

Course Programme Description 2005/2006

European Graduate Programme in Social Protection Policy

1.

Course: Managing Social Risks: the Economics of Welfare States and Social Protection in Advanced Capitalist Economies

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Chris de Neubourg, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

Period: 5th – 8th, 12th -15th September, (Weeks 36 and 37)

Course code: 1001/intro

Course description:

This introductory course compares the different social security and social welfare systems in advanced capitalist economies and discusses their viability and sustainability in a longer-term perspective. The course explores new insights to reorganize the systems in order to guarantee their social and economic survival. The Social Management of Risks is introduced as a new framework to analyze and understand policy interventions.

This course is meant to provide an introduction and an overview of the main issues, theories and practices regarding the design and the implementation of modern Welfare States in advanced economies. The course aims at:

- reviewing the insights provided by theories and empirical analyses;
- setting the scene for a comprehensive analysis of social protection policy.

2.

Course: Social Demography

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. G. Esping-Andersen, Universidad Pompeu Fabro, Barcelona

Period: 19th – 22nd September (Week 38)

Course code: 1002BC

Course description:

The objective of this course is not demography *per se* but to examine how key demographic transformations influence society and well-being. The advanced societies have over the past half Century undergone what demographers call 'the second demographic transition', a term that encompasses major changes in life course transitions, family formation, fertility behaviour, gender relations, and also aging. The transformation of demographic behaviour has, in turn, major consequences for the distribution of social risks and for social policy.

This course provides both a theoretical and empirical overview of ongoing demographic processes with special attention to those aspects that directly impinge upon social risks and social policy, namely transformations of household structure and family formation, of female fertility and employment behaviour, and of population aging. These transformations, in turn, will be related to income and welfare distributions. And, finally, the course will examine how demographic change challenges existing welfare models.

3.

Course: Comparative Welfare States

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. K. Hinrichs, Universitat Bremen, Zentrum fur Sozialpolitik

Period: 26th – 29th September (Week 39)

Course code: 1003BC

Course description:

This introductory course will hardly deal with the substance or content of national social policy arrangements, but rather, provide a critical evaluation of the main theories explaining the development of (advanced or emerging) welfare states. They have highlighted either the relative importance of institutional variables, social cleavages, partisanship and ideology, or the role of economic openness in explaining cross-national differences. Special attention will be given to new analytical approaches that depart from a construction of ideal types or models of different welfare states.

This course is meant to provide an introduction into comparative welfare state analysis and the applied methodologies (why and how). The course aims at:

- reviewing the insights provided by successive “generations” of theoretical approaches;
- evaluating the impact of welfare state activity (e.g. legitimacy, social equality) in comparative manner;
- identifying indicators and patterns of recent/ongoing welfare state reform and discussing corresponding theoretical approaches.

4.

Course: Sociology of Inequality, Poverty and Social Exclusion

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Bea Cantillon, Universiteit Antwerpen, Centrum voor Sociaal Beleid

Period: 10th -13th October (Week 41)

Course code: 1004BC

Course description:

Social policies in welfare states aim at the reduction of inequalities, poverty and social exclusion. Although, more developed welfare states are arguably more ‘inclusive’ than less developed, tackling poverty and social exclusion remains a basic concern in all welfare states.

This introductory course:

- explores the concept and measurement of inequalities, poverty and social exclusion,
- compares inequality, poverty and social exclusion in Europe, the US and in their welfare states,
- analyses the causes and mechanisms
- and reflects on the adequacy of social policies

5.

Course: Migration, Mobility and Social Protection

Lecturer: Dr. Kaczmarczyk, Warsaw University, Department of Economics

Period: 17th – 20th October (Week 42)

Course code: 1005BC

Course description:

The aim of the course is to present and discuss a broad range of issues related to migration with special emphasis on linkages between mobility and social protection framework. The distinction between migration and mobility will be discussed extensively. Additionally, most important migration systems will be presented to give an overview of contemporary migration processes. In the second part, the emphasis will be put on the causal factors of international mobility (migration as a social protection strategy). Different approaches will be presented and discussed extensively (economic, sociological and political one) which attempt to explain migratory behaviour on various levels of aggregation. Special attention will be paid to economic approaches, as they are the most advanced and influential among contemporary migration theories. In the next part, the effects of migration will be a subject of interest. On one hand a link between mobility and development will be analysed, i.e. a question on the importance of migration for sending communities will be asked. Next, selected issues related to the presence of immigrants in receiving societies will be covered, with special emphasis on the integration processes. The final part will be devoted to the immigration in the context of social protection framework. Here attention should be paid to such issues as legal rules and measures of social protection policy, their viability and effectiveness (e.g. legislation for migrants, international

conventions protecting migrant rights, bi-lateral agreements between labour-sending and labour-receiving countries, labour market policies, social services, subsidies etc.).

