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## European Politics

The aim of this course is to provide general knowledge to the students about Europe and the European Union and to help them to understand contemporary issues and futures challenges faced by the EU nowadays. Since its inception in 1957, the European Economic Community (ECC) then the European Union (EU) has become one of the leading international actors in the world. But in the same time, European integration remains a little-understood process. Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that it is unlike any other organization. Whereas it is more developed than ‘classical’ international organizations, it is not a state, and may possibly never become one. This notwithstanding, comparative analysis is required to make sense of its functioning.

This course addresses the following issues : what are the origins of the EU ? How do the EU institutions work ? What are the main prospects of the EU ? In order to answer such questions, the lectures are organized in three different sections : 1/ Europe and the EU from yesterday to nowadays ; 2/ The EU today. A space in construction ; 3/ Europe and the EU tomorrow. The future of the European project.

The methodological approach of the course is based on PowerPoint presentations. 12 topics are proposed below. The program of the course will handle most of them according to the time and interest of the students.

**Program of the course**  
**(proposal)**

**First Section**

**Europe and the European Union**

**From yesterday to nowadays**

**Topic 1. Introduction to Europe and the EU**

This session draws up a general historical overview of Europe before the emergence of the EU, including the main dates in Europe's history. The origins of the EU, starting with World War II, will also be explained.

**Topic 2. General Presentation of the EU Member States (27 countries) and the Candidate Countries**

This session provides a general presentation of the current EU Member States and of the Candidate Countries and the potential Candidates Countries. A Historical as well as a geographical approach of Europe will be emphasized (countries, capitals, years of membership, population, GDP/person).

**Topic 3. Historical overview of the EU : the main stages of the European construction**

This session draws up an historical overview of the EU since its inception in 1958. Who were the « founding fathers » of Europe (Schuman) ? What role played national leaders and politicians in the Europe construction (de Gaulle, Adenauer). What are the main stages of the European construction ? In this prospect, the successive treaties signed by the EU Member States will be particularly examined : European Coal and Steel Community Treaty (1951), Treaty of Rome (1957), Single European Act and the Treaty on European Union (or Maastricht Treaty, 1992).

## **Second Section**

### **The European Union Today**

#### **A Space in Construction**

#### **Topic 4. General overview of the EU Institutions**

This session draws up a general presentation of the EU institutions : European Commission, European Parliament, European Council, European Court of Justice and European Court of Human Rights. It presents the main features of the organization and functioning of the EU institutions.

#### **Topic 5. EU public policies**

This session presents the main public policies implemented by the EU institutions in Europe. It explains the policy-making process at European level, and the way it copes with the national ones. A particular interest will be shown on several fields of EU policies : the economic and social policies implemented by the EU since the launching of the European Economic Community in 1958, in particular the Common Agricultural Policy ; The EU and public services (Bolkestein directive).

#### **Topic 6. Economic and monetary Union : The politics of Euro**

This session addresses one of the most important EU policy related to the economic and monetary fields : the politics of Euro. It describes the single European currency process and highlights the role of Maastricht Treaty in this process. It also explains the role of certain EU institutions, such as the European Central Bank, and raises some of the questions about the single European currency.

#### **Topic 7. The enlargement process of the EU**

This session focus on one of the EU's most powerful tool policy : the enlargement process. It presents and explains the past enlargements of the EU. Since its inception in 1957 with six founder Member States, the EU has undergone seven successive enlargements which deeply affected its size and shape.

A special emphasize will be shown on the wave of 2004, with the accession of eight Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) and the two islands of Cyprus and Malte, which is considered as one of the most important enlargement in EU's history. The Copenhagen criterion as required conditions for accession will also be explained.

### **Topic 8. Democracy and citizenship in the EU and Member States**

This session addresses the issue of democracy and citizenship in the EU. It explains the notion of EU citizenship based on specific rights and duties. It shows how the European democracy works, in particular at the occasion of the European Parliament elections. It also emphasizes the role of the EU in democratization process and democratic transitions in Central and Eastern European countries. Last, it discusses the issue of European « democratic deficit » which was raised in the past years.

## **Third Section**

### **Europe and the European Union Tomorrow**

#### **The Future of the European project**

### **Topic 9. The EU and its citizens : assessing the social legitimacy of the EU**

The role of European citizens in the development of the EU has become a central issue in the past years. This question deals with the social legitimacy of the EU. To what extent the EU has acquired a social legitimacy ? Based on the Eurobarometer public opinions surveys, carried out in the Member States and the Candidate Countries by the European Commission since 1973, this session will explore a range of indicators dealing the EU citizens attitudes towards the EU. Among them, the following will be examined : support of European citizens for EU Membership ; perceptions and meanings of the EU ; awareness of the EU institutions ; trust in the EU institutions ; benefits and expectations from the EU ; feeling National and/or European.

## **Topic 10. The issue of EU's Borders**

The past and future enlargements of the EU has raised the issue of EU's borders within Europe. This session explores this issue through two main topics : the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), a new policy which was launched by the EU institutions in 2004 ; Turkey's accession to the EU.

In this prospect, a particular interest will be emphasized on Turkey's accession to the EU, which has become one of the most controversial issue in Europe during the past years. European citizens appear to be deeply divided on the issue of Turkey's accession to the EU. If Turkey is admitted, it will mean the entry of the first Muslim country into the EU. If it is not, the EU will be perceived as an exclusively Christian Club. The enlargement of the EU will, therefore, not only have a profound effect on the world, but on Europe itself. At the same time, many European political leaders, in particular in France, has claimed that Turkey cannot be accepted to join the EU because its geographical territory is not located on the European continent. If Turkey joins the EU in the coming years, the EU will share its eastern borders with countries such as Irak, Iran, Syria, Georgia or Armenia.

## **Topic 11. EU's geopolitical position and new international threats : towards a common foreign and security policy ?**

This session addresses the issue of European foreign and defense policy. Several questions will be raised and tackled : what is the future of the Common Foreign and Security Policy ? Do the EU Member States share the same positions about international issues, such as the war in Irak ? How do the EU Member States cope with conflicts on European continent, like the war in Yougoslavia ? Is there an European common policy against international terrorism ? A particular emphasize will be brought on the EU's geopolitical position and the relationships between the EU and NATO.

## **Topic 12. The European Constitution**

The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (TECE) has been considered as one of the most important step in European construction for the past years. This session is devoted to explain the origins, the developments and the final conclusions of the project of European Constitution. At the same time, several questions can be raised : Does Europe need a Constitution ? Why do certain EU countries, such as France and the Netherlands, reject the treaty in 2005 referenda ? What will be the future of the Reform Treaty, which has succeeded to the TECE, in 2007 ?

## Course readings :

Giandomenico Majone, *Dilemmas of European Integration : The Ambiguities and Pitfalls of Integration by Stealth*, OUP 2005.

John Peterson and Michael Shackleton (eds.), *The Institutions of the European Union*, Oxford University Press, 2002.

Paul Margette, *Le système politique de l'Union européenne*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2005.

Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union*, London, Macmillan, 2000.

Dyonissos Dimitrakopoulos, and Jeremy Richardson, « Implementing EU Public Policy », in Jeremy Richardson (ed.), *European Union*, 2th ed., London, Routledge, 2001.

Anthony Forster and William Wallace, « Foreign and Security Policy : From Shadow to Substance? » in Helen and William Wallace (eds.), *Policy-Making in the European Union*, 4th ed., Oxford University Press, 2000.

Kathleen R. McNamara, « Managing the Euro : The European Central Bank » in John Peterson and Michael Shackleton (eds.), *The Institutions of the European Union*, Oxford University Press, 2002, 169-189.

Joseph H.H. Weiler et al., « European Democracy and its Critique » in Jack Hayward (ed), *The Crisis of Representation in Europe*, London, Frank Cass, 1995, 4-39.

Jan- Erik Lane and Svante Ersson, *Politics and Society in Western Europe*, London, Sage, 1999.

Simon Bulmer and Christian Lequesne (eds.), *The Member States of the European Union*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

John Peterson and H. Sjursen, *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe ? Competing visions of the CFSP*, London, Routledge, 1998.

Jan Zielonka , *Europe Unbound : Enlarging and Reshaping the Boundaries of the European Union*, London, Routledge, 2002.

Christopher Hill and Michael Smith, *International Relations and the European Union*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.