

Tilburg University – Tilburg School of Economics and Management

Programme: MSc Economics Specialization: Sustainable Development

As many of us towards the end of Bachelor Studies at IES, I was thinking where I should pursue my master's degree. I felt that I was fulfilled with outstanding knowledge, but I was missing the specific purpose of my future career. I started to crave for a career path where I could contribute to society and where I could create real positive externalities. At the same time, I had an urge for another international experience and thus, I start searching for programmes abroad. After an intensive search, I found a programme in Economics at Tilburg University. The programme offers everything I was looking for, further elaboration of analytical skills as well as focus on sustainable development and environmental economics. Therefore, if you are looking for an opportunity where you could combine hard skills acquired at IES and applied them in sustainability or development field, this might be the right choice for you. However, if this is not your case, please, do not stop reading right now, because what is one of the most appealing things about this programme is that you are able to adjust it almost completely based on your interest (see courses and specialization part).

University and Programme

Tilburg University was founded as the catholic university in 1927. Today, the university has more than 15 thousand students who are daily cycling to green campus in the western part of the city.

The one-year master's programme in Economics is an excellent choice if you want to develop the skills, knowledge and attitude to become a professional economic analyst. Programme's ranking:

- #17 in Business & Economics Worldwide (US News Best Global Universities, 2020)
- #33 Worldwide in Business and Economics (Times Higher Education Subject Ranking, 2020)
- 95.1% of the current students is (very) satisfied with the program (National Student Survey 2018 | n=39)

The programme is relatively small, around 80 students per year, with about 50% of international fellow students. I see this as a great opportunity to meet interesting people from various backgrounds with fascinating stories. If you love the family atmosphere at IES, you will get it here also with international friends and internationally renowned economics professors who know you by name.

Courses and Specialization

You could create your curriculum or specialize in one of six tracks:

- Behavioural Economics
- Data Science
- Financial Economics
- Laws and Economics
- Public Policy
- Sustainable Development

Courses are standardly divided into compulsory and optional courses. If you decided not to follow a track, your mandatory courses are only *Econometrics I* and *Applied Economic Analysis I* and *II*. The rest

is optional and completely up to you what creates a great opportunity to create a programme suited just for you. If you choose a track, you have two additional specialization-specific mandatory courses. List of all courses offered by specific track could be seen in the table below. Programme distinguish between method courses and seminars. Methods are 5-week long courses and seminars are 9-week long. Fall semester starts with the first block when students follow only methods corresponding to the fall semester. After 5 weeks there is an exam week when you have all the exams from methods. Subsequently, the second block of seminars is starting, which is at the end, again, followed by the exam week. If lucky enough, you could be able to finish all exams of the fall semester before Christmas and enjoy almost a month-long holiday. Spring semester is starting the last week in January with both methods and seminars at once. In addition to that, you start working on your master thesis. After the last exam period in mid-April, you are free of classes and have more than two months solely for your thesis.

MSc Economics Course list and Specialization Tracks (as of academic year 2019-20)##

	Law and Economics	Public Policy	Sustainable Development	Financial Economics	Data Science	Behavioral Economics
METHODS (each course is 3 ects)						
Fall Semester						
#Methods: Econometrics 1	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Methods: Experiments and Surveys			♦			♦
Methods: Game Theory 1	♦	♦	◊	◊		♦
Methods: Game Theory 2	♦					
Spring Semester						
Methods: Econometrics 2			◊	♦	♦	
SEMINARS (each course is 6 ects)						
Fall Semester						
Seminar Governance of Innovation	♦	◊	◊		♦	
Seminar Financial Markets and Institutions			◊	♦		
Seminar Economics and Psychology of Social Norms and Strategic Behavior	◊					♦
Seminar Growth and Regional Development		◊	♦			
Seminar Taxation		♦		◊		
The Economics and Finance of Pensions				◊		◊
Spring Semester						
Seminar Economics and Psychology of Risk and Time			◊	◊		♦
Seminar Competition Policy	♦	◊				
Seminar Data Science for Economics					♦	
Seminar Environmental and Resource Economics		◊	♦			◊
Seminar Financial Economics				♦		
Seminar Labor Economics		♦			◊	◊
PROJECT WORK (in fall and spring semester)						
*Applied Economic Analysis, 1 (fall) and 2 (spring), 6 ects	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
*Thesis (spring and summer), 15 ects	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
ELECTIVES (fall and spring)						
From defined group				6 ECTS [‡]		
From Methods (see above: ◊ = good choice)		3 ECTS	3 ECTS	3 ECTS	3 ECTS	
From Seminars (see above: ◊ = good choice)	12 ECTS	12 ECTS	12 ECTS	6 ECTS	12 ECTS	12 ECTS
Free (any MSc-level course, upon approval)	6 ECTS ^{‡‡}	6 ECTS	6 ECTS	6 ECTS	6 ECTS	6 ECTS

