UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Regolazione, Politiche e Imprese nelle Economie Avanzate

2627-2-E1602N014

Learning objectives

Knowledge and Understanding (D1)
The course provides theoretical and empirical tools to understand differences in economic development and social inclusion among advanced countries. Participants will gain knowledge of key approaches in comparative political economy and institutional regulation models that shape economic growth and social cohesion.

Applied Knowledge and Understanding (D2)
Participants will be able to apply concepts and theories to the analysis of real-world cases, critically assessing economic and social policies at both national and supranational levels. Skills in the comparative analysis of strategies pursued by key actors—such as public institutions, firms, trade unions, and employers' associations—will be developed.

Autonomy of Judgment (D3)
The course aims to strengthen the ability to formulate independent and well-argued assessments regarding how policies and institutions influence development trajectories and inequality. A critical approach to understanding the interaction between governance, public policy, and market dynamics is encouraged.

Communication Skills (D4)
Through group work, presentations, and guided discussions, the course fosters effective communication skills, the appropriate use of analytical language, and the ability to present well-structured and evidence-based arguments.

Learning Skills (D5)
The course promotes autonomous learning and the ability to navigate multidisciplinary and international scientific literature. Participants will be equipped to explore complex topics by integrating theoretical frameworks with empirical data.

Contents

The course offers a comparative analysis of different models of economic development and social inclusion in advanced economies, with a particular focus on institutional regulation. Public policies influencing growth, employment, and social cohesion are examined, highlighting how various systems of governance and interest representation shape national trajectories.
The course emphasizes the role of key actors in building institutional compromises between market and state, competitiveness and solidarity, efficiency and inclusion. Through comparative case studies, models of regulation and policy strategies are analyzed within Western European contexts, considering the challenges posed by technological innovation, demographic transition, and new social risks.

Detailed program

Part I – Foundations and Comparative Perspective

• Introduction to models of capitalism: Nordic, Continental, Anglo-Saxon, and Mediterranean
• Institutional arenas within each model: production systems, welfare, industrial relations, education, finance
• Institutional complementarities: how different institutional arrangements foster various combinations of social cohesion and competitiveness
• The role of agency and coalitions of key actors: public institutions, firms, trade unions, employers’ associations, and third-sector organizations
• Collective actors in socioeconomic regulation: functions of unions and employer associations, and the emerging role of the third sector in different capitalist models

Part II – Analysis of the Four Models and Economic/Social Policies

• Nordic model: universal welfare, high social protection, inclusive innovation
• Continental model: corporatist welfare, labor market dualism, role of intermediate bodies
• Anglo-Saxon model: liberal-market economy, low union density, flexible labor markets
• Mediterranean capitalism: family centrality, residual welfare, weak innovation
• Comparison of growth, employment, and cohesion policies across models

Part III – Contemporary Transformations and Policy Responses

• Globalization, digital technologies, environmental and demographic changes: how they are reshaping advanced capitalism
• New social risks: precarity, generational and gender inequalities, migration, and socioeconomic vulnerabilities
• Comparative analysis of policy responses: inclusive welfare models, structural innovation policies, labor market regulation
• Focus on Italy as a Mediterranean variant: recent reforms, innovation strategies, and social protection
• Group work on selected cases illustrating institutional and policy variations across countries

Prerequisites

None

Teaching methods

The course includes a didactic component (60%), which remains interactive, and a participatory component (40%), in which students will be engaged in guided discussions, exercises, group work, readings, and presentations. Classes will be held 70% in-person and 30% online in synchronous mode.

Assessment methods

The final evaluation consists of a written exam with 4 open-ended questions based on the two required texts, to be completed in 90 minutes.

Assessment criteria:

Understanding of content (DdD 1–2)
Critical reflection skills (DdD 3)
Written/oral communication abilities (DdD 4)
Ability to connect theories and empirical data (DdD 5)

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Trigilia, C. (2022). La sfida delle disuguaglianze. Bologna: Il Mulino
Burroni, L. (2016). Capitalismi a confronto. Bologna: Il Mulino
Additional books or scientific articles on topics of interest may be arranged with the student.

Sustainable Development Goals

NO POVERTY | GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | GENDER EQUALITY | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS