Course Description

Social policy is constantly evolving in the European Union and is closely intertwined with other EU policy areas. The main objective of the course is to analyze the development and transformation of European social policy, focusing on different policy domains and considering the high variance among different member states.

The course will approach the following topics:

- introduction to the welfare state concept and social policy;
- analysis of different social policies (degree of Europeanization and differences between member states);
- contemporary challenges and opportunities for EU social policy: the enlargement process; the role of the civil society; privatization and globalization processes.

Aims: the course aims at familiarizing students with European social policy. Students will be required to read papers and articles on different topics, making individual and group presentations and writing a paper. The topic of the final paper will be jointly agreed.
Weekly Schedule

Week One: Introduction
January 12

Brief description
- Mutual presentation, constitution of 3 working groups and description of the course
- Welfare and social policy: Towards a definition
- The historical origin of the Welfare state
- Welfare and social policy in context
- How much Europeanized?

Compulsory readings:


Additional readings:


DALY, M., 2006, "EU social policy after Lisbon", in Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. 4:3, pp. 461-81. [link to the article page]

Week Two
Unemployment and employment policies
January 19

Compulsory readings:


Additional readings:


Week Three
Pension systems and reforms
January 26

Compulsory readings:


Additional readings:


Week Four: European health care systems and policies
February 2

Compulsory readings:


→ Text to be read and presented by working group:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/Documents/strategy_wp_en.pdf [PDF]

Additional readings:


STEFFEN, M. and LAMPING, W., 2005, "The European Union and Health Policy. The Dynamics of Integration", in Diskussionspapiere und Materialien Nr. 19:
http://www.aspp.jhpc.de/layout/set/print/content/view/full/489/


Week Five: Cohesion funds
February 9

Compulsory readings:


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Midterm Break - Classes resume on 23/02
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Week Six
Poverty and social inclusion
February 23

Compulsory readings:


Additional readings:


Week Seven
Europe between equality and difference: engendering Europe
March 2

Compulsory readings:


Additional readings:


March 9th Brussels Week, NO CLASSES

Week Eight
Europe between equality and difference: anti-discrimination policies
March 16

***Class time change: 3:00-6:00 PM***

Compulsory readings:


→ Text to be read and presented by working group:

Additional readings:


Week Nine
Social policy from below: the role of civil society in building a social Europe
March 23

***Class time change: 3:00-6:00 PM***

**IMPORTANT: Hand-in a title, an outline and a draft (1000 words) of the paper and a preliminary bibliography**

Compulsory readings:


Additional reading:


Week Ten
Liberalization, privatization and globalization: social policy under pressure
March 30

Compulsory readings:


→ Text to be read and presented by working group:

[could be replaced by a more recent report addressing the current economic crisis]

Additional readings:


GINSBURG, N., 2006, Globalization and pressure on social policy development. Paper prepared for the concluding seminar for the project "Poverty, social assistance and social inclusion – developments in Estonia and Latvia in a comparative perspective" [PDF].

Week Eleven
European social policy perspectives
April 6

IMPORTANT: Hand-in Final Paper in class today (7000 words)

Compulsory readings:


Additional readings:


***End of program***

Final grade

The final grade will be based on:

- 20% group presentations
- 20% individual presentation
- 20% in-class active participation including "constructive criticism" (as "non-presenters")
- 40% final paper