UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Storia dello Stato Sociale

2627-1-F8702N032

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide an overview of the history of the welfare state in the Western world in the contemporary era, through a historical and historiographical approach, with a view to equipping students with the tools necessary for a critical understanding of the main stages in the development and implementation of welfare policies, the forms taken by social protection systems and their evolution over time, from a comparative perspective, in relation to long-term political, economic, social and cultural changes. The historical perspective enables us to understand how welfare, care and social security systems have evolved into their current form, highlighting the changing and historically determined nature of social protection models and the ways in which societies have progressively identified the needs and risks deserving of collective protection. Particular attention will be paid to the Italian case.

Knowledge and understanding

Students acquire a fundamental understanding of the political, social, economic and cultural contexts in which the welfare state originated and developed, from a comparative perspective, through the use of historical and historiographical sources, demonstrating an ability to critically analyse its processes, developments, key players and transformations.

Applying knowledge and understanding

The student is able to apply the knowledge they have acquired to analyse complex historical events, interpret documentary sources and place events in their long-term context. They are able to link historical knowledge to contemporary issues.

Making judgements

Students develop critical and independent thinking when interpreting historical events relating to the history of the welfare state. They are able to distinguish between different historiographical perspectives, evaluate sources and arguments, and reflect on the implications of historical narratives for the formulation of policies implementing the welfare state and shaping social identity.

Communication skills

The student is able to present their analyses clearly and coherently, both in writing and orally, using the specialist vocabulary of the discipline of history. They are able to construct well-founded arguments, summarise complex texts and communicate content to audiences with varying levels of expertise.

Learning skills
The student demonstrates the ability to pursue independent study of the history of the welfare state and related disciplines, making effective use of bibliographies, primary sources, databases and digital tools. They are able to keep up to date with historiographical debates in a critical manner and to reflect on the connections between history and contemporary society.

Contents

History of the Welfare State in the Modern Era.

Detailed program

The course focuses on the history of the welfare state in the Western world, with a detailed examination of the Italian context, paying particular attention to its development from a comparative perspective and over the long term, with a special emphasis on the contemporary era.
Starting with the earliest forms of social welfare introduced in the modern era, the course will focus on the emergence of the welfare state in the 19th century and its evolution throughout the 20th century, examining key turning points (the formation of nation states, the interwar period, the post-war period, and the crisis of the 1970s and 1980s), right up to the early 21st century.
Having introduced the rationale and significance of historical knowledge, as well as the tools, sources and methodologies for understanding the fundamental processes in the history of the welfare state – alongside the main historiographical and methodological issues – the course will then examine the key political, social, cultural and economic turning points that characterised the emergence and evolution of welfare policies during the period under consideration. The historical perspective allows us to observe the variety of actors involved in the development of social policies and the different balances of power established over time. It also enables us to examine the Italian case within a broader comparative and international context, highlighting the variety of organisational forms and the diversity of solutions adopted across different places and periods. Through this course, students are expected to acquire the essential knowledge and sufficient tools to develop a critical understanding of events related to the history of the welfare state, beginning with a thorough grasp of the main historical periods that mark the political, social, economic and cultural history of the contemporary era.

Prerequisites

The main concepts of contemporary Italian and international history.
We recommend using the two-volume series on contemporary history by G. Sabbatucci and V. Vidotto: *Storia contemporanea. L'Ottocento*, Bari-Rome, Laterza, 2018, and G. Sabbatucci and V. Vidotto, *Storia contemporanea. Dalla Grande Guerra a oggi*, Bari-Rome, Laterza, (latest edition).
If you wish to use textbooks other than those listed, you must consult the professor.

Teaching methods

49 hours of lessons delivered in person.
The lessons are held in Italian

Assessment methods

An oral examination based on the examination texts and (for attending students) on the topics covered in lectures, with the aim of assessing the extent to which students have applied the knowledge acquired; analysing the facts, key figures and turning points in the history of the welfare state; and evaluating their ability to think critically and independently when interpreting historical events, as well as their communication skills and capacity for learning.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

For the exam, it is mandatory to study the textbook (section 1) and one book of your choice among those proposed in section 2.

Section 1
F. Conti, G. Silei, *Breve storia dello Stato sociale,* Roma, Carocci, 2022.

Section 2
one of the following books:

• C. Giorgi, I. Pavan, *Storia dello Stato sociale in Italia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2021
• C. Giorgi, *Salute per tutti. Storia della sanità in Italia dal dopoguerra a oggi*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2024
• M. Minesso, *Madri Figli Welfare. Istituzioni e politiche dall'Italia liberale ai giorni nostri*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2016.
• J. Foot, *La repubblica dei matti: Franco Basaglia e la psichiatria radicale in Italia, 1961-1978*, Feltrinelli, Milano 2014
• P. Gatrell, *L'inquietudine dell'Europa. Come la migrazione ha rimodellato un continente*, Torino, Einaudi, 2023.

Further bibliographical references will be provided during lectures and on the course page.

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS