

Course manual version 2.0

Social risks in Europe: protection, activation and diversity (2020-2021)

Code 201700151

Teaching period 1

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1. Course coordinator

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3. Course content: Social risks...

How many of you have wondered whether you will be able to find a suitable job after finishing your degree? Or what might happen if you can't? Particularly now, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic? Have you ever wondered how parents of young children juggle the demands of caring for children while also working in a paid job? Or maybe you've wondered about the motivation for governments to change the way they administer social policies and interventions, for example giving municipalities or individual citizens more responsibility for social welfare. These questions, and the answers to these questions, form the core of this course: Social Risks in Europe: protection, activation and diversity.

...what are they?...

Through this course, you will learn how to define new social risks by looking into their background and development, learning how new social risks differ from so-called old social risks and why this matters for the development and governance of social policy and social interventions. Using classical as well as recent literature, we will examine how social risks develop, how they are defined and the ways in which they manifest themselves in various European countries. Examples of old social risks are *unemployment*, *occupational disability* and *poverty*. Protection of these social risks changed during the 1980s and 1990s following the emergence of so-called new social risks. Some new social risks are the *exclusion of newcomers* (women, youth, and migrants), *risks centred on reconciling work and care*, *care shortages* (for the elderly and the chronically ill) and *insufficient skills/training, and education*. Causes of the emergence of new social risks are the same in practically all European countries: economic globalisation, significant labour market changes, demographic shifts and migration processes. We will discuss these causes, common approaches for dealing with social risks, and the effects of these risks for the health and wellbeing for European citizens.

...And what can be done about them?

In line with the goals of the Master's program in Social Policy and Public Health, this course approaches these issues from an interdisciplinary perspective, primarily at the macro level. This approach means you will learn about various theoretical explanations given to understand social risks and the policy alternatives that have been developed to manage social risks from sociological, public administration, economic and psychological

perspectives. A great deal of attention will be paid to the 'social investment approach', which is meant to offer an alternative for both the social protection (Keynesian) approach and neo-liberal policy approaches. On the one hand, the social investment approach attempts to provide an answer to social exclusion. On the other hand, the social investment approach tries to offer a solution to the bureaucratic regulation of social risks, the inefficiency of public services and the 'calculating' citizen. The prevalence of this approach means we see a similar trend in the design of social policies in many European welfare states: a declining role for the government, greater control from a distance, increased marketization, and the decentralisation of authority and responsibility for social risks to the local level.

In addition to the social investment approach, we look at alternatives for understanding social risks, moving from the macro-level approach to the micro-level approach. Inherent in the management of social risks is the need to share risk, with a balance between solidarity (collective responsibility for risks) and individual responsibility. But how do individuals view social risks? In this part of the course, we look at how the framing of risks can influence individual perceptions of social risks. To this end, prospect and framing theory, often used in economics and psychology for understanding risk-taking behaviour among individuals will be discussed. In addition, we will discuss the capability approach, a multilevel approach that can be useful for understanding how certain groups of individuals may be more affected than others in relation to social risks. This approach will also be used to help you learn to relate micro-level approaches to understanding risk to social policy discussions on social risks.

After completing this course, students will be able to identify social risks, to articulate the various theoretical approaches to understanding social policy and individual responses to social risks across European welfare states and to apply this knowledge to empirical examples of social policies and social interventions in written form.

4. Objectives:

- To be able to describe social risks in Europe, including their causes and consequences for individuals' health and wellbeing and to be able to relate these risks to the governance of social policies and interventions related to health and wellbeing in an independent and scholarly manner.
- To be able to interpret and explain various theoretical approaches to social risks from an interdisciplinary perspective.
- To be able to apply and relate these theoretical approaches to the transformation of European and national social policies.
- To be able to make and evaluate methodological decisions in comparative research on social risks.
- To be able to compare and analyse empirical data about social risks.
- To be able to report these findings clearly, and in a well-organised manner.

5. Required materials

The required literature consists of a book (to be purchased by students, or accessed in the University library) and various articles (which can be downloaded from the internet via the

university library). Chapter 4 from Pierson (2006) will be made available via Blackboard.

Book:

Hemerijck, A. (2017) *The Uses of Social Investment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198790495. See 'Activities per Week' for the assigned chapters.

Articles/book chapters:

- Alba, R., Sloan, J., & Sperling, J. (2011). The integration imperative: The children of low-status immigrants in the schools of wealthy societies. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37, 395-415.
- Bambra, C. (2007). Going beyond *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*: regime theory and public health research. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 61(12), 1098–1102.
- Burchardt, T. (2004). Capabilities and disability: the capabilities framework and the social model of disability. *Disability & Society*, 19(7).
- den Dulk, L., & Yerkes, M. A. (2016). Capabilities to Combine Work and Family in the Netherlands: Challenging or Reinforcing the One-and-a-half Earner Model? *Japanese Journal of Family Sociology*, 28(2), 180–192.
- Fenger, M. (2018). The social policy agendas of populist radical right parties in comparative perspective. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 34(3), 188–209.
- Huijnk, W. & I. Andriessen. (2016). [Integration in sight? A review of eight domains of integration of migrants in the Netherlands](#). The Hague: Netherlands Institute for Social Research.
- Nieuwenhuis, R., & Maldonado, L. C. (2018). The triple bind of single-parent families: resources, employment and policies. In *The triple bind of single-parent families: resources, employment and policies to improve wellbeing*. Nieuwenhuis, R., & Maldonado, L. C. (Eds). Bristol: Policy Press: pp. 1-15. Available online from <https://open.org/search?identifier=643492>
- Pierson C. (2006). *Beyond the Welfare State? The New Political Economy of Welfare*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Chapter 4, pp. 105-142
- Rose, D. (2019). The impact of active labour market policies on the well-being of the unemployed. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 29(3), 396–410.
- Sadiraj, K., S. Hoff & M. Versantvort. (2018). [From sheltered employment to Participation Act. How have people on the waiting list for sheltered employment fared?](#) The Hague: Netherlands Institute for Social Research.
- Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1981). The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice. *Science*, 211(4481), 453–458.
- Yerkes, M. A., J. Javornik, and A. Kurowska. (2019). Rethinking Social Policy from a Capability Perspective. In Yerkes, M. A., Javornik, J., & Kurowska, A. (Eds). *Social policy and the capability approach. Concepts, measurement and application*. Bristol: Policy Press: 1-18.

6. Workload

• Lectures and tutorials	18 hours
• Reading and individual study	112 hours
<i>Total (5 ECTS x 28 hours)</i>	<i>140 hours</i>

7. Course assessments

Your knowledge in this course will be tested two ways:

- *Digital Practice Exam:* (open essay question). The practice exam is a formative assessment and is graded pass/fail. The exam is intended to assess your progress in the course and help you understand the expectations for the final exam. The grade does not count towards your final course grade.
- *Digital Written Final Exam:* (open essay questions) 100% of the final grade, minimum grade 5.5 (on a scale of 0-10). The exam will test your knowledge of the required course readings and lecture material. See Assessment Matrix for more information. Exams will be conducted online (digitally).

Students must pass the course assessment with a minimum grade of 5.5 to pass the course.

Please note!

- Resits of the exam are only possible if the required efforts have been met, i.e. you actively participated in the course and you have NO MORE THAN ONE ABSENCE for the tutorials and your overall grade for the course is not lower than a 4.0.
- Are you sick or unable to make it to the exam due to extraordinary circumstances? You are required to report your absence prior to the start of the exam. If you do not report this absence prior to the start of the exam then you no longer qualify for a re-sit of the exam. Once the exam begins, it is no longer possible to report an illness or other problem.

Plagiarism and Fraud

Plagiarism and fraud are taken very seriously at Utrecht University. All assignments uploaded to Blackboard will be subjected to plagiarism and fraud checks. Any suspicion of plagiarism and/or fraud will be investigated thoroughly, subject to university regulations. Plagiarism takes many forms, including re-using your own work that has been previously submitted to another course, and attempting to pass it off as new work. Don't get caught out! Ensure you list sources for any material not your own, and understand what is expected of students. For a full explanation of what constitutes plagiarism and/or fraud, and the consequences of any disciplinary actions, see the [Educational and Examination Regulations](#).

8. Feedback on Assessments

Final exams are assessed by the lecturers based on a general answer key. Questions about exam outcomes can be discussed once grades have been posted.

9. Student voice

You can provide feedback through the course evaluations and through the Educational Advisory Committee (OAC in Dutch). At the end of the academic period, the Educational

Advisory Committee assesses each master course through invited panel discussions and students will be invited to participate. Comments and suggestions concerning this course can be sent via email to the OAC: ma.oac.asw@uu.nl.

10. Instructional formats

Normally the course consists of large-group lectures and small-group tutorials. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, this course will be taught **COMPLETELY ONLINE**. For an overview of lectures and tutorials, see **Activities per Week** below.

- **Lectures** will be pre-recorded and made available each week at the allotted time slot on the Blackboard course page (every Monday at 11:00). Each lecture will be split up into smaller videos and interspersed with optional exercises that allow you to go more in-depth into the material. A total of 5 pre-recorded lectures will be provided. Lecture 6 is an exam preparation lecture, and will be the only live lecture (available through a webinar).
- **Tutorials:** Tutorials will be **LIVE** during the allotted timeslot and students are expected to attend all five tutorials in the Microsoft Teams environment.

We recommend students read the required literature prior to the lecture; however some students prefer to read the material following the lecture. The course covers a significant amount of literature; ensure you keep up, as it can be difficult to catch up if you fall behind. We do expect that you will have read the literature before each week's tutorial. The focus of the lectures will be to provide a central thread to the various readings for each week. This will be done by drawing on the required literature for that week as well as additional literature. The tutorials provide space for going more in-depth into various concepts and literature.

During the **first three weeks of the course (Lectures 1-3; tutorials 1-3)**, students will become familiar with social risks related to health and wellbeing, in particular work, care and participation, in European welfare states. Theoretical approaches to these risks will be placed in a historical and internationally comparative perspective by embedding them in the comparative welfare state literature. Significant attention is given to the so-called social investment approach to dealing with social risks. During the **last two weeks of the course (Lectures 4 and 5; tutorials 4 and 5)**, we will take an empirical approach, focusing on two broad policy areas: activation policy and diversity policy. Course involvement will consist of weekly lectures and small-group tutorials, focused primarily on student-led discussion of the literature following on from the lectures.

11. Activities per Week /* Lec = lecture; Tut = tutorial.

Wk	From/to	Day & Time	Location	What	Required preparation
1(37)	7-09 / 13-09	Mo 11.00 h. - 12.45 h.	Blackboard	Lec*1: Social Risks, the Welfare State and Social Investment	Read through the course manual; Read Bambra (2007); Hemerijck (2017) Ch1 pp. 3-33 ONLY; Pierson (2006) Ch4.
		1. Wed 09.00 - 10.45 h. 2. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h. 3. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h.	TEAMS	Tut 1	Read through the Tutorial Assignment Guide; course readings from WK1 required for active participation.
2(38)	14-09 / 20-09	Mo 11.00 - 12.45 h.	Blackboard	Lec 2: Social Investment: Promises and Problems	Read Fenger (2018); Hemerijck (2017) Chapters 3, 4, 5, 7, 32.
		1. Wed 09.00 - 10.45 h. 2. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h. 3. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h.	TEAMS	Tut 2	
3(39)	21-09 / 27-09	Mo 11.00 - 12.45 h.	Blackboard	Lec 3: Alternatives to the Social Investment Perspective	Read from Hemerijck (2017) Chapters 13 & 35. Read Yerkes, Javornik and Kurowska (2019) Ch1 ONLY; Tversky & Kahneman (1981).
		1. Wed 09.00 - 10.45 h. 2. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h. 3. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h.	TEAMS	Tut 3	
5(40)	28-09 / 04-10	Mo 11.00 h. - 12.45 h.	Blackboard	Lec 4: Activation policy	Read Den Dulk and Yerkes (2016); Nieuwenhuis and Maldonado (2018); Rose (2019)
		1. Wed 09.00 - 10.45 h. 2. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h. 3. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h.	TEAMS	Tut 4	
6(41)	05-10 / 11-10	Mo 11.00 h. - 12.45 h.	Blackboard	Lec 5: Diversity policy	Read Alba et al (2011); Burchardt (2004); Huijnk and Andriessen (2016) and Sadiraj et al (2018).
		1. Wed 09.00 - 10.45 h. 2. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h. 3. Wed 11.00 - 12.45 h.	TEAMS	Tut 5	
7(42)	12-10 / 18-10	Mo 11.00 h. - 12.45 h.	TEAMS	EXAM PREP	Submit questions in preparation for the exam via Blackboard no later than Thursday, October 8 th at 12:00h.
8(43)	20/10	Tue 17.00 h. – 20.00 h.	TBA	FINAL EXAM	Self-study / group study.
(47)	17/11	Tue 17.00 h. – 20.00 h.	TBA	RESIT FINAL EXAM	Self-study / group study.

12. Course schedule week by week

Week 1 – Lecture 1: Social Risks, the Welfare State and Social Investment

Lecture: The development of post-war European welfare states took place among very favourable conditions. During this lecture we will discuss the rise and expansion of welfare states and the “golden age” of the welfare state, before briefly addressing the “crisis” of the welfare state since the 1970s. We will then spend time looking at what happened after the crisis. New social risks have arisen due to external developments such as globalisation, the post-industrial economy, migration and the influence of neo-liberal ideas, as well as internal developments such as an ageing population, changed family lifestyles and women’s participation in the labour market. In class we will discuss what these new social risks are, how they differ from ‘old’ social risks and which population groups they involve. We will also discuss the most recent and increasingly dominant approach for addressing social risks, the social investment state.

Week 1 – Tutorial 1: Tutorial on social risks and social investment

Tutorial: During this first tutorial, you will have a chance to be introduced to your fellow students and discuss an outline of the tutorials. The remainder of the time will be spent discussing the literature.