6.

Course: Economics of Social Protection

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. P.Pestieau, Universite de Liege, Faculte d'economie, de Gestion et des Sciences Sociales

Period: 31st October – 3rd November (Week 44)

Course code: 1006BC

Course description:

In most countries, governments pursue two main objectives: they make sure that markets are as efficient as possible and they aim at some equity in the way resources are allocated among individuals. Governments operate in a setting of more or less competitive markets and in a world of asymmetric information. Education, health care, pensions, disability and unemployment are increasingly studied because of their financial importance in modern economies, but also because of their predominant allocative and redistributive role. For example, conventional wisdom is that most social redistribution in modern welfare state is implemented through the spending side rather than the revenue side.

This short course is devoted to the interaction between taxation and social insurance as a vector of efficient and equitable allocation of resources. The viewpoint is predominantly normative, (the political economy viewpoint is presented in the next course by Ph. De Donder). The emphasis is put on informational issues and also on the complementary role of private spending in the provision of health, retirement and disability insurance. The course consists of 5 lectures each of which will be introduced by a quick survey of the available empirical evidence.

7.

Course: Political Economy of Social Insurance

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Donder, University of Toulouse (GREMAQ & IDEI)

Period: 7th – 10th November (Week 45)

Course code: 1007BC

Course description:

Social insurance programs have two main rationales: first, they provide insurance against various risks (unemployment, disability, sickness, living old, etc) that may be inadequately covered by the private market, and second, they redistribute income across categories of people (from rich to poor and/or from high risk individuals to low risk individuals). In his course on Economics of Social Protection, Pierre Pestieau analyses these rationales mainly from a normative viewpoint, i.e. assuming that a government wants to maximize some notion of the well-being of its constituency.

In this class, we take the complementary positive viewpoint, i.e. we assume that social insurance policies are the result of a collective choice by citizens. In most cases, we assume that citizens vote directly over the characteristics of the social insurance program they want to see enacted. We first look at how economists pose (and solve) the problem of voting over a public policy, we then study voting over social insurance programs in general, with the objective of finding lessons that apply to many social insurance programs. An important theme in this analysis is the mix between private and public provision of insurance. Finally, we study more in depth two kinds of insurance programs, namely retirement and unemployment.

8.

Course: Economics of Risk and Insurance

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. E. Fornero, Universita de Torino, Centre for Research on Pensions and Welfare Policies

Period: 14th – 17th November (Week 46)

Course code: 1008BC

Course description:

Pension systems are designed to meet three main objectives: to allow people to smooth consumption in their life cycle; to prevent poverty in old age and to establish a compact among generations. These goals, in their turn, are meant to insure individual risk, to overcome individual planning limitations and to provide some sharing for aggregate risks. Within the first category of risks, longevity and earnings risks are predominant; within the second, myopia and time inconsistency have to be addressed; within the third, demographic, economic and political risks should be as much diversified as possible.

Starting from this framework, the course aims at placing European pension systems and reforms in the context of the economic theory of households' savings, where imperfect and incomplete (financial and insurance) markets make room for the state to play an insurer's role, besides its traditional redistributive tasks. The logic behind insurance does not imply giving up the traditional concept of solidarity, both within and between generations; indeed, this concept is strengthened by highlighting the key role of risk diversification. Furthermore, thanks to an analytical framework based on insurance, measures aimed at achieving a given distributional goal are easily designed; while, if the insurance frameworks are ignored, redistribution in practice ends up with unforeseen and undesirable features.

9.

Course: Evidence-based policy making

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. K. Van den Bosch, Universiteit Antwerpen, Centrum voor Sociaal Beleid

Period: 28th November- 1st December (Week 48)

Course code: 1009BC

Course description:

The phrase 'Evidence-based policy making' has been gaining currency over the last decade, especially in the UK. It seems to be associated with the reform agenda of the Blair governments. However, even if it is partly a product of political 'spin', 'evidence-based policy making' brings up the important issue of the relationship between social science and policy. Important questions in this regard include:

- what kinds of evidence are actually used by policy makers, and why?
- what kind of evidence do they expect from social scientists?
- what kind of evidence do social scientists have to offer?
- what are the channels through which social scientists can influence policy makers?
- how should social scientists bring their evidence to the attention of policy makers?

The course will therefore treat both the positive question of how policy makers select and use evidence, and the normative question of how social scientists should present and 'market' their results.

In order to illustrate and discuss the various issues, the 'National Action Plan/social inclusion' (NAP/incl), that every EU Member state has to submit to the EU Commission, is used as a source of examples. In these NAPs/incl, countries present their plans and actions to fight social inclusion. These measures appear to be 'evidence-based' in rather varying degrees. Yet, learning from the best practices of other countries is an explicit goal of this EU initiative.

10.

