

## P2EC.00.239 The European Union - Current Affairs

### 2021/2022 autumn block mode study

<b>Faculty/Department</b>	Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies (SVJS)
<b>Amount of credits (1 ECTS=26 hours)</b>	6 ECTS
<b>Duration in semesters</b>	1
<b>Final assessment</b>	differentiated (A, B, C, D, E, F, not present)
<b>Syllabus credits</b>	6 ECTS
<b>Lecturers</b>	Stefano Braghiroli (responsible), Toomas Hendrik Ilves
<b>Languages of instruction</b>	English
<b>Other languages needed for achieving learning outcomes</b>	English
<b>Minimum number of attendants</b>	10
<b>Maximum number of attendants</b>	70
<b>Study levels</b>	bachelor's studies, master's studies, doctoral studies, bachelor's and master's integrated studies
<b>Target group and/or preconditions for participation</b>	All interested
<b>Forms of teaching and learning and no of hours</b>	lectures: 6 seminars: 6 independent work (including e-learning): 144
<b>Web-based learning</b>	Partially
<b>Study period (in weeks)</b>	2,4,6,8,11,13,15

#### Objectives

The purpose of the course is to discuss a number of policy issues that currently define the EU political agenda, such as the COVID-19 crisis, post-Brexit Britain's relations with Brussels, and migration. Students are trained to analyse various current EU policy problems and to design solutions to tackle these issues.

#### Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students:

- Use basic methods to analyse complex ("wicked") policy problems in the EU context (problem analysis/root cause analysis)
- analyse the positions of various EU actors (institutions, Member States, other stakeholders) regarding such problems and regarding possible solutions (stakeholder analysis)
- use foresight techniques for policy analysis and design (scenario-writing, Delphi method, brainstorming, expert consultations, trend extrapolations)
- find relevant information from the EU databases (legislation, policy documents, EUROSTAT) and from specialized think-tanks/on-line media
- effectively communicate on policy analysis and design, both orally and in writing
- adequately provide and receive feedback to/from fellow students and from lecturers, in class-settings

Key competences to be improved: sense making, novel and adaptive thinking, cross-cultural competency, transdisciplinarity, design mind-set, cognitive load management.

#### Brief description

The course has two main parts, which will run parallel. During the first part of each meeting, seven specific EU cases ("current issues", or "wicked policy problems") will be put central in the course; the actual choice of topics will be made as late as possible in order to stay close to actual developments. Students will be provided (on the course website) with basic material on these four policy areas, as well as relevant background academic resources (papers, articles). Each case is introduced and discussed, using the expertise of former President Toomas Hendrik Ilves. In the second part of each meeting, following a students' presentation on the same topic, a seminar will be held, and students will get small (group) assignments to prepare beforehand. These assignments will vary for each case (preparation of some questions, policy note, presentation). Students will be assigned different roles (presenter/discussant, advocate/opponent) for these class meetings. Second, students are trained in understanding and using some simple tools/methods for policy analysis and communication, by means of four specific (group) assignments on the cases/issues.

Course keywords: EU, crisis, current affairs, political agenda, policy analysis, policy design.

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## Groups

Mark Limit of attendants Lecturers

## Schedule

10.09.2021	lecture - Talk on current and future EU Foreign Policy Challenges (by Toomas Hendrik Ilves)
10.09.2021	seminar - Course introduction Seminar discussion
24.09.2021	lecture - Talk on PESCO and the future of EU Security and Defence (by Toomas Hendrik Ilves)
24.09.2021	seminar - Students' group presentation Seminar discussion
08.10.2021	lecture - Talk on the future of the Digital Single Market (by Toomas Hendrik Ilves)
08.10.2021	seminar - Students' group presentation Seminar discussion
22.10.2021	lecture - Talk on the recent developments in the Eastern Neighbourhood: Focus on Belarus (by Toomas Hendrik Ilves)
22.10.2021	seminar - Students' group presentation Seminar discussion
12.11.2021	lecture - Talk on EU's East-West Divide (by Toomas Hendrik Ilves)
12.11.2021	seminar - Students' group presentation Seminar discussion
26.11.2021	lecture - Talk on the European Green Deal and Green Transition (by Toomas Hendrik Ilves)
26.11.2021	seminar - Students' group presentation Seminar discussion
10.12.2021	lecture - Talk on democratic backsliding in the EU: Focus on Poland and Hungary (by Toomas Hendrik Ilves)
10.12.2021	seminar - Students' group presentation Seminar discussion

## Lecture materials and course home page

### Web-based learning environment

<http://moodle.ut.ee>

### Compulsory study materials

There is no obligatory literature for this (case-based) course. Case materials and academic background reading material will be made available on the course website, as well as materials on policy analysis and communication.

