Course title: POLAND AND EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY

Course at Warsaw University,
Dpt. of Political Science and International Studies, Institute of Social Policy

Lecturers: Professor Dr. Włodzimierz Anioł  
Professor Dr. Mirosław Księżopolski

Teaching semester: Winter 2017/2018

Time: class meets on every other Wednesday, 9:45 – 11:15 hrs
2017: 25 Oct, 8 Nov, 22 Nov, 6 Dec, 20 Dec
2018: 10 Jan, 24 Jan

Place: room 219, Nowy Świat 69

ECTS credits: 6

Teaching method: the course will be taught through traditional lectures

Examination: in place of a final exam, each student will write individually an essay discussing the provision of welfare in a selected field of social policy (e.g. family policy, health care, pension system, education) in a specific country, preferably in students’ native countries. It needs to be around 5 to 7 pages (ca 3000 words) long and should relate to the existing models of social policy in Europe. It is required to submit the research paper (typed, not by mail!) on 10 January 2018 at the latest.

Assessment: the students can gain the required credits with attendance at the lectures. The papers will be graded according to the following grading scale: 5 – excellent, 4+ - very good, 4 – good, 3+ - satisfactory, 3 – sufficient, 2 – fail.

Language of instruction: English

Course Description/ Content

The central aim of the course is to examine the essence and achievements of European social policy in broader context of global trends, and to look at the complex interplay between Western welfare states, the European Union and Polish social policy. Following historical and geopolitical background (Poland’s place in Europe), key Polish social questions and challenges for social policy will be discussed, including reforms of social security, pension, child-care and education systems. Also, basic instruments and areas of EU social policy, like the free movement of people, EU structural and cohesion funds and policies, coordination of working conditions or promoting social inclusion, will be presented. The specificity the so-called European Social Model, against the background of social policy regimes in other parts of the world, will be emphasized.

Central course themes/ Daily topics

The course is organized around seven themes:

1. Introduction: Poland in Europe in a historical and geopolitical perspective
   - introduction to the course, presentation of the syllabus
   - Poland between West and East through centuries
   - Poland’s “return to Europe” after 1989, the rationale for reintegration with the West
   - major contemporary challenges for Poland in the European Union

2. Convergence and divergence between European welfare states
   - basic social policy regimes in Europe (continental, Anglo-Saxon, Nordic, Mediterranean, postcommunist)
   - differences, common problems and similar tendencies,
   - is there any European Social Model?
   - the role of the European Union social policies: is convergence also due to the EU?
3. Contemporary Polish social policy model versus mainstream welfare state regimes
   - specificity of and changes in the social security system
   - demographic challenge of an aging population
   - problems of the Polish labour market

4. The family and family policy in Poland in a comparative perspective
   - the second demographic transition and its influence on family structure and social policy
   - the role of welfare states in supporting families (familism, male breadwinner model etc.)
   - comparison of selected family policy tools in Poland and Europe

5. Future of social policy in the developed world
   - impact of the global economic crisis on social policies
   - hybridisation of national and regional welfare patterns
   - a few scenarios for the future

6. Characteristics and evolution of European Union social and cohesion policies
   - European labour law, structural and investment funds, open method of coordination (OMC), Strategy Europe 2020
   - contemporary developments in the eurozone: a way forward to a more social Europe?
   - impact of the European cohesion policy on Poland

7. The Europeanisation and de-Europeanisation (?) of Poland and her social policy
   - processes of adaptation after Poland’s accession to the European Union
   - key social and, economic challenges: competitiveness, migrations, posted workers, social dumping etc.
   - the influence of Poland’s membership of the EU on social development and modernization, including recent tendencies after 2015

Selected course readings/ List of recommended literature