Course: Analysis of Policy Processes

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. T. Papadopoulos, University of Bath

Period: 5th – 8th December (Week 49)

Course code: 1010BC

Course description:

(to be updated)

11.

Course: Governance, Power and Policy

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. T. Papadopoulos, University of Bath

Period: 12th- 15th December (Week 50)

Course code: 1011BC

Course description:

(to be updated)

12.

Course: Public Economics and Finance

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. A. Jousten, Universite de Liege

Period: 19th – 22nd December (Week 51)

Course code: 1012BC

Course description:

Governments across the globe levy taxes and duties. Tax policy and administration has often been characterized by its rather arcane nature. The role of economic analysis in the setting and administration of taxes has often been rather limited. More recently, political decision makers have focused their attention on a more efficient and less distortive taxation process. The trend is at least in part due to the general tendency towards a clearer separation of the redistributive goals of the government from its money raising branch. Nowadays, redistributive aims are mostly confined to the public expenditures and the social redistribution programs of the government. The focus of tax policy is hence undergoing a profound change from a sometimes very complex multi-tasked framework to a streamlined economically efficient revenue producing tool. Value added tax, as a key tax instrument, is at the forefront of this evolution. By its structure, and by the increasingly international nature of economic transactions, it has undergone the most profound scrutiny. But other tax instruments, such as the personal income tax, or the corporate income tax also have a large potential for improvement, to make them more transparent and less costly to administer while at the same time increasing the revenue they generate. The objective of the course is to familiarize the student with some key issues in public economics and public finance. Our special attention will be directed to the practical policy implications of these theoretical arguments in terms of a coherent tax policy strategy.

13.

Course: Research skills

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. G. Esping-Andersen, Universidad Pompeu Fabro, Barcelona

Period: 9th - 19th January (Week 2)

Course code: 1013ST

Course description:

This course combines theory, methodology, and practicum. It aims to help students design a scientifically sound study. It will teach you how to move from vague ideas to a well-designed and practically doable project. *Your* aim, as doctoral students, must be to complete a thesis which meets international scientific standards, which will be publishable in refereed journals and with respectable publishing companies. If this is not your aim, you are probably wasting your time pursuing a doctorate.

14.

Course: Evaluation Methods and Techniques

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Bea Cantillon, Universiteit Antwerpen, Centrum voor Sociaal Beleid

Period: 23rd – 26th January (Week 4)

Course code: 1014BC

Course description:

(to be updated)

15.

Course: Econometric Evaluation of Treatment Effect

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. T. Magnac, Universite de Toulouse, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique

Period: 6th - 9th February (Week 6)

Course code: 1015BC

Course description:

Since the 1990s, the econometric evaluation of economic policies has been cast with great benefits into the vocabulary of the statistical literature concerning “treatment effects”. It addresses questions of causality that economic policies purposively have on the economic behaviour of various economic agents. It aims at distinguishing causal or treatment effects from sheer descriptive correlations in a framework that is borrowed from treatment set-ups in biological sciences. It allows for ex-post evaluation of the objectives of economic policies in terms of targeting some sub-populations or in terms of their impact and allows for comparisons with the intended targeting and impact when those policies were designed.

This course is meant to provide an introduction and an overview of the main issues, theories and practices regarding the design and the implementation of econometric evaluation of treatment effects. The course aims at giving basic knowledge on the treatment effect literature that allows for critical reading of reports of analyses where some econometric evaluation of economic policies is performed.

The outline of the course is:

- Definitions: treatments, counterfactuals and causal relations
- Matching and double-differences
- Instrumental variable estimators
- Selection correction and control function approaches

16.

Course: Social Policy Modelling

Lecturer: Dr. C. O’Donoghue, Economics of Social Policy Research Unit, National University of Ireland

Period: 13th – 16th February (Week 7)

Course code: 1016BC

Course description:

This course is a practical course that aims to equip students to use quantitative (microsimulation) modelling techniques to design policy reforms. The course will revolve around a case-study of designing a Poverty Reduction Strategy in developing countries. Initial lectures will focus on the World Bank/IMF Poverty Reduction Strategy Program. Students will then be introduced to tax-benefit policy reform in developed and developing countries, microsimulation modelling, measurement issues in policy evaluation and behavioural response to policy reform. The objective of the course will be for students to evaluate tax-benefit policy in a developing country and to design a set of policy reforms to reduce poverty. Students will utilise an EXCEL based microsimulation model of Brazil to carry out this analysis. No previous experience in public economics, modelling or EXCEL is required.

17.

Course: Work, Family and Social Protection

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. C. Saraceno, Università de Torino, Faculty of Social Sciences

Period: 20th – 23rd February (Week 8)

Course code: 1017BC

Course description:

Family policies are the most marginalized area of welfare state and social policy research, particularly at the comparative level. Yet the role assigned to the family (gender division of labour, intergenerational solidarity) is at the core of many social policies and of their cross country (and cross time) differentiation. The familisation/ de-familisation dichotomy – or continuum – is as important for welfare state analysis as the commodification/decommodification one.

