

Kobe University

Kobe University can trace its origins back to Kobe Higher Commercial School in 1902, which was established by an imperial decree as a premier institution of business studies to rival the twin of Tokyo. The alumni pioneered world trade from Kobe and contributed to the development of industry based in the international port city. Since the reorganisation as a national university in 1949, the university has evolved into a major comprehensive university with 10 faculties, 15 postgraduate schools and many research centres.

As a gateway to Europe, Kobe University has special ties with European research universities and institutions. It is privileged to have welcomed leading figures in Europe, and has a pivotal role in EU flagship projects: the EU Institute in Japan, Kansai (EUIJ-Kansai) and the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence. Its focus on Europe has culminated in the creation of the Kobe University Programme for European Studies (KUPES).



The City of Kobe

Located between Rokko mountains and the Seto inland sea, Kobe is fortunate in having natural good harbours and magnificent scenery composed of mountainous landscapes changing in the four seasons and coastal townscapes where artificial islands are closely knit by elevated highways and stitched by arch bridges. An ancient port was made in the 8th century and the bay area enjoyed such prosperity as to attempt to build a new capital of Japan in the 12th century.

In 1868, at the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, Kobe Port was constructed as an international trading core to lead the modernization of Japan. It was developed into one of Asia's largest ports on a par with Shanghai and Singapore. Since many foreigners settled in the town for over 150 years and created a cosmopolitan atmosphere, Kobe is one of the most popular destinations for international scholars and students.



Program Coordination Section Center for International Education

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List of partner schools
(undergraduate)



List of partner schools
(graduate school)



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KUPES

Kobe University Programme for European Studies

Faculty of Global Human Sciences

Graduate School of Intercultural Studies

Faculty of Law

Graduate School of Law

Faculty of Economics

Graduate School of Economics

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KUPES

Overview

Kobe University Programme for European Studies (KUPES) is an interdepartmental framework to provide an integrated five-year curriculum for students from 2nd year undergraduate to postgraduate (master's) level, fostering an interdisciplinary understanding of the EU and Europe. KUPES students major in Global Human Sciences, Law or Economics while acquiring specialised knowledge of the EU. They are trained to analyse and research European issues from different angles and are encouraged to critically examine international trends from a comparative perspective. In today's world, a global perspective and experience are prerequisite, regardless of their path after graduation. KUPES students are expected to obtain high language competency and global understanding through this unique programme.



Study in Europe

KUPES undergraduates study abroad as exchange students in the latter half of the third year. Equipped with foreign language skills as well as with basic knowledge of European society, politics, and economies, they are expected to gain experience through participation in extracurricular activities such as internships and fieldwork. Study-abroad experience during undergraduate studies enables them to expand their network with students from all over the world and pave the way to their future.

For successful study in Europe

EU-Japan Comparative Seminars

This core course helps students explore various issues in the EU and Japan from a comparative perspective. Through interactions with international classmates as well as European instructors from the Faculties of Global Human Sciences, Law, and Economics, KUPES students gain strong communication skills in their academic fields and prepare for their studies abroad.

Master's Double Degree (DD)

The Master's Double Degree (DD) scheme was launched to incorporate successful experience in study exchange programmes with European partner universities and is designed as an integral part of KUPES. DD facilitates a new kind of postgraduate study at two institutions linked across the Eurasian Continent in an efficient way, based on the dual enrollment and the mutual recognition of academic credits. Special arrangements are typically made with exemption from tuition fees and opportunity for various scholarships. Two master's degrees are awarded by fulfilling all the course requirements and completing two dissertations based on a variety of interdisciplinary and comparative approaches. DD qualifies its holders to engage in various professional activities in the world with enhanced expertise in humanities and social science, a high level of language proficiency and remarkable international experience. Some may go on to pursue doctorates and others may work for international organisations or multinational enterprises. They are expected to be international leaders since they have gained insights into global challenges, great confidence and resilience, and also the dual networks of the almae matres.



EU Fieldwork Course

This is an extramural study course for the 2nd year undergraduates of KUPES to set their research themes and research questions, with the topics of EU-Japan comparison. In spring, they travel to Europe as a group to interview experts or to give presentations with students in partner universities.



Special Lectures by visiting scholars

Visiting scholars from European universities provide several lectures throughout the year. These are important opportunities for KUPES students to familiarise themselves with European-style seminars before studying abroad and to gain new insights into Europe.



Educational Goals

Students will be able to:

- Develop insights into trends in the EU and Europe
- Analyse and research the structure and challenges faced by the EU from an interdisciplinary perspective
- Foster a deep understanding of different cultures and contribute to strengthening connections with people in European countries

