



| le savoir vivant |

public opinion  
and democratic  
decisions: how  
to know what the  
population is  
thinking?

# Master of Arts (MA) in public opinion and survey methodology

## GENERAL OUTLINE

### Objectives

Public opinion polls and surveys on social, political and consumer behaviour have grown in importance in recent years. In parallel, methods of data collection as well as techniques and tools for analysis and interpretation of this data have been developed and become more complex. To date, no university courses taking account of this development in the broad sense have been offered. There is now a recognised need for professionals who are able to combine strong theoretical, methodological and technical knowledge of survey research and who are moreover aware of the legal issues related to data processing. This interdisciplinary Master's course, the fruit of collaboration between the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences of the University of Lausanne, the Faculty of Social Sciences and Culture of the University of Lucerne and the Faculty of Economics of the University of Neuchâtel, is intended to teach students how to produce a survey independently, from its design to the analysis of data, both for the public and private sectors.

Distinctive features of the study programme are its multilingualism and multidisciplinary, with the emphasis on both academic and practical aspects.

### Career prospects

- Doctoral training
- Research and teaching at University or UAS level
- Federal and cantonal public administration, Office of Statistics
- Non-governmental and international organisations
- Private and public enterprises in the sector of polling, data collection and analysis (social and market surveys, advertising)
- Banks, insurance, industry (human resources, marketing, etc)
- Political parties, trade unions, lobbies, think-tanks
- Journalism, media, public relations, communication
- Small associative structures, public and private enterprises, SMEs, etc.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Organisers

University of Lausanne  
University of Lucern  
University of Neuchâtel

### Degree awarded

Master of Arts (MA) in Public Opinion and Survey Methodology

### ECTS credits

90

### Duration

3 semesters or according to the regulations of the Faculty of enrolment

### Teaching language

Mainly languages of the site at which courses are given, and English

### Enrolment

Applications to be submitted within the deadline to the Admissions Office of one of the partner Universities

### Contact

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Only the official texts are authentic

[www.unil.ch/masters](http://www.unil.ch/masters)



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Faculté des sciences  
sociales et politiques

## EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

### Description

The Master of Arts includes 90 ECTS credits and is composed of three parts: 1) a common programme giving entitlement to 45 ECTS credits; 2) a special subject worth at least 15 ECTS credits; 3) a dissertation (which may or may not be related to a placement) equating to 30 ECTS credits.

The common programme comprises three modules. Module 1, "Theoretical Foundations of SRM and of Opinion Formation" provides an in-depth understanding of definitions and theories underlying the concepts of public opinion and social, political and consumer behaviour. Module 2, "Survey Research Methodology" covers the various tools and techniques required to organise a survey with respect to both quantitative and qualitative methods. Module 3, "Analysing and Presenting Survey Data" focuses on the analysis of survey data and the visualisation of results. It also provides an introduction to advanced methods of statistical analysis.

### Examinations

Courses and modules are assessed through written work or through written or oral examinations.

### Mobility

The course runs on three University sites and involves mobility on the part of students.

### Skills development

In addition to methodological insight and knowledge, particularly quantitative and statistical, enabling them to design, implement and analyse a survey in the private or public sector, students develop theoretical skills that allow them to understand how chosen methods and research questions can affect results. The course also develops a large number of cross-disciplinary skills such as: discernment, analytical and summarising skills, research experience, acquisition and transmission of knowledge, independence, and the ability to form judgements in the field of specialisation and related areas.

This range of skills, combined with specialist knowledge acquired during their studies, prepares students for professional careers in very varied sectors of activity (see under "Career Prospects").

## SYLLABUS\*

### 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> semester

#### Compulsory courses

Module 1: Bases théoriques de la méthodologie d'enquête et de la formation d'opinion

- The field of survey research methodology (SRM)
- The social foundations of social behaviour and opinion formation (SRM and sociology)
- The social psychology of attitude formation (SRM and social psychology)
- Theories of consumer behaviour (SMR and market research)

Module 2: Survey methodology

- Survey methodology and production of data
- Survey research methods in context: quality and comparison issues
- Introduction to survey statistics
- Questionnaire development and questionnaire design

Module 3: Analyse et présentation des données

- Statistical analysis for survey research
- Introduction to data management and statistical software
- Factorial methods and cluster analysis
- Exploratory techniques, data visualization and data presentation

45 ECTS credits

#### Optional courses

To be chosen from a list of courses offered by partner Faculties.

At least 15 ECTS credits

#### Dissertation

30 ECTS credits

\* Subject to changes

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Admission requirements

Candidates must hold a Swiss Bachelor's degree in one of the following fields: Sociology, Political Science, Media and Communication Sciences, Psychology, Political Economy, Finance, Management or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Scientific Committee.

### Regulations and additional information concerning the course

Website of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences:  
[www.unil.ch/ssp](http://www.unil.ch/ssp)

### Final enrolment dates

30 April.  
Candidates needing a visa to study in Switzerland: 28 February.

### Start of courses

mid-September

### Part-time Master's degree

See Directive 3.12:  
[www.unil.ch/interne/page44629.html#3y](http://www.unil.ch/interne/page44629.html#3y)

### Academic calendar

[www.unil.ch/central/page4804.html](http://www.unil.ch/central/page4804.html)

### General information on studies, career prospects and guidance

Guidance and advisory service:  
[www.unil.ch/soc](http://www.unil.ch/soc)

### Accommodation and financial assistance

Office for socio-cultural affairs:  
[www.unil.ch/sasc](http://www.unil.ch/sasc)

### International students

[www.unil.ch/international](http://www.unil.ch/international)

### Study abroad possibilities

[www.unil.ch/echanges](http://www.unil.ch/echanges)

