

Research Areas

The Department's Research Lines

The main feature of the Department's research lines is the coherence and tuning with the study of the State and other local, national and European institutions, in order to analyze the connective tissue of the Society, ranging from the territorial to the international dimension, without neglecting the non-institutionalized and spontaneous aspects. So the Department's research activity focuses on studying the historical, legal, economica and socio-political rules, governing the contemporary world.

The disciplines attributable to the Department are characterized by a consolidated and rigorous scientific method and the strong European and international connotation. These aspects are essential in the formation of young people from any European and non-European country, in order to acquire the ability to orient themselves and to influence the complex problems of contemporary society. And to achieve this, a broad mental opening is needed, as well as the ability to innovate and adapt to the changing knowledge and skills.

In this respect, the Department constantly develops its research lines to foster an ever-increasing integration of the different areas of study, collaborating also with scholars and scientific institutions of national and international value.

History

Research activities

The scientific research activities in History embrace the widest spectrum of the discipline, from Contemporary History in its most comprehensive meaning to History of Contemporary International Relations and History of Political Doctrines.

Within these disciplines, the most specific research lines currently being addressed are:

Historical Studies Sector

The studies and researches of the members of this sector focus on the political, institutional, social and economic history of contemporary age, both in general and with specific insights dedicated to the history of development, with regard to communications and territory, institutional history of contemporary Italy, with attention to cultural and environmental assets, and those relating to territorial attitudes and urban planning with specific reference to the area of sustainable mobility and environmental degradation. A major research effort is devoted to the history of journalism in contemporary Italy, its origins and development from the 19th Century till present. There is a specific focus on the history of Europe, the development of its welfare, its institutions and the social implications of it, not forgetting the process of building a united Europe. The study of the main political doctrines developed in the Old Continent between the 18th and the 20th centuries is a well-established source of research, with particular emphasis on theories of the political class, as well as research on political systems with regard to movements and political parties between the 19th and the 20th centuries. In the history of diplomatic relations, the focus is on the foreign relations after World War II. Relations between the State and the Church in Italy are to be mentioned, as well as History of Africa, with special concern to the Far East and China.

Professors and researchers of this sector are involved in various educational programs and research projects focusing on topics related to European studies, attracting a significant number of international students. The variety of research topics and the use of different methodologies favor the comparison and exchange of knowledge, as well as the sharing of experiences and collaborations.

Researchers from the Historical Studies section regularly collaborate with national and international cultural organizations and centers, promoting frequent exchanges and relations with Italian and foreign colleagues. This reflects positively on didactics at all levels, gaining more value by the constant innovative contribution by research and studies conducted.

Law

Research activities

For the legal field, research activities are carried out in: International Law, History of Medieval and Modern Law, Administrative Law, Tax Law, Labor Law, Philosophy of Law. Within these disciplines, the most specific research lines currently being addressed are as follows.

International sector

The research activity focuses mainly on aspects of public international law. In the last two years, topics of general theory of international law have been addressed. In this regard reference can be made to publications and conferences on issues related to the structure of the international order, its sources and processes of change. Particular attention has been given, in some researches that will be published shortly, to issues relating to the role of the general principles of international law and the principles of antinomies. With regard to specific areas of international law, the theory of international human rights obligations are very relevant. Recently, also in connection with some Erasmus Plus KA2 projects coordinated by DISPI professors, the right to education in multicultural societies has been analyzed. In addition, studies and research on the protection of children's rights, immunities and the right of immigration are being pursued. For private and procedural law, attention is focused on the implications of EU law on the general theory of private international law, with particular concern to the issues of public order and the enforcement of rules.

History of Law sector

The research activity aims at investigating many aspects of the history of law from the medieval age to the contemporary era. The research focuses on: history of European and international law, with reference to the evolution of legal thinking, the study of the unpublished works of Alberico Gentili (one of Grozio's forerunners and the founding fathers of modern international law), the history of religious freedom and the relationship amongst the religious confessions at the beginning of the modern age to the present day; the juridical and institutional history of the Vatican State; the history of university institutions, with particular reference to Siena University; the analysis of the history of specific institutes, both substantive law and procedural law (civil and criminal); the history of leasing in Italy.

