

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Aims

An examination and analysis of the 'European' characterisation, and context, of the development of European Union social policy, leading to assessment of the degree of Europeanisation of European Union social policy.

Objectives

Initially, the historical development of European Union social policy will be examined within the context of the growth in importance of social policy areas in the E.U. integration project. Against that background the course will move on to identify and characterise models of welfare in European states, as well as four typologies of European welfare states. The principles and concepts of harmonisation, mutual recognition, and convergence which shape and condition E.U. social policy will then be defined and examined. Finally, definition and assessment of the degree of general Europeanisation of social policy will be undertaken within the context of the previous aspects and elements of the course, and in particular in terms of comparison with the characteristics of the types of European welfare states identified in the course.

Structure of the course

The course will be taught through a series of 5 lectures and 1 workshop.

Course programme:

The powerpoint presentations with commentary for each lecture and the workshop will be placed on the Masaryk University Information System prior to each lecture

Course programme: All classes will be held at 16.00 hours at FSS

11.11.25 (Room P24b) Lecture 1. The historical development of E.U. social policy

18.11.25 (Room M011) Lecture 2. Models of welfare in European states: 'old' and 'new' convergence

18.11.25 (Room M011) Lecture 3. Types and models of European welfare states

25.11.25 (Room P24b) Lecture 4. The principles and concepts of E.U. social policy – harmonisation, mutual recognition, cohesion and convergence

25.11.25 (Room P24b) Lecture 5. The Europeanisation of social policy?

02.12.25 (Room U42) Workshop

Workshop 02.12.25:

PLEASE NOTE: *Attendance at the workshop is a requirement to pass the course (see Course Assessment below)*

In the workshop there will be group discussions and some direction will be provided in respect of the assessment essay.

Course Assessment

- a) **Attendance:** 80% attendance at lectures (at least 4) and attendance at the workshop is a requirement to pass the course
- b) **Essay** (maximum 2000 words)

Deadline: 10 December 2025. To be submitted by email to me at *jitaly25@hotmail.com* or through the Masaryk University Information System.

Students will be required to submit an essay in answer to **one** of the questions shown below. The essay must be of **a maximum of 2,000 words**, be fully properly referenced, and include a full bibliography.

PLEASE NOTE: Essays that are more than 10 per cent above or below the word limit will be penalised through the deduction of marks

- (i) Is *Europeanised* an adequate definition of E.U. social policy? Provide evidence and examples drawn from E.U. social policy areas to support your assessment.
- (ii) Critically evaluate how useful models and types of European welfare states are in identifying the impact of the European Union on welfare and social policy provision within E.U. states.
- (iii) Identify and assess ways in which the principles and concepts of European Union social policy impact upon and influence social policy within Member States. Provide social policy examples in order to illustrate your assessment.

Texts

Students are referred below to a range of journal, book and internet texts. ***These may be added to within the lectures, and if so, sources will be included within the lecture powerpoint presentations placed on the Information System prior to each lecture.***

Books

Hantrais provides a useful introductory overview, and is useful for a range of E.U. social policy areas covered in the course. Kleinman addresses some broader issues concerning the role of social policy in the E.U. Kleinman (Ch.7) also examines the pressures created for EU social policy by rising levels of unemployment and changes in Labour Market policies. Richardson (Ch.3) examines 'Europeanisation' and the E.U. social policy process (Ch.13). Featherstone and Radaelli also examine 'Europeanisation'.

