

Decision-making in the EU

Lecturers

Ramona COMAN (Coordinator) and Pauline Pirlot

Course mnemonic

POLI-D409

ECTS credits

5 credits

Language(s) of instruction

English

Course period

First term

Campus

Solbosch

Course content

The main objective of the course is to provide students with an in-depth knowledge of the decision-making processes of the European Union (EU).

The course is divided in three main parts and it is structured as follows:

Introduction

Part I - How did we get here? A history of EU integration

- › The foundation of the Communities and re-foundation of the EU
- › Key dates in the development of the EU
- › The establishment of the Communities and institutions
- › Successive revision of Treaties
- › The institutional and policy architecture of the EU
- › The emergence of the first European policies
- › The competencies of the EU
- › Types of EU policies
- › What is the EU and why/how to study it?
- › Explaining European Integration: Theoretical approaches

Part II – The EU as a political system

- › Executive politics
- › Legislative politics
- › Judicial politics
- › Sociology of Eurocrates

Part III – Decision-making and modes of governance

- › Supranational decision-making
- › Intergovernmental methods
- › Policy coordination
- › Policy making in practice
- › Conclusions

Objectives (and/or specific learning outcomes)

The main objective of the course is to provide students with in-depth knowledge of the decision-making processes of the European Union (EU). The course is divided in three parts.

- › The first section deals with the fundamentals of the EU, its nature and theories of European integration.
- › The second part introduces the three branches involved in EU decision-making (executive, legislative, judicial). This section will cover EU actors' and institutions' roles transversally.
- › The third section examines decision-making procedures and modes of EU governance.

This course is a prerequisite to understand integration/disintegration and cooperation in the EU, the role of the main institutions and how decisions are made. It is designed both for students who plan to work in the EU bubble, in institutions and organisations at the regional, national or European level and those who aim to undertake a research in European studies.

Students are highly recommended to read newspapers and follow closely and regularly current affairs in European politics.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will acquire the following knowledge and skills:

- › good knowledge and understanding of the different stages of the EU integration process;
- › in-depth knowledge and understanding of the roles and organisation of the EU's main institutions; ability to explain their powers; a good understanding of the inter-institutional relations and the interaction of the EU institutions with the other political and social actors at the European level;
- › an ability to analyse and explain the relations between member states and EU's supranational institutions as well as the dynamics of cooperation and conflict between EU institutions;
- › a good knowledge and understanding of the decision-making processes at the EU-level and ability to explain different decision-making methods and modes of governance.
- › skills and ability to critically and analytically analyse and discuss issues related to European integration and major turning points in this process
- › a thorough understanding of the main controversies related to the EU integration process.
- › A good understanding of the following transversal concepts/topics: integration, governance, intergovernmental, supranational, spillover, preferences, modes of governance, sovereignty, policy coordination, consensus, political regime, critical juncture, crisis, politicisation, depoliticization etc.

Pre-requisites and co-requisites

Course having this one as pre-requisit

TRAN-0501 | Stage | 15 crédits

Teaching method and learning activities

The course is composed of 11 lectures of 2 hours. Whenever possible, lectures with invited academics, experts, civil servants, and EU officials are organized.

The teaching material is available on the UV. It is composed of readings, news articles, and the PowerPoint presentations used in class.

References, bibliography and recommended reading

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Course notes

Université virtuelle and Syllabus

Other information

Place(s) of teaching

Solbosch

Contact(s)

Contact:

Pauline Pirlot

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Evaluation method(s)

written examination

written examination

Closed question with multiple choices (MCQ)

Evaluation method(s) (additional information)

The assessment is twofold:

- > A MCQ on the UV (6/20) related to a selection of readings. The MCQ will be evaluated on a 20-point grading-scale. It will be organised during the semester.
- > A two hour written exam with one open question to select among two questions (14/20). It will be organised in the January exam session.

Determination of the mark (including the weighting of partial marks)

The assessment is twofold:

- > A MCQ on the UV (6/20) related to a selection of readings. The MCQ will be evaluated on a 20-point grading-scale. It will be organised during the semester.
- > A two hour written exam with one open question to select among two questions (14/20). It will be organised in the January exam session.

Main language(s) of evaluation

English

Programmes

Programmes proposing this course at the faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences

MA-ADMP | **Master in Public Administration** | finalité Professional/unit 2, MA-ETEU | **Master in European Studies** | finalité European Politic/unit 1, finalité EU and Asia/unit 1 and finalité EU and Asia/unit 2 and MA60-POLI | **Master in Political Sciences : General (60 credits)** | option JOUR/unit U

Programmes proposing this course at the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management

MA-ECON | **Master in Economics : General** | finalité Economic Governance and Public Policy in Europe/unit 2

Programmes proposing this course at the institute of European studies

MS-EURI | **Specialized Master in EU Interdisciplinary Studies** | unit U