

Social Politics in Europe since 1750 (A003108)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 2)	Dutch	Gent	lecture peer teaching group work seminar
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Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Verbruggen, Christophe	LW03	lecturer-in-charge
Vrints, Antoon	LW03	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject History)	5	A
Master of Science in Teaching in Social Sciences (main subject Sociology)	5	A
Master of Arts in History	5	A
Master of Science in Sociology	5	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

history of social policies, poor relief, social security, welfare state, nineteenth century, twentieth century

Position of the course

This advanced course aims to familiarize students with different perspectives on the development of social policies in Belgium and Europe in modern and contemporary history (nineteenth and twentieth centuries). The approach of the course is interdisciplinary: insights and concepts from history, sociology and political science are being combined. The historical perspective on social policies aims to contribute to a critical analysis of current social problems.

Contents

The course focuses on the history of social policy in Belgium and Europe during the past two centuries. Social policy is not reduced to the social interventions of the welfare state. Starting point in this course is a more comprehensive perspective: any form of definition of a social problem / intervention to overcome such problems, falls under the heading of 'social policy'. The analysis of the history of social policy takes shape at two levels:

- 1) The analysis of a number of approaches and trends in the research on the history of social policy.
- 2) The analysis of number of areas of social policy (such as poor relief, health or education). (These areas may change each year)

Initial competences

Knowledge of political and social history of Belgium/Europe on the level of Bachelor of Arts in History, the Political Sciences and Sociology.

Final competences

- 1 To have the ability to use advanced insights into historical conceptual frameworks (also in another language than Dutch) to analyse and evaluate new

and complex ideas.

- 2 To have the ability to analyse new and complex historical insights using the epistemology of history, societal conceptions, and ethical views.
- 3 To have the ability to take a critical approach to the history of a particular period or subject.
- 4 To have the ability to independently recognize the dynamics, processes and recurrences in complex historical situations.
- 5 To have the ability to form nuanced and value conscious opinions on historical questions.
- 6 To have the ability to present the results of one's own historical research, to both experts and peers, in a clearly structured oral presentation, in a clear and academically correct language.
- 7 To have the ability to critically assess social issues and contemporary views and contextualize them historically in scientific work.
- 8 To have the ability to critically use insights into the history of Belgium and/or Europe and/or the world to analyse complex problems and to formulate possible research questions.
- 9 To have general insight into the field's literature (also in another language than Dutch), and the ability to use sources (also in another language than Dutch) in an original and creative way.
- 10 To have a reflective and critical attitude that demonstrates historical scientific curiosity, pluralism and a positive attitude towards lifelong learning.
- 11 To be able to approach a problem systematically from multiple perspectives – multiperspectivism.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Group work, Seminar, Lecture, Peer teaching

Extra information on the teaching methods

The course is conceived as a series of discussions (seminars). Students are requested to read scientific literature, report on this literature in short preparatory questions or presentations, and discuss it under the lecturer's guidance. Wherever necessary, lectures expounding specific topics will be inserted.

Study material

Type: Reader

Name: Annual rotating reader (digital).

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

References

Course content-related study coaching

Ufora, opportunity for individual discussion with the lecturer (by appointment through e-mail)

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

Non-periodic assessment

Periodic assessment: Oral exam covering synthesis-focused questions.

Calculation of the examination mark

Non-periodic assessment: preparatory questions, presentation and participation in discussions: 40%

Periodic: 60% (oral exam)

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance, a task is imposed in substitution;

2. The examination cannot be rescheduled

3. Feedback can be given by email, telephone or during an appointment during office hours.

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy