

**COURSE TITLE:**

## **CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS IN SOCIAL POLICY**

### **A short description of the course**

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The course addresses a variety of challenges within the modern welfare state. For example, do debates on universal basic income mean abandoning the current doctrine of targeting and turning to social benefits that are more universal in nature? In addition to the analysis of social transfers aimed at reducing poverty, special attention is paid to the analysis of the education and health systems. The aim is for students to get acquainted with the models developed within the economics of education and health, which indicate the importance of education and health care systems, both at the individual and national level. Students will be introduced to the instruments for financing education and health care systems, as well as the criteria for assessing the efficiency and fairness of these systems. During the course, attention will be paid to the implementation of various methods to assess the effects of social policy related to social protection, education and health, but also to create predictions about the possible effects of changes in social policy. First of all, students will be introduced to cost-benefit analysis, which enables the assessment of financial profitability and economic viability of public projects and policies implemented by the state in order for the resources to be allocated in a way that maximizes the well-being of society as a whole. Students will be able to apply key theoretical concepts and practical tools that are essential for assessing government activities by applying cost-benefit analysis techniques, in conditions of imperfect markets and the presence of risk and uncertainty.

### **What are the educational goals of the programme?**

- Introduction to the elements and types of social policy;
- Providing knowledge about the reasons for state intervention in education and health;



- Providing a theoretical basis for the application of various methodological instruments in selected segments of social policy;
- Providing insight into the possibility of applying cost-benefit analysis when evaluating and creating welfare state, education and health policies.

## What knowledge will the participants acquire?

- Poverty and inequality: defining and measuring
- Educational system: supply and demand for educational services
- Health care system: supply and demand for health services
- Efficiency and equity in the field of social, educational and health policy .

## Course content

- Concepts (Political Economy: Social Justice and the State; Economic Theory: State Intervention to Improve Efficiency and Equity);
- Concepts and measurements: well-being, poverty and inequality
- Social transfers. Impact on poverty and inequality
- Distributive effects of tax policy
- Demand for education: human capital theory and alternative theories
- Educational offer: modalities of financing educational services
- Creating and evaluating educational policies: an analysis of determinants
- Theoretical foundations of cost-benefit analysis in public policies. Valuation of net benefits (based on the effects of the project on the output and input markets).
- Discounting of future effects of the project and treatment of inflation (financial net present value and internal rate of return)
- Economic analysis - social discount rate (economic net present value and internal rate of return)
- Uncertainty - expected values and sensitivity analysis; Risk and expected outcomes (options).