Week 2 – Lecture 2: Social Investment: Promises and Problems

Lecture: This lecture will look more in-depth at the social investment approach by looking at the theoretical distinction between different types of welfare paradigms. We will examine the concept of the ‘social investment state’, consider major criticisms to this approach and the promises it holds for social risk protection.

Week 2 – Tutorial 2: Tutorial on Social Investment: Promises and Problems

Tutorial: During this tutorial, we will continue to discuss the literature and topics covered this week. (See week 1)

Week 3 – Lecture 3: Alternatives to the Social Investment Perspective

Lecture: This week's lecture looks at alternative approaches to understanding social risks. In particular, we will move from the macro level (welfare states) to the micro level, assessing two alternative perspectives: (1) Sen's capability approach and (2) prospect and framing theory. Sen's capabilities approach is a normative framework used to assess the (in)equality of social arrangements. It considers multiple factors at the individual, meso and macro level, making it a multilevel approach for explaining social risks. Framing and prospect theory, however, explicitly look at the micro level and are useful for

considering how the framing of social risks can affect social risk protection.

Week 3 – Tutorial 3: Alternatives to the Social Investment Perspective

Tutorial: During this tutorial, we will take a closer look at framing and prospect theory. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to prepare for the final exam. Students will be asked to answer 1 essay question as if they were taking the exam. Feedback will be provided and discussed the next week.

Week 4 – Lecture 4: Activation policy

Lecture: Activation policies are a core instrument in the social investment approach. They accentuate active participation instead of pure financial protection of various groups, such as the unemployed, parents, lone mothers, workers with health problems, disabilities, etc. They also include a long-term perspective and offer resources to individuals who need to bridge a much larger gap to the labour market, such as individuals with obsolete or insufficient skills and school drop-outs. This week we will discuss whether European activation policies fulfil these promises. The focus is on the variation in policy interventions labelled as ‘activation policies’, their underlying assumptions and effects, in particular on the health and wellbeing of various groups. We will look at multiple policy fields in which activation policies are invoked and whether they fulfil the promise of social investment.

Week 4 – Tutorial 4: Activation policy

Tutorial: During this tutorial, we will discuss activation policy from a comparative perspective, discussing how to conceptualize and measure activation policy in this way. For example, we will discuss the common pitfalls of doing comparative policy analysis, problems encountered when looking for comparative indicators, and how to address these problems in a policy setting. There will also be time for a discussion of the literature presented during Monday’s lecture.

Week 5 – Lecture 5: Diversity policy

Lecture: Diversity policy can refer to many things. For example, diversity policies can be needed to encourage the equal participation of immigrant groups, who seem to be particularly vulnerable to social risks. This vulnerability is evidenced by overrepresentation in unemployment in virtually all European countries. Additionally, diversity policies can be needed to create inclusive workplaces, to encourage the participation of people with a significant distance to the labour market, such as the long-term unemployed or people with a disability. In this lecture, we will cover the issue of diversity policies and their intention to address the social risks of vulnerable groups such as migrants and workers with a disability. Similar to last week, the focus is on the variation in policy interventions labelled as ‘diversity policies’, their

underlying assumptions and effects, in particular on the health and wellbeing of various groups.

Week 5 – Tutorial 5: Diversity policy

Tutorial: During this tutorial, we will debate topics centred on diversity. There will also be time for a discussion of the literature presented during Monday's lecture.

Week 6 – Lecture 6: Exam preparation

Lecture: Prior to this webinar, students will have the opportunity to ask questions in preparation for the exam. Students are expected to submit their questions in advance via Blackboard no later than Thursday, October 8th (see Activities per week, above).

Week 7 – TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER: EXAM. 17:00-20:00 hours

Period 2: TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER: RESIT OF EXAM. 17:00-20:00 hours

12. Assessment matrix – Social Risks in Europe

	Exam (50%)	
<i>Subject/ Learning Objective</i> ↓	<i>Remembering and Understanding</i>	<i>Applying and Analysing</i>
A To be able to describe social risks in Europe, including their causes and consequences for individuals' health and wellbeing and to be able to relate these risks to the governance of social policies and interventions related to health and wellbeing in an independent and scholarly manner.	3 open essay questions	
B To be able to interpret and explain various theoretical approaches to social risks from an interdisciplinary perspective.	3 open essay questions	3 open essay questions
C To be able to apply and relate these theoretical approaches to the transformation of European and national social policies.		3 open essay questions
D To be able to make and evaluate methodological decisions in comparative research on social risks.		Tutorial assignment/ 3 open essay questions
E To be able to compare and analyse empirical data about social risks.		3 open essay questions
F To be able to report these findings clearly, and in a well-organised manner.		3 open essay questions