- Castles, F. *The Future of the Welfare State*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Falkner, G. Trieb, O. Hartlapp, M. & Lieber, S. (eds.) *Complying with Europe. E.U. Harmonisation and Soft Law in the Member States*, Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005
- Featherstone, K. and Radaelli, C. (eds.) *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Gallie, D. (ed.) *Resisting marginalisation: Unemployment experience and social policy in the EU*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Geyer, R. *Exploring European Social Policy*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000.
- Hantrais, L. *Social Policy in the EU*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2007 (Third edition) (or Second edition, 2000).
- Jones, C. (ed.) *New Perspectives on the Welfare State in Europe*, London, Routledge, 1993 (especially Liebfried, S. 'Towards a European Welfare State?')
- Kleinman, M. *A European Welfare State: European Union Social Policy in context*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002.
- McCormick, J. *Understanding the European Union* (Third Edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2005.
- Richardson, J. (ed.) *European Union. Power and policy-making* (Third edition), Oxford, Routledge, 2006. (or Second Edition, 2001)
- Roberts, I. and Springer, B. *Social Policy in the European Union: Between Harmonisation and National Autonomy*, Boulder, Lynne Reiner, 2001.
- Salais, R. and Villeneuve, R. (eds.) *Europe and the politics of capabilities*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2004
- Schimmelfennig, F. and Sedelmeier, U.. (eds.) *The Europeanisation of Central and Eastern Europe*, Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, 2005.
- Wallace, H. Wallace, W. and Pollack, M. A. *Policy Making in the European Union* (5th edition), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

Journal Articles

- Aysan, M. F. and Beaujot, R. (2009) 'Welfare Regimes for Ageing populations: No Single Path for Reform', *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp.701-720.
- Begg, I. and Nectoux, F. (1995) 'Social protection and economic union', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 5, pp.285-302.
- Borros, S. and Greve, B. (2004) The Open Method of Co-ordination in the European Union, special issue of *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11:2 (various articles of interest)
- Cunliffe, A. and Wilton, J. (2006) The Development of a European Asylum Policy in an Expanded European Union, *Migration Online*, May 2006 (www.migrationonline.cz/studies.shtml)
- Duina, F. and Raunio, T. (2007) 'The open method of co-ordination and national parliaments: further marginalization or new opportunities?' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 14:4, pp.489-506.
- Guillen, A. and Palier, B. (2004) 'Does Europe matter? Accession to EU and social policy developments in recent and new member states', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 14:3, pp.203-209, and other articles in this special issue on *EU Enlargement, Europeanisation and Social Policy*.
- Hansen, M.P. and Triantafyllou, P. (2011) 'The Lisbon strategy and the alignment of economic and social concerns', in *Journal of European Social Policy*, Vol. 21, no.3, July, pp.197-209.

- Jepsen, M. and Pascual, A.S. (2005) 'The European Social Model: an exercise in deconstruction', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 15(3), pp.231-245.
- Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.14, no.5, 2007. (Special issue: Mutual Recognition as a New Mode of Governance)
- Mosher, J. and Trubek, D. (2003) 'Alternative approaches to governance in the EU: EU Social Policy and the European Employment Strategy', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 4:1, pp.63-88.
- Neilson, J. (1998) 'Equal opportunities for women in the European Union: success or failure?', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 8, pp.64-79.
- Room, G. (2007) 'Challenges facing the E.U.: Scope for a coherent response', *European Societies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp.229-244.
- Sinn, H-W and Ochel, W (2003) 'Social Union, convergence and migration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41, pp.869-96.
- Threlfall, M. (2003) 'European social integration: harmonization, convergence and the single social area', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 13, pp.121-140.
- Van der Mei (2003) 'Freedom of movement for the unemployed and co-ordination of unemployment benefit schemes', *European Journal of Social Security*, 5:3, pp.214-229.
- Van Vliet, O. and Koster, F. (2011) 'Europeanisation and the political economy of active labour market policies', in *European Union Politics*, Vol.12, no.2, June, pp.217-240.
- Vobrubá, G. (2003) 'The enlargement crisis of the European Union: limits of the dialectics of integration and expansion', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 13 (1), pp.35-48, and responses by M. Bach and M. Rhodes.
- Walkenhorst, H. (2008) 'Explaining change in EU education policy', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.14, No. 4, June 2008, pp. 567-587.
- Warleigh-Lack, A. and Drachenberg, R. (2011) 'Spillover in a soft policy era? Evidence from the Open Method of Co-ordination in education and training', in *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.18, no 7, pp.999-1015.

Journals

European Union Politics

European Political Science

Journal of Common Market Studies

Journal of European Social Policy (the 'European Briefing' section of this journal is very useful for up-to-date EU developments)

Journal of European Public Policy

Migration Online (www.migrationonline.cz/studies.shtml)

John Wilton (07.10.25)