

ΚΚΠ3 - Economic Inequalities and Social Policy

Tutor: Kyriakos Souliotis

Semester: 6th

ECTS: 4.5

Short Description:

This course takes a multidisciplinary approach towards two distinct but highly interrelated scientific areas: economic inequalities and social policy. Students are asked to critically assess the challenge of economic inequalities at both methodological and empirical level. The methodological level analyses the concept of economic inequality and presents the various approaches to measuring it. At the empirical level, the reality of prevailing economic inequalities is addressed at both the level of the new “globalised” economy and the national level for a variety of countries, with the emphasis on “developed” OECD and EU member states. The second part of the course emphasises the role of social policy in tackling economic inequalities. It analyses and evaluates measures taken thus far at the supra-national and the national level for the “relief” of individuals, groups or even nations that face the reality of economic inequalities, and closely studies the effect of economic inequalities on various thematic sub-areas of social policy, such as health, employment, housing, etc. Special reference is made to the dimensions and the impact of the recent economic crisis in Greece and the European South.

Aims:

The course aims to:

- Provide students with a basic understanding of economic concepts relating to income allocation, inequalities, poverty, etc.;
- Familiarise students with concepts relating to income allocation and re-allocation at

national and international level;

- Provide students with capabilities to critically analyze phenomena relating to globalization, the economic crisis etc., applying principles of cross-functional analysis.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon course completion, students should:

- Know basic methods for measuring economic inequalities and poverty;
- Be able to assess specific choices for countering the impact of economic inequalities and financial crises, in a wider political, economic and social context;
- Be able to participate in research protocols relating to causes and dimensions of economic inequalities and apply contemporary tools for social policy analysis;
- Be able to propose solutions and advocate for choices in critical issues relating to economic inequalities and specific areas of social policy, based on international best practice and experience.

Structure:

The course runs over 13 three-hour long lectures. Course presentations are in PowerPoint format and are made available to students throughout the semester. Students are also requested to familiarise themselves with international policy databases such as those of the UN, the World Bank and OECD and perform select analyses on their datasets. The course commences with introductory presentations on economic inequalities (analysis of key concepts relating to the economy, the methodology for measuring economic inequalities and poverty etc.), and goes on to discuss specific issues such as the dimensions of the recent economic crisis, its impact on economic inequality and the scope for responding to the crisis through social policy.

Assessment:

Students are assessed via a written exam, which includes the discussion of at least one current economic inequalities challenge and its relation to social policy (cause and effect).

Bibliography:

- Dworkin R. (2006): What is Equality: equality of welfare - equality of resources, Polis, Athens.
- Liaropoulos L. (2006): Globalization and the Social State: Europe and America, Papazisis Publications, Athens.
- Lytras A., Souliotis K. (2004): Alone in Globalization: Social Policy Issues, Papazisis Publications, Athens.
- Matsaganis M. (2011): Social policy in hard times, Kritiki, Athens.
- Piketty Th. (2007): L'économie des inégalités, Polis, Athens.
- Souliotis K. (2007): Economic Inequalities and Health Policy, Papazisis Publications, Athens.