This course compares different family policies and their link with other social security policies. Specific attention will be given to policies supporting the cost of children, policies addressing the needs of care of children and of the frail elderly, equal opportunity and conciliating policies.

The course aims to

- a) make students familiar with relevant concepts and debates;
- b) help students to develop the ability to “read” expectations” concerning family arrangements in different kinds of policies (non exclusively explicit family policies)

- c) present students with main research findings in the field as well as with the most relevant data bases

18.

Course: Economics of Inequality

Lecturer:

Period: 6th – 9th March (Week 10)

Course code: 1018BC

Course description:

(to be updated)

19.

Course: Institutional Design

Lecturer: Dr. G. Kula, University of Warsaw, Faculty of Economics

Period: 13th – 16th March (Week 11)

Course code: 1019BC

Course description:

When we think about the institutions like a welfare system, quite often we have an impression that politics is the main factor in their design. However, it is not true, or not fully true. Many institutions developed naturally through time, driven by economic and practical problems, social habits, or even some historical events. Therefore, the institutional design combines together politics, economy, sociology, history, and even philosophy. For the economists, especially those studying social protection policies, the problem of institutions, they design and redesign, is essential, since it helps to understand the social security systems, the ways in which they work, and different approaches to their reform.

The main objective of this course is to provide students with the tools necessary for the analysis of institutions. The course gives an overview of the institutional economics and new institutionalism, introduces different theories of the institutional design, trying to combine different disciplines studying institutional factors in our lives. Afterwards, using these tools in practice, we will try to analyze social protection policy and its institutions, focusing on retirement systems and their reforms.

20.

Course: Social Protection Policies and the Labour Market

Lecturer: Dr. L. Pacelli, Università de Torino, Faculty of Economics

Period: 20th – 23rd March (Week 12)

Course code: 1020BC

Course description:

The course will provide an overview of the most common labour market institutions aimed at protecting workers on the labour market (e.g. employment protection legislation, unemployment benefits, and wage subsidies). It will present economic models that encompass these institutions and discuss their effect on labour markets functioning. It will then introduce evaluation techniques to assess the empirical impact of such policies on individual and aggregate behaviours. Finally it will discuss the actual implementation of these policies in selected EU countries and the empirical evaluation of their impact performed by scholars.

21.

Course: Advanced Micro-economics

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Robin Cowan, Maastricht Economics Research Institute on Innovation and Technology

Period: Weekly, from 9 September – 28 October

Course code: 1021BC

Course description:

The basic core of economics lies in micro-economic theory. It provides the underpinnings for the study of virtually all behaviour of economic agents, whether firms or consumers. The basic issue has

to do with allocation of scarce resources in order to achieve a goal. For the consumer, the goal is utility maximization; for the firm, profit maximization. In this course, we approach this issue using traditional tools and models. The goal is to provide the students with a solid understanding of the way economists approach these issues, an understanding of how micro-economic models are structured, basic results having to do with firm and consumer behaviour, and a close familiarity with the economist's traditional toolbox.

22.

Course: Applied Econometrics

Lecturer: Drs. Denis de Crombrughe, Dept. of Quantitative Economics, Maastricht University

Period: Weekly, from 4 November – 23 December

Course code: 1022BC

Course description:

The challenge of econometrics is to find out what everyday reality, when it is recorded systematically in a quantitative sense, can tell us about the truth of economic and social theory. In a governance context, such theory more often than not concerns the effects of economic and social policies. The importance of econometric methods is then to properly measure and assess the impact and effectiveness of economic and social policies.

The difficulty of econometric methods is that they are based on statistical induction and, apart from being often technically demanding, statistical induction is unavoidably subject to statistical error. Whereas a mathematical conclusion is supposed to be “exact”, a statistical conclusion is not – even though extensive mathematical arguments have been invoked in the process. Furthermore, there are much worse kinds of statistical error than the ordinary “sampling error” that one tries to capture by the “standard error” attached to every decent statistical estimate. The worse kinds of errors are called non-sampling errors and are much harder to control. They are very much present in economic and social policy research and require more subtle methods of statistical analysis.

Participants in this course will introduce themselves and one another to the main methods of econometrics, they will pay attention to applications and to mathematical topics relevant for model specification, and they will (learn to) work with actual data in an econometric computer package (Stata). The course explicitly aims at combining theoretical analysis with empirical practice and group activity. A lot of personal involvement and commitment will therefore be demanded. Prior exposure to econometrics is a very favourable factor but not an absolute requirement; a willingness to think formally and take risks is essential. Advanced econometrics students may be offered an alternative way of passing the subject.