

European Union Public Policy: from agenda setting to policy formulation and policy decision making, and through to policy implementation

Aims and Objectives

The European Union has developed the policy making attributes of a modern state across an increasingly wide range of policy sectors. As a result it has also gained a considerable degree of power in order to set policy agendas, and formulate, implement and enforce policy decisions.

After a brief introduction to the basis of, and principles underpinning, E.U. public policy the course will conceptualise the EU public policy process into four sections – agenda setting, policy formulation, policy decision-making and policy implementation. In examining these four parts of the policy process different models of analysis will be employed at different levels within the EU and at different stages of the policy process.

The final lecture of the course will raise and examine the question of the ‘europeanisation’ of the E.U. public policy process.

Structure of the Course

The course will be taught through a series of 6 lectures and a workshop.

Lecture programme:

PLEASE NOTE: 80% attendance at lectures (i.e. at least 5) is a requirement to pass this course, as well as attendance at the workshop (see Course Assessment on page 2)

The powerpoint presentations for each lecture and the workshop will be placed on the Masaryk University Information System prior to each class

All lectures and the workshop will take place at FSS at 16.00

Timetable:

- 13.11.25 Lecture 1 (**Room U43**) The basis of, and principles underpinning, E.U. public policy: harmonisation, mutual recognition and convergence?
- 13.11.25 Lecture 2 (**Room U43**) Agenda-setting: role and purpose, fragmentation and the absence of effective policy co-ordination
- 20.11.25 Lecture 3 (**Room P24b**) Policy formulation: the policy communities and policy networks model, policy-making uncertainty, expertise and epistemic communities, multiple policy-making ‘venues’
- 20.11.25 Lecture 4 (**Room P24b**) Policy decision-making: institutional analysis
- 27.11.25 Lecture 5 (**Room U43**) Policy implementation: implementation as a complex and multifaceted process, inter-organisational behaviour and implementation analysis, characterising implementation in the E.U.
- 27.11.25 Lecture 6 (**Room U43**) The ‘Europeanisation’ of public policy
- 04.12.25 Workshop (**Room P24b**)

Workshop programme:

PLEASE NOTE:

Attendance at the workshop is a requirement to pass this course (see Course Assessment below)

04.12.25 Workshop: In this workshop there will be discussion in student groups and some direction offered in respect of the assessment essay.

Some useful readings:

- Beland, D. (2009) 'Ideas, institutions, and policy change', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.16, no.5, pp.701-718
- Borros, S. and Greve, B. (2004) The Open Method of Co-ordination in the European Union, special issue of *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11:2 (various articles of interest)
- Hix, S. The Political System of the European Union, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2005.
- Jepsen, M. and Pascual, A.S. (2005) 'The European Social Model: an exercise in deconstruction', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 15(3), pp.231-245.
- Roberts, I. and Springer, B. *Social Policy in the European Union: Between Harmonisation and National Autonomy*, Boulder, Lynne Reiner, 2001.
- Room, G. (2007) 'Challenges facing the E.U.: Scope for a coherent response', *European Societies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp.229-244.
- Rosamond, B. *Theories Of European Integration*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2000
- Sinn, H-W and Ochel, W (2003) 'Social Union, convergence and migration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41, pp.869-96.
- Threlfall, M. (2003) 'European social integration: harmonization, convergence and the single social area', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 13, pp.121-140.
- Wallace, H. Wallace, W. and Pollack, M. A. *Policy Making in the European Union* (5th edition), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

Course Assessment:

- a) **Attendance:** 80% attendance at lectures (at least 5), as well as attendance at the workshop is a requirement to pass this course.
- b) **Essay** (maximum 2000 words)

Deadline: 17 December 2025. To be submitted by email to jitaly25@hotmail.com or through the Masaryk University Information System

Students will be required to submit an essay in answer to **one** of the questions shown below. The essay must be of a maximum of 2,000 words, be typewritten, fully properly referenced, and include a full bibliography.

PLEASE NOTE: Essays that are more than 10 per cent above or below the word limit will be penalised through the deduction of marks

- (i) Identify some of the benefits and problems at the beginning and end of the European Union public policy cycle. Do the benefits outweigh the problems?

- (ii) Critically assess to what degree European Union public policy making can be characterised as 'Europeanised'?
- (iii) Do the principles of harmonisation, mutual recognition and convergence in the E.U Public Policy process provide benefits or problems? Use examples from one or more E.U. Public Policy area to illustrate and critically assess your examination of this question. **(PLEASE NOTE: The Common Agricultural Policy, Security and Defence Policy, and Economic policy concerning the EU budget are not public policy areas. You should check carefully that your chosen policy area constitutes 'public policy', as if it does not you will not receive the required grade to pass the course.)**

3Texts

Students are referred to a range of journal, book and internet texts. Contemporary issues of journals can be found to the left of the FSS library entrance. Journals older than a year can be found downstairs by the entrance.

Additional texts will be included in the power point presentations for lectures placed on the University Information System.

Books

- Featherstone, K. and Radaelli, C. (eds.) *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003. (especially the Introduction and the chapter by D. Wincott).
- Gallie, D. (ed.) *Resisting marginalisation: Unemployment experience and social policy in the EU*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Geyer, R. *Exploring European Social Policy*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000
- Hantrais, L. *Social Policy in the EU*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000 (second edition) or 2007 (third edition).
- Hix, S. *The Political System of the European Union*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2005.
- Jordan, A. and Liefferink, D. (eds.) *Environmental Policy in Europe: The Europeanization of National Environmental Policy*, London, Routledge, 2004.
- Kleinman, M. *A European Welfare State: European Union Social Policy in context*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002.
- McCormick, J. *Understanding the European Union* (Third edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2005
- Nugent, N. *The Government and Politics of the European Union*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Richardson, J. *European Union. Power and policy-making* (Third edition), Oxford, Routledge, 2006. (alternatively, Second edition, 2001).
- Roberts, I. and Springer, B. *Social Policy in the European Union: Between Harmonisation and National Autonomy*, Boulder, Lynne Reiner, 2001.
- Rosamond, B. *Theories Of European Integration*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2000.
- Salais, R. and Villeneuve, R. (eds.) *Europe and the politics of capabilities*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2004
- Schimmelfennig, F. and Sedelmeier, U.. (eds.) *The Europeanisation of Central and Eastern Europe*. Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, 2005.
- Wallace, H. Wallace, W. and Pollack, M. A. *Policy Making in the European Union* (5th edition), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

Journal articles

- Beland, D. (2009) 'Ideas, institutions, and policy change', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.16, no.5, pp.701-718

- Borros, S. and Greve, B. (2004) The Open Method of Co-ordination in the European Union, special issue of *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11:2 (various articles of interest)
- Delreux, T. 'The E.U. negotiates multilateral environmental agreements: explaining the agent's discretion', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 16, No.5, pp.719-737.
- Farrell, H. and Heritier, A. (2005) 'A Rationalist-Institutionalist Explanation of Endogenous Regional Integration', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12/2: pp.273-90.
- Farrell, D. M. and Scully, R. (2010) 'The European parliament: one parliament, several modes of political representation on the ground?', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 17, no.1, pp.36-54.
- Guillen, A. and Palier, B. (2004) 'Does Europe matter? Accession to EU and social policy developments in recent and new member states', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 14:3, pp.203-209, and other articles in this special issue on *EU Enlargement, Europeanisation and Social Policy*.
- Jepsen, M. and Pascual, A