

Program in Economic and Public Policy (PEPP)

University of Tsukuba, JAPAN

Graduate School of Business Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences

1. Program Outline

The Program in Economic and Public Policy (PEPP) is an English-taught program offering an MA in International Public Policy. Our program is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become well-trained economists upon graduation, capable of designing, analyzing, and implementing policies using economics, econometrics, and data science, including GIS, satellite imagery, and AI-based analysis. To this end, the program emphasizes the importance of quantitative skills for policy analysis, as well as the development of strong written and oral communication skills in English to effectively convey analytical results to stakeholders.

The program provides comprehensive training across core and applied fields of economics. PEPP faculty members work on a wide range of topics in economics and public policy, including international trade, macroeconomics, microeconomics, economic growth, poverty reduction, health and health policy, public finance and taxation, econometrics, agricultural economics, microfinance and mobile money, environmental issues and environmental policy, and human capital development and education. We aim to contribute to the development of an international community of highly trained professionals who address the ongoing challenges of economic and social development.

Currently, PEPP offers the Joint Japan/World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program (JJ/WBGSP) and the Asian Development Bank–Japan Scholarship Program (ADB-JSP). The program also accepts students supported by JICA, MEXT, and other full-scholarship schemes, as well as self-funded candidates.

During the program, students are required to write a master's thesis based on rigorous quantitative analysis and to present their progress regularly to faculty members and peers. While most students have an undergraduate background in economics, we also admit students from other disciplines—such as engineering, science, statistics, law, business, political science, and sociology—who demonstrate a strong commitment to studying economics at the graduate level. With over twenty years of experience in managing the program, we are confident that students from diverse academic backgrounds can acquire the essential foundations of modern economics, along with advanced quantitative skills, and ultimately become highly competent economists.

The program begins in October with introductory courses, followed by more advanced coursework. Students can take a wide range of applied economics and policy-oriented courses. In addition, they are required to attend weekly research workshops, in which each student presents their progress toward their master's thesis. Students who successfully pass the thesis oral examination and complete at least 30 credits of required coursework will be awarded the degree of MA in International Public Policy.

2.1 Short History of PEPP

PEPP (PEPPM as its predecessor) is the oldest partner program in Japan of the Joint Japan/World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program, a large scholarship program for young professionals from developing countries funded by the Government of Japan and managed by the World Bank in Washington, DC. During the past twenty years, more than a hundred students from over forty developing countries have graduated from PEPP. The University of Tsukuba PEPP is also one of many academic institutions which participate in the Asian Development Bank-Japan Scholarship Program (ADB-JSP).

2.2 Past Scholars in PEPP

1st Cohort (10): All students received their master's degree.

(China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan (2), Macedonia, Guyana, Jordan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania)

2nd Cohort (10): All students received their master's degree.

(Indonesia, Lithuania, Azerbaijan, Peru, Egypt, Jordan, India (2), Nigeria, Zambia)

3rd Cohort (12): 11 students received their master's degree.

(Cambodia, China, Philippines, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Chile, Mexico, Egypt, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Uganda)

4th Cohort (14): 13 students received their master's degree.

(Cambodia, Philippines, Vietnam, Rumania, Uzbekistan, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, Egypt, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania)

5th Cohort (12): All students received their master's degree.

(Mongolia, Vietnam, Armenia, Guyana, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe)

6th Cohort (14): All students received their master's degree.

(China, Fiji, Philippines, Brazil (3), Chile, Ecuador, Nepal, Pakistan, Kenya (2), Ethiopia, Zimbabwe)

7th Cohort (14): 13 students received their master's degree.

