

KKΠ6 - Comparative Social Policy

Tutor: Andreas Feronas

Semester: 8th

ECTS: 4.5

Short Description:

This course explores key questions and issues in social policy and welfare state development. It comparatively examines the history, growth, maturation, retrenchment and reform of the welfare states of the developed countries of Western Europe as well as their consequences. The comparative analysis of social policies, programmes and institutions helps us understand why, how and to what effect different countries deal with important social problems and issues. Five key questions structure the course:

- 1) Why did we need the welfare state in the first place?
- 2) How did we get the welfare state we got?
- 3) What are the main effects of welfare states?
- 4) Why do we need to reform the welfare state?
- 5) What new welfare state do we need and how do we get it?

Aims:

- To critically analyze key concepts and terms of comparative analysis and study of social policy and welfare
- To understand the logic, the importance and the problems of comparative analysis
- To critically analyze and synthesise different theoretical approaches in the interpretation of the development of social policy
- To understand why, how and with what effects different countries construct the delivery of social services and transfers to citizens

- To stimulate critical thinking on whether and to what extent the existing and emerging social policies are able to solve current social problems
- To promote awareness of the dilemmas and social and political risks involved in major reforms of the welfare state

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course students should be able to:

- Understand the basic concepts and terms in the comparative analysis of social policy and the welfare state
 - Understand the rationale, significance and problems of comparative social policy analysis
- Analyze and synthesise quite different approaches in the comparative analysis of the development of social policy and the welfare state
 - Apply established theories, methods and techniques of social sciences to problems of social policy development
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the origins, meaning and implications of the similarities and differences of national social policies
 - Identify exogenous and endogenous factors affecting the formation of different welfare state regimes

Structure:

13 three-hour lectures.

Assessment:

Written examination. The students may improve their final grade by up to 2 points by writing an essay of 1500 words max.

Bibliography:

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- Kennet, P. (ed.) (2013), *A Handbook of Comparative Social Policy*, Edward Elgar, 2nd Edition, UK.
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