

Master's programme in the Techniques and Methods of Territorial Management

Jobs relating to regional development and particularly to local planning and development started to appear in the 1980s following the introduction of the first French laws on decentralisation. Since then, the range of employment opportunities has continued to increase. The 'Techniques and Methods' related to territorial management concern the different skills required to conceive and carry out development programmes at a regional or local level, irrespective of whether they relate to economic, heritage, rural or urban issues or cultural, environmental or tourist-related questions.

A specialist in territorial management needs the ability to combine knowledge and skills in three areas:

- Thematic – a foundation of knowledge about frameworks (institutional, procedural....) and about the different spheres of activity (urbanism, environment, economy, transport....).
- Technical – the mastery of different techniques and software relating to the collection, analysis and use of data on territorial development (cartography, GIS, survey techniques, the web and multi-media....)
- Communicational – the capacity to communicate with professional and institutional partners, to carry through, in a professional manner, a project to its conclusion and to initiate and sustain debate with local actors (politicians, residents....)

People working in this field are represented in the public sector (local authorities – communes, departments, regions -, specialised public-sector authorities, decentralised state services, para-public organisations) as well as in different forms of associative structure (urban development agencies, NGOs, local development associations) and the private sector (consultancies, agencies....). During their careers, these specialists may well work in a variety of different spatial contexts (urban, rural, developing countries...), dealing with a wide range of issues and actors.

Benefiting from 15 years experience of vocational education at the Institut de Géographie Alpine, this programme is based on four pathways:

- Planning and development (Aménagement) (M1/M2) – training of specialists capable of managing local development projects (conception, implementation, evaluation) in different contexts (urban, environmental, tourist).
- Geomatics and GIS (Géosit) (M1/M2) –training of specialists in geomatics and geographical information systems as applied to territorial management. (This pathway will open in September 2008).
- Economy (Economie) (M2 only) – training of management staff and professionals with a sufficiently wide background to adopt an integrated approach to development issues in both developed and developing economies. This pathway focuses on an economic approach to project management.

- Professional (Actid) (M2 and continuous education only) – customized training for employed professionals wishing to take specific modules to update their skills and knowledge or to change career paths. They select modules from the other three pathways. Actid (Actualisation des Competences et Trajectoires professionnelles en Ingénierie du Développement Territorial) stands for 'the updating of skills and career development in local and regional planning'.

Teaching is based around a 'common core' and specific modules. Contributions from specialists in related professions and practical work in the field are features of the programme. Students are expected to undertake a work placement.