**Economics and politics of sustainability**

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with a complete overview of issues concerning sustainability in relation to corporate decisions and changes in business models, with specific attention to the policies, especially the European ones, which are progressively outlining the sustainable transition path. The course consists of two parts.

The first module of the course starts from the approach of the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030 (SDGs) to represent the evolution of the European framework which is leading from the European Green Deal to the Sustainable Finance Action Plan and the recent interventions in the field of production standards, reporting, financial regulation, and taxonomy of sustainable economic activities. Subsequently, the course will focus on the economic policies implemented at the European level in response to the major adverse events of the last fifteen years, from the 2008 financial crisis to the pandemic crisis and the war. In addition to addressing the policies adopted, the course will reconstruct the economic rationale that inspired them in the overall framework of the European Union construction.

The second module examines the role of circular economy, first providing the conceptual elements to understand the areas of application of the *circular economy*, also in relation to the *green economy* and the *bioeconomy*, and then exploring the measurement tools at company and sectoral level. This part also includes a focus on circular innovation, with an analysis of the empirical evidence on its determinants and economic effects.

At the end of the course, students will have developed the ability to understand the current evolution of the regulatory context on issues related to sustainability and the possible effects on strategic corporate choices. They will also be able to analyse the sustainability of business models in terms of circularity, to identify potential spaces for circular transformation and to understand their benefits for the business.

The alternation of theoretical notions with empirical applications and case studies during lectures will allow students to develop the ability to independently apply the concepts learned to the study of specific cases.

*Intended learning outcomes*

*Knowledge and understanding*

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Understand the theoretical reasons that motivate European policies (goal 1);
* Understand the approach based on the concept of sustainability (according to the SDGs) in economic policies (goal 2);
* Know the basic concepts of circular economy models (goal 3);
* Implement an in-depth analysis on the impacts of circular economy models (goal 4);

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*

* Ability to develop applied competences on European programmes (goal 5);
* Propose planning changes in economic policies, especially those aimed at businesses (goal 6);
* Ability to measure the circular economy (goal 7);
* Ability to put circular economy models into an operational relationship with innovation in companies (goal 8).

As part of the course, the student's ability to learn the structure of policies and to evaluate their impact will be promoted, aiming to encourage their own independent judgment, and significantly supporting their ability to propose policy changes, also in light of the evaluation of the professional world. The assessment methods are designed for stimulating communication skills in particular through the Hackathon path that relates students with the professional world.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Presentation of the Course

Module 1 - European economic policy for sustainability

* 1. Market failure and reasons for economic policy: the European perspective
  2. The approach of the SDGs Agenda 2030 and economic policies for sustainable development in Europe: the European Green Deal
  3. Economic policy for the pandemic and war: Next Generation EU and RePowerEU

*Module 2 - Circular economy - Prof. Giovanni Guastella*

* 1. The environmental benefits of the *Circular Economy*.
  2. *Circular Economy*, *Bioeconomy* and *Green economy*: a summary picture.
  3. Measuring the circular economy: experiences and methodological approaches.
  4. Circular transformation of business models and analysis of the innovation drivers.
  5. Circular and digital innovation for the twin transition of small and medium-sized enterprises.

***READING LIST***

MODULE 1 – European Economic Policy for Sustainability

*Materials will be prepared by the lecturer and provided on Blackboard. Here are some useful references for the course.*

* *Fetting, C. (2020). “The European Green Deal”, ESDN Report, December 2020, ESDN Office, Vienna.*
* *Apollonia Miola, Fritz Schiltz (2019), “Measuring sustainable development goals performance: How to monitor policy action in the 2030 Agenda implementation?, Ecological Economics, Volume 164, 2019, 106373, ISSN 0921-8009,* [*https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2019.106373*](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2019.106373)*.*
* *Codogno, L., van den Noord, P. (2022). Assessing Next Generation EU. In: Paganetto, L. (eds) Economic Challenges for Europe After the Pandemic. Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics. Springer, Cham.* [*https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-10302-5\_5*](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-10302-5_5)
* *Laurent A. Lambert, Jad Tayah, Caroline Lee-Schmid, Monged Abdalla, Ismail Abdallah, Abdalftah H.M. Ali, Suhail Esmail, Waleed Ahmed (2022), “The EU's natural gas Cold War and diversification challenges”, Energy Strategy Reviews, Volume 43, 2022, 100934,, ISSN 2211-467X,,* [*https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esr.2022.100934*](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esr.2022.100934)
* ASVIS, “*Rapporto ASVIS sullo sviluppo sostenibile”*, 2022

MODULE 2 – Handouts provided by the lecturer

The module is based on lectures, seminars and case studies. It includes student presentations on course topics and mid-term assessment sessions. Finally, some forms of policy design will be implemented also in the form of hackathons.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The assessment method varies between attending students who take two interim tests (one per module) and non-attending students who take the exam in a single session.

The first group of students will have to answer two questions in each of the interim tests (to be chosen among four). The time for each interim test is 90’.