Public Law sector

The main research lines in this area concern - as a whole - issues related to the freedom of expression and thought, the right to the protection of personal data, the rights of citizens' democratic participation, the transformation of the role of some public institutions in the context of the changes affecting contemporary States. The reference is to the changes that have taken place both at the technological level (especially with reference to the new media) and socio-economic level (which includes studies on "constitutional profiles of State fees" and studies on the relationship between reform, social status and the EU) and finally at political level (with a study on "democratic participation and populism").

In particular, this concerns the protection of rights in the new media, with insights into the relationship between search engines and information pluralism, guaranteeing privacy and children in the use of the web and the related problem of provider liability; but also to investigate some new repressive tendencies in the freedom of manifestation of thought.

These issues are interlinked with respect to the protection of the subjective dimension (electoral rights) and the objective (constitutional rigidity and guarantees inherent in the legislative process) of representative democracy, which are also being investigated from an institutional point of view: the evolution of the role of the President of the Republic and the Presidents of the two Houses of Parliament and the multiplication of independent authorities, with particular reference to the establishment of ANAC.

In tax law, the research activity focuses particularly on the study of the evolution of the modalities for the implementation of public expenditure competition in a horizontal and vertical subsidiary context and on the prospects for the realization of fiscal federalism. Research and analysis are also underway on Community taxation issues, in particular with regard to the VAT sector as well as research activities in the field of law, with particular attention to the problems of the taxation process with plurality of parties.

Administrative Law Sector

Research in the field of administrative law moves on the paths involving both private administrative bodies and substantive procedures. Since the studies on E. Cannada Bartoli, a tight dialogue between academia and jurisprudence has been interwoven; all in order to verify the state of implementation of the protection techniques that administrative justice puts and makes available to the person who comes into contact with the administrative power. From there, the ambition was to implement this dialogue on the one hand and, on the other hand, to extend it to substantial safeguards in the administrative procedure.

Private Law Sector

Research in the field of Private Law is mainly concerned with the reform of the system of real guarantees, professional liability, the destination of goods for one purpose, the legal certainty of movement, and the reform of the Non profit organisations.

Labour Law Sector

In this field, research mainly focuses on issues related to business and labour mobility in the European single market, the protection of workers' fundamental rights at supranational level, women's labour and labour market transformation, the relationship between productive work and reproductive work.

Criminal Law Sector

The research activity in criminal disciplines aims mainly at studying the latest trends in criminal policy over the past recent years, all aimed at a significant reduction in the judicial burden. This objective was pursued with the introduction of a new institute for the suspension of the trial, no longer limited to offenses committed by minors, provided that sentences does not exceed four years of imprisonment (L. 28 April 2014, No 67); with the prediction of non-punishment for the particular tenuity of the fact for offenses punishable by imprisonment not exceeding five years (Legislative Decree No 28 of March 16, 2015); with the abolition of tout court of codicist cases and extra codicem as well as with the repeal of other offenses and the simultaneous introduction of illicit penalties with civil fines (Legislative Decree No.17 January 2016, Nos 7 and 8); with the insertion of art. 162 ter criminal code, through which a criminal offense of extrajudicial offenses is instituted in the criminal justice system, which is based on wholly remedial actions of the damage caused by the refund or compensation and, where possible, of the damaging or dangerous consequences of these produced.

Economics

Areas of research activities

For the economic area, the research activities range from Political Economy to Economic Policy, Applied Economics, International Economics, Monetary Economics, Demography and Statistics.

Within these disciplines, the most specific research lines currently being addressed are:

Economy sector

In the Economy sector, the research activity deals with the relationship between globalization and social sustainability, in addition to the issues related to the global energy system against climate change. Other research lines concern the role of cooperatives for the economic recovery in the Tuscan economy and the resolution of the European Parliament on the need for a pluralistic market, as well as issues related to the organization and management of the Non Profit sector in the provision of personal services.

Demography Sector

Current research lines focus on historical demography, the interrelation between demography and anthropology (ethnodemography), and the influence of religions on demographic behaviors of individuals essentially in terms of differential fertility (religious demographics)

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Additional research areas

Additional research areas to the major scientific areas

The department also includes research areas that are complementary to the three major scientific areas, but are functional and essential to the pursuit of general goals. These are, in particular, foreign-language disciplines that characterize Corpus Linguistics for word-processing, focusing on political themes.