(Fiji, Myanmar, Vietnam, Argentina, Bangladesh, Kenya (2), Malawi, Nicaragua, Tanzania (2), Nigeria, Brazil, Mongolia)

8th Cohort (22): All students received their master's degree. Economics (11), International Public Policy (11)

(Indonesia, Mongolia (2), Philippines, Vietnam, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru, Afghanistan, India (3), Nepal, Ethiopia, Kenya (3), Nicaragua, Senegal, Tanzania (2))

9th Cohort (15): All students received their master's degree. Economics (7), International Public Policy (8)

(Philippines, Vietnam, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Pakistan (2), Sri Lanka, Kenya (3), Malawi (3), Uganda)

10th Cohort (15): All students received their master's degree. Economics (9), International Public Policy (6)

(Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tajikistan, Nepal, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Malawi (2),

Uganda, Zimbabwe (3))

11th Cohort (17): All students received their master's degree. Economics (10), Public Policy (7)
(Indonesia, Mongolia, Vietnam (2), Nepal, Pakistan (2), Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Zimbabwe (4),
Cambodia, China, Bangladesh)

12th Cohort (14): All students received their master's degree. Economics (11), Public Policy (3)
(Indonesia, Kyrgyz, Uzbekistan, Algeria, Pakistan (3), Ethiopia (2), Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia,
Zimbabwe)

13th Cohort (18): All students received their master's degree. Economics (16), Public Policy (2)
(Myanmar, Uzbekistan, Guyana, Afghanistan (2), Bangladesh, Pakistan (3), Sri Lanka, Botswana,
Ethiopia (3), Liberia, Malawi, Tanzania, Solomon Islands)

14th Cohort (13): 12 students received their master's degree. Economics (12)
(Malawi, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Sudan, Liberia, Timor-Leste, Guyana, Bangladesh, Afghanistan
(4)) One student from Pakistan who resumed study after deferment enrolled with the 15th cohort.

15th Cohort (16): All students received their master's degree. Economics (16)
(Pakistan (3), Liberia (2), Malawi (2), Zimbabwe (2), Indonesia (2), Algeria, Afghanistan, Mongolia,
Bhutan, Myanmar)

16th Cohort (9): All students received a Master of Arts in International Public Policy* (9)
(Fiji, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Tanzania, Malawi, Ethiopia, Philippines, Afghanistan (2))
*Degree name changed to 'Master of Arts in International Public Policy'

17th Cohort (10): 8 students received a Master of Arts in International Public Policy (8)
(China (3), Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malawi (2), Philippines, Samoa, Nigeria)

18th Cohort (6): All students received a Master of Arts in International Public Policy (6)
(China, Mongolia, Malawi (2), Kenya, Tanzania)

19th Cohort (14): All students received a Master of Arts in International Public Policy (14)
(China (2), Pakistan (2), Uzbekistan (2), Paraguay, Papua New Guinea, El Salvador, Afghanistan,
Ethiopia, Malawi, Ghana, Zambia)

20th Cohort (13): 12 students are currently enrolled in the master's degree program.
(China (4), Pakistan, Malawi, Azerbaijan, Sierra Leone, Nepal, Philippines (3), Bangladesh)

21st Cohort (10): 10 students are currently enrolled in the master's degree program.
(Somalia, Indonesia (2), Pakistan, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Malawi (3), Zimbabwe)

2.3 Numbers of Program Enrollment by Country (Total: 278 from 60 countries)

As of April 2026

Africa (16)		East Asia & Pacific (13)	
Botswana	1	Cambodia	4
Ethiopia	15	China	14
Ghana	2	Fiji	4
Kenya	14	Indonesia	10
Liberia	4	Mongolia	8
Malawi	21	Myanmar	3
Nigeria	5	Papua New Guinea	2
Rwanda	1	Philippines	10
Senegal	1	Samoa	1
Sierra Leone	1	Solomon Islands	1
Somalia, Fed. Rep.	1	Timor-Leste	1
Sudan	2	Tonga	1
Tanzania	13	Vietnam	8
Uganda	3		
Zambia	3		
Zimbabwe	13		
Middle East and North Africa (5)		South Asia (5)	
Afghanistan	11	Bangladesh	7
Algeria	2	Bhutan	4
Egypt	3	India	6
Jordan	2	Nepal	7
Pakistan	22	Sri Lanka	3
Latin America & Caribbean (12)		Europe & Central Asia (9)	
Argentina	1	Armenia	2
Brazil	6	Azerbaijan	2
Chile	2	Kazakhstan	2
Ecuador	2	Kyrgyz Republic	2
El Salvador	1	Lithuania	1
Guatemala	1	North Macedonia	1
Guyana	4	Romania	1
Mexico	1	Tajikistan	1
Nicaragua	2	Uzbekistan	7
Paraguay	1		
Peru	3		
Venezuela	1		

2.3 Long History of PEPP

PEPP started out in April, 1995 as the Program in Policy Management (PPM) under the Graduate School of International Political Economy (GSIPE) of the University of Tsukuba. In accordance with an agreement between the university and the World Bank Institute (WBI), the PPM was established as a trans-disciplinary program targeting mid-career professionals from developing and transition countries. The first cohort consisted of ten young professionals from developing countries. Subsequently, recruitment was carried out every two years.

The program received sponsorship for scholars from developing countries through the Joint Japan/World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program (JJ/WBGSP). To be eligible, a candidate had to be midcareer (preferably under 35 years old), with work experience related to the policy-making process and/or research (public or private sector), or related institutions, particularly in an economics-related area. Scholars who completed course work and successfully defended their master theses within two years were awarded a master's degree in International Political Economy.

After the expiration of the first agreement (which covered Cohorts 1 to 3), the university and the WBI extended the program. In the second contract (covering April 2001 ~ March 2007), three more batches (Cohorts 4 to 6) were awarded scholarships. The PPM was then placed under the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences (which superseded the GSIPE). It began to accept scholars funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). A special extension of the second contract provided funding for Cohort 7 (April 2007 to March 2009).

With the success of the program for over ten years, funding increased and more scholarship grants were provided. Starting in April 2009, the program offered two alternative courses: Course in Economic Policy and Course in International Public Policy. To reflect these changes, the PPM changed its name to the Program in Economic and Public Policy Management (PEPPM). Meanwhile, the AfDB and Japan's Ministry of Finance agreed on AfDB's withdrawal from the scholarship program. However, a student from Indonesia sponsored by a project for human resource development of the country's Ministry of Finance was admitted to study in the program.

In April 2011, the IADB and Japan's Ministry of Finance agreed on IADB's withdrawal from the scholarship program. Asian scholars, however, filled the gap left by the Latin American scholars, as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) started to award scholarships to Asian professionals. In recognition of PEPPM's outstanding contribution in helping the University of Tsukuba to internationalize and to provide high quality education, the university administration conferred the program the "University President's Prize" in 2013.

PEPPM adopted several changes with the entry of Cohort 11 (2015-17), not least of which was the shortening of its name to "Program in Economic and Public Policy (PEPP)". The master's program was also shortened from two years to eighteen months, as other programs in the university had shown that students could successfully take on the study/research load towards graduation within a shorter program duration. The start of the master's program was moved from April to October too, synchronizing the academic schedule with that of school/university openings in many other countries. A significant implication of these changes was that the program was opened up to more potential applicants, with PEPP recruiting students on an annual basis, as opposed to once every two years previously.

Following reorganization in the university, PEPP was classified as one of the Special English Programs, and was moved, still under the umbrella of the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, to the Master's Program in International Area Studies. The Course in Economic Policy conferred the degree of Master of Arts in Economics and the Course in Public Policy conferred the degree of Master of Public Policy. The end of Academic

Year (AY) 2018, however, saw the closure of the Course in Public Policy, and all Cohort 14 students graduated from the Course in Economic Policy.

From Cohort 15, the program has accepted scholars sponsored by the SDGs Global Leader Program of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Five scholars who received this scholarship enrolled in 2019, and we expect this scholarship support to continue.

In AY2020, the University of Tsukuba carried out an organizational restructuring of its graduate schools in order to better respond to the needs of today's rapidly changing world. As part of this reorganization, PEPP was incorporated into the Master's Program in International Public Policy, under which international and Japanese students will acquire expertise in policy making and policy analysis particularly relevant for developing countries. The new degree to be conferred is Master of Arts in International Public Policy. The program will continue to focus on economics with some slight changes in the curriculum.

From Cohort 18, along with the SDGs Global Leader Program of JICA, the program began to accept students from other JICA scholarship programs. The program has also been reverted to a 2 year format, whilst retaining all the benefits of annual recruitment, with two Cohorts studying side-by-side concurrently.