

**Instructor: Ing. Irena Vrnáková**

7 ECTS/3 US credits

**Aims of the course:**

The aim of this course is to explore the relationship between economy and society by asking what a sociological perspective brings to our understanding of economic processes and economic organizations, particularly in Europe. The course aims at a strong link between the economy and society, or between the economic and the social. Students shall learn to understand how the theoretical and methodological approaches of sociology differ from those orienting the discipline of economics. A part of this course is also examination of current research in the subfield of economic sociology.

**Learning outcomes and competences:**

Having successfully finished the course students will be able:

- To understand the complexity of linkages between the economy and society that interact with each other;
- To understand the newest approaches in the area of economic sociology;
- To appreciate multicultural differences and similarities;
- To learn about different types of societies, institutional participation, roles and moral codes of society to social experiences over a life time;
- To become familiar with multiple types of social institutions;
- To understand the major perspectives as well as their theoretical components in European sociology;
- To have an overview concerning sociological processes and concepts, and contemporary issues in Europe;
- To understand social problems in contemporary Europe;
- To find relevant data sources and get information on social topics;
- To explain how social problems interact and reacts with larger societies.

**Course content:**

Economic activity is a form of social activity: people contribute to economic activity, they pursue such activity in relation to others, and this activity is organized. By surveying recent developments in economic sociology, this course introduces students to the sociological analysis of the theory and practice of power in contemporary societies. Emphasis will be placed upon such topics as the nature of political power, social and cultural foundations of political institutions, sources and patterns of political involvement, and the social consequences of various types of power structures. The second part of the course will be dedicated to European sociology. The European Union and its system of governance pushes economic systems, gender roles, and family models of its member states towards greater homogenization. Education policies are being synchronized due to international evaluations. Member states are becoming ever closer, and intra-European exchange and communication have increased considerably while also reaching a higher standard. In addition, these processes take place in a context of increasing globalization. We will answer the question of what convergences of social structures, economic and cultural systems can be found among the member states of the EU. How can we understand globalization and how do different aspects of globalization (e.g. economic and cultural) affect European societies?

**Course content in details:**

1. Introduction to Economic Sociology (sociological theories and sociologists)
2. Public Policy and Human Resources
3. The concepts and types of economic institutions (state, law, labour markets) shape and constitute economic behaviour.
4. Firms, networks, and industrial regions - can be seen as specific forms of involved economic relationships
5. Globalisation and its impact on European societies
6. Similarities and characteristics of European societies compared to other world regions
7. Social policy of the EU and European identity
8. The European Union today and social problems of modern society. Evaluation of efforts to solve social problems.
9. Challenges, threats and limits of social integration in Europe - What are the socio-structural and cultural limits of further integration?
10. Economic systems, sociology of education, gender roles, and family models of the EU - social and cultural conditions of stress and tension in a changing society.
11. Social convergence - How much cultural and social convergence is necessary for an integrated Europe?
12. Urban communities & regions - origins and structure of metropolitan communities, with special attention to population and economic changes, social class systems, urban institutional forms, and the nature and limitations of metropolitan planning programs.
13. Special topics in contemporary European Sociology

**Assessment methods (weight):**

Active lecture/seminar/workshop/tutorial participation/ attendance		20%
Mid-term test		20%
Essay paper		15%
Presentation		15%
Final test		30%
<b>Total – maximum</b>		<b>100 %</b>

**Literature:**

	ISBN	Title	Authors	Year
RQ	978-0745652931	Sociology	Giddens, Anthony	2013
RE	978-0761940722	Exploring the Sociology of Europe	Roche, Maurice	2010
RE	0-691-13059-0.	Principles of Economic Sociology	Swedberg, Richard	2003