure-content)

Old and current syllabi that give detailed information on the contents of each class can be found in the online course catalogue i.e. VVZ (make sure to select the correct semesters). The course catalogue also includes information on current and previous instructors, registration options, and class schedules. For courses in the SEEP program, go to Master's Programs and then Master's Program in Socio-Ecological Economics and Policy: [vvz.wu.ac.at](https://vvz.wu.ac.at)

## ■ Who SEEP is for and possible job fields after SEEP

SEEP is targeted primarily to students who wish to obtain interdisciplinary theoretical and academic skills, qualifying them for specialist positions in diverse areas of policy and management in government and NGOs, international agencies, research institutes and academia. Furthermore,

the program prepares students who wish to pursue a PhD in economics, social policy or environmental studies or who want to teach and/or research at universities or other institutions. Other possible employment options include: policy analysts, program managers, consultants and advisors in processes relating to sustainability issues, project managers, and policy designers.

More information on career prospects, as well as personal stories of SEEP alumni, can be found here: [wu.ac.at/en/programs/masters-programs/socio-ecological-economics-and-policy/career-prospects](https://wu.ac.at/en/programs/masters-programs/socio-ecological-economics-and-policy/career-prospects)

## ■ SEEP Students

SEEP cohorts are gender balanced and contain students with mixed disciplinary and international backgrounds. The cohorts vary by nationality, but in recent years have consisted of 40% international, 20% international German, and 40% domestic.

SEEP students tend to be very engaged in group discussions and are often politically active in one way or another. Most of them study the program because the content matters to them personally and not only because they want a diploma.

The program establishes peer groups upon enrolment, which are formed with the goal of achieving diversity of backgrounds within each group (in terms of academic discipline, nationality, gender, and age). These groups are supposed to function as learning units within some courses and can help to create mutual learning and cooperation possibilities.

## ■ What will SEEP offer outside of the academic realm?

SEEP will likely make you question many things you might not have otherwise questioned. You may become more critical towards your own consumption and lifestyle habits, as well as towards societal-level issues. As a SEEP student and eventual graduate, maintaining a 'business as usual' approach to individual and collective contemporary challenges may prove difficult!

Among your peers, you will likely find many who will share the same or similar values as you have. If you think you are the fanatic 'eco-war-

rior' of your friend group, wait until you meet your fellow 'SEEPies'. The SEEP community may challenge aspects of your life, but if you share similar values, it can offer you a place of understanding that is hard to find elsewhere.

In addition, SEEP students are known for actively organising excursions, participating in Buddy networks, Language Tandem programs, and the like. Also, the faculty supports various activities that foster connection between SEEP students.

### ■ Working on the side

SEEP is a strict full-time program (i.e. inflexible to work conflicts) and attendance is mandatory in all SEEP courses, making work on the side very difficult. To quote the faculty: *"We encourage our students to make their hands-on experiences in research, society and the private sector, but first of all, we ask them to demonstrate their academic ability."* Full-time internships should also only be pursued during break periods, such as the summer break (July-September), the semester break (February), or the Easter break.

Tutors for first-year students, however, are typically recruited from previous cohorts and second-year SEEP students are highly encouraged to apply for these positions. In general, SEEP students tend to obtain more part-time jobs in the WU Socioeconomics department than students of other Master programs.

Since SEEP students come from such a wide array of disciplines and regions, it is hard to determine the workload during the semester on an individual level. Students with deeper previous knowledge in economics and political science will have an easier time in the first semester compared to those who will be exposed to these topics for the first time. In later semesters, the course-workload tends to decrease and reach an equal level for most students.

### ■ Exchange semester

The faculty advises against pursuing an exchange semester and does not provide up-to-date information on the issue. Some helpful, but perhaps outdated, information can be found in this document: [wu.ac.at/fileadmin/wu/h/programs/master/seep/SEEP\\_Study\\_Abroad\\_Information\\_for\\_Students.pdf](https://wu.ac.at/fileadmin/wu/h/programs/master/seep/SEEP_Study_Abroad_Information_for_Students.pdf)

### ■ How to get in touch with students, graduates, and professors

To get in touch with SEEP faculty members, you can email the address [seep@wu.ac.at](mailto:seep@wu.ac.at) or look up the contact information of each professor online through the WU homepage. A complete list of faculty members can be found here: [wu.ac.at/en/programs/masters-programs/socio-ecological-economics-and-policy/faculty](https://wu.ac.at/en/programs/masters-programs/socio-ecological-economics-and-policy/faculty)

Insider info: Most professors appreciate if you do not contact them directly with questions about the SEEP program if you have not been admitted yet. The SEEP coordinator, who manages the SEEP e-mail account, is always happy to help and connect you to the relevant contacts.

In case you want to gain first-hand insights from a student perspective, it pays off to contact the most current SEEP students (especially since the program is changing from time to time). To get in touch with current students and graduates, you can write a message to the current SEEP mentor [seep-mentor@wu.ac.at](mailto:seep-mentor@wu.ac.at) or join the Facebook group MSc SEEP - Q&A: [fb.com/groups/654294854618366/](https://fb.com/groups/654294854618366/)

You can also contact us, the Students' Union, either via [stv-vwsozoekseep@wu.ac.at](mailto:stv-vwsozoekseep@wu.ac.at) or on Facebook: [fb.com/vwsozoekseep](https://fb.com/vwsozoekseep)

*All information is for general guidance and is provided with no guarantee of completeness or accuracy.*

## Questions? Contact us!

### Student Representation

#### VWL | Economics | Sozioökonomie | SEEP

🌐 [www.vwsozoekseep.at](http://www.vwsozoekseep.at)

✉ [stv-vwsozoekseep@wu.ac.at](mailto:stv-vwsozoekseep@wu.ac.at)

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