Recommended reading: Esther Versluis, Mendeltje van Keulen, Paul Stephenson, Analyzing the European Union Policy Process, Palgrave Macmillan, The European Union Series, 2011.

### Recommended study materials

### List of independent works and their instructions

## Assessment methods and criteria

presentation	<p>The group presentation is assessed according to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Analytical ability</li><li>- Grouping ideas</li><li>- Connecting concepts and objects</li><li>- Synthesis and clarity</li></ul> <p>In order for the task to be considered achieved, the content of the group work and its oral presentation, focusing on a specific case study / "wicked" policy problem, should demonstrate the ability to analytically connect concepts, theories, and empirical objects and the practical skills to group ideas in the light of coherent general meanings. The presentation should</p>
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	<p>also summarize the results of the group work in coherent and clear way combining synthesis and completeness.</p> <p>The failure to meet these criteria when it comes to the content of the group work and its oral presentation will determine the failure of the task.</p> <p>The task is assessed on a non-differentiated provided that the required minimum criteria are achieved.</p>
case analysis	<p>The reflection paper &amp; policy proposals are assessed according to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problem solving</li> <li>- Critical thinking</li> <li>- Analytical ability</li> <li>- Grouping ideas</li> <li>- Connecting concepts and objects</li> <li>- Connecting theory and hypotheses</li> <li>- Methodological clarity</li> </ul> <p>The reflection paper is assessed according to the following scale:</p> <p>11-20 - The required minimum criteria are generally achieved; the formal aspects of the task are, on the whole, met; the descriptive and analytical parts of the task present a sufficient level of development; however, recommendation part is non-existent or clearly underdeveloped. The method appears only formally applied but not substantially interiorized and the student fails to properly include and discuss the consistent literature.</p> <p>21-30 - The required minimum criteria are achieved; the formal aspects of the task are, generally, met; the descriptive and analytical parts of the task present a satisfactory level of development; however, the recommendation part and its research component present appear basic, inconsistent, and underdeveloped in most of the parts. The method appears only imperfectly formally applied and poorly interiorized and the student includes and discusses only the basic literature related to the task.</p> <p>31-40 - The required minimum criteria are achieved, not only formally, but also substantially; the descriptive and analytical part of the task present a good level of sophistication. The recommendation part and its (generally satisfactory) research component, appear well developed, but still present some weakness at times. The method appears generally well applied and - on the whole - interiorized and the student includes and discusses not only the basic literature related to the task, with some degree of sophistication.</p> <p>41-50 - The required criteria are achieved, not only formally, but also substantially; almost the totality of the aspects of the task are met. The descriptive and analytical parts present a very high level of sophistication. The recommendation part and its research component, appear highly developed and satisfactory, and present only very marginal weakness that does not affect the final result. The method appears well applied and interiorized and the student includes and discusses a consistent amount of literature related to the task, with a satisfactory degree of sophistication.</p> <p>51-60 - The required minimum criteria are achieved, not only formally, but also substantially; the totality of the aspects of the task are met. Both the descriptive/analytical and recommendation parts of the task appear equally well developed and present a remarkably high level of sophistication in their arguments and consistency. The method appears remarkably applied and fully interiorized and the student includes and discusses a vast amount of literature related to the task, with a high degree of sophistication.</p>

#### Requirements to be met for final assessment

In order to be considered for the final evaluation students are required to attend at least 5 out of 7 meetings, actively participate to class discussion, and perform a successful class presentation.

These requirements apply both to in-class and remote-track students. When it comes to the remote-track meetings, they will be streamed live from the classroom via ZOOM and attendance will be recorded during the meeting time.

#### To obtain final grade, the following is required

Once the pre-conditions to be considered for the final assessment are met, the components of the final evaluation will weight in the definition of the final grade according to the following distribution of points:

Work description Max. points  
Case analysis (60% of the final grade): 60  
Class presentation (40% of the final grade): 40  
Total: 100

The final grade is computed on the basis of the positively assessed test and of the positive grade for the case analysis.

Options for taking tests/exams at later date

As agreed with the lecturer

Other information

This course is developed and implemented with the support of the Jean Monnet Module "Neighbourhood Enlargement and Regionalism in Europe" (NearEU). The project has received funding from the European Union's Erasmus+ Jean Monnet programme under Grant Agreement 620279-EPP-1-2020-1-EE-EPPJMO-MODULE.