♦ = compulsory course for this track; ◊ = good choice for this track; *compulsory within MSc Economics.

If you do not choose a track, you do the courses indicated with # and you choose 2 more methods courses, 4 seminars, and 1 free elective.

‡ "Investment Analysis" and "Corporate Governance and Restructuring". ‡‡Recommended: Course at Tilburg Law School, e.g. "EU Competition Law"

Application Process

Tilburg University offers an opportunity to enrol twice per year. This programme starts at the end of August and at the end of January. Even though it is recommended to start at the of August, you are perfectly fine to start in the spring as well, as courses are not building much on the knowledge from the fall semester.

Unfortunately, Tilburg University is not a partner with Charles University and thus, you have to do GRE test (GMAT is not accepted for this programme). Besides that, they will evaluate you based on your academic background and English proficiency. Overall, nothing of what IES graduate should be afraid of 😊. For more information see:

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/masters-programmes/economics/application>

Deadlines are typically July 1 and December 1 if you are planning to start at the end of August and January, respectively.

Finance and Accommodation

Tuition fees for EEA citizens who are pursuing their first master's degree in the Netherlands are 2,096€¹ for the academic year 2019/2020.

Food in grocery stores will cost you a similar amount of money as in the Czech Republic. What is much more expensive in here are the services, for instance, you will typically pay more than 4€ for one (small) beer in a restaurant or a bar. In general, a reasonable budget would be between 750€-900€ per month excluding tuition.

Accommodation deserves a paragraph on its own. Tilburg, like many other Dutch cities, is having a huge problem with housing capacities. Therefore, if you are planning to study in the Netherlands, I would recommend you start looking for a place as soon as possible. In addition to that, be aware of scammers who are trying to take advantage of desperate students. When it comes to prices, monthly rent for a room is usually ranging from 350€ to 500€ based on the size and condition.

My Experience and Life Outside University

Tilburg University is located in North Brabant province, 20min from Eindhoven where the international airport is, or 40 min from Rotterdam. Convenient location allows for trips within the Netherlands as well as to neighbourhood countries. Tilburg itself offers plenty of cosy bars and pubs where you could occasionally go for a drink with classmates. If you prefer some physical activity over bars, Tilburg University has a great Sports Centre where you could lift some weights, play plenty of sports from tennis, volleyball to climbing.

If I scared you before with scammers about accommodation, don't be afraid. People here are extremely nice and friendly. Waiting in the long line? No one is moody, they rather smile at you and ask you about your day.

And what about me? After 3 blocks of my master's I am feeling quite confident to say that as I had found a programme which offers everything I was looking for, it indeed delivers it all. I decided to follow two tracks, along with sustainability development I also followed all courses from data science track and one behavioural course. On the one hand, courses from data science track help to develop important skills in Python or R. On the other hand, courses from sustainable development track offer valuable insights into environmental and climate change challenges which we are facing today. In addition, the class of behavioural economics opened for me new doors on how to look at problems as an economist. To sum it up, Tilburg University was a great choice for me and I am convinced that it represents great next step for each IES bachelor graduate.

If you have any further questions, please, feel free to contact me on holkova.janka@gmail.com. I will be more than happy to answer all your questions.

¹ This amount is yearly adjusted by inflation.