



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

School of Economics and Management

## **EKHT35, Economic History: Advanced Topics in Economic History - The History of Economic Inequality, 7.5 credits**

*Ekonomisk historia: Fördjupningskurs i ekonomisk historia - den ekonomiska ojämlikhetens historia, 7,5 högskolepoäng*

Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

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### **Details of approval**

The syllabus was approved by The Board of the Department of Economic History on 2020-06-09 to be valid from 2020-08-31, autumn semester 2020.

### **General Information**

This is a graduate level course, which can become one of two mandatory tutorial courses in the second year of the master's program EAETU Economic Growth, Population Studies and Development, track EKHI Economic History.

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of studies*

Economic History

*Depth of study relative to the degree requirements*

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

### **Learning outcomes**

On an overarching level, the student will acquire knowledge on economic and social inequality from a historical perspective. The student will acquire a solid base of knowledge to stand on for further discussions on the development and history of inequality, and will have insights in the methods, theories and sources applied in research on historical inequality.

More specifically, to pass the assessments students should be able to:

## Knowledge and understanding

- account for the evolution of income and wealth inequality in key economies of Europe since the 1300s
- describe and discuss the main types of sources for historical economic inequality
- analyze the debates and contradictions in the research literature on the history of economic inequality

## Competence and skills

- analyze the development of inequality and its causes from a variety of theoretical and analytical perspectives
- conduct independent evaluations of empirical research and judge its use of sources and methodology

## Judgement and approach

- critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various empirical approaches to historical inequality
- perform analyses of economic and social inequality in a historical setting, and point to lacunas of our knowledge, and roads forward for research on these topics

## Course content

This course discusses the history of economic and social inequality, focusing on the Western world since the Middle Ages. The aim is to bring students up to speed with the research frontier in research on historical inequality. While some attention is paid to classic studies, the emphasis is on newer research.

The core issues are these:

One, what is defined as inequality and what is measured?

Concepts of income and wealth are introduced and discussed, and we discuss alternative empirical approaches to the overall theme of "inequality". The disciplinary divides and boundaries between economics, economic history, history, sociology and other relevant disciplines are discussed. We discuss the connections between economic, social, and political inequality in history. We also go through the main types of sources used in historical studies of inequality: tax data, probate inventories and wills, and social tables.

Second, we go through recent empirical research on economic inequality through history. We discuss strengths and limitations of the literature and what we know a lot about and what is omitted from the literature. We discuss where the research field is going and what kind of research is needed going forward. The course gives students a deeper understanding of economic inequality, its history and its development.

## Course design

The course consists of reading of key literature, and a number of mandatory group meetings where students are expected to actively participate in discussion. For the meetings, the students will also write shorter written assignments in relation to the readings. During the first part of the course, we read important studies in the history of economic inequality and discuss the literature in depth at group meetings. The course ends with the writing of an essay on a topic in historical inequality and living standards. The essay submitted is part of the examination and is presented and discussed in a seminar.

## Assessment

The grading is based on individual performance in the form of written summaries, essays, presentations and other required activities. The quality of the course essay which is discussed at the final meeting is an especially important consideration for the grading. Equally great value is placed on the oral element in the form of active participation in group discussions during meetings and seminars.

The University views plagiarism very seriously, and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

*Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.*

## Grades

Marking scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A.

At the School of Economics and Management grades are awarded in accordance with a criterion-based grading scale UA:

- A (Excellent). A distinguished result that is excellent with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
- B (Very good). A very good result with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
- C (Good). The result is of a good standard with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought and lives up to expectations.
- D (Satisfactory). The result is of a satisfactory standard with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.
- E (Sufficient). The result satisfies the minimum requirements with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought, but not more.

- F (Fail). The result does not meet the minimum requirements with regard to theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.

To pass the course, the students must have been awarded the grade of E or higher. Students who do not obtain grades A-E on their written class room exam will be offered opportunities to retake the exam in which case the student will be assessed according to regular procedure. In the case of home exams that are handed in after the set deadline the teacher can: a) hand out a new exam which will be assessed according to regular procedure, b) may penalize the student by handing out a lower grade on the assignment in question unless the student can demonstrate special circumstances for the delay.

### **Entry requirements**

Students accepted for the second year of the master's programme EAETU 'Economic Growth, Population and Development', track EKHI 'Economic History' and students that have already acquired the equivalent knowledge are qualified for this course.

### **Further information**

This course cannot be combined with EKHT42 Economic History: Advanced Topics in Economic Development - Explaining Growth and Inequality.

Subcourses in EKHT35, Economic History: Advanced Topics in Economic History - The History of Economic Inequality

Applies from H20

2001 The History of Economic Inequality, 7,5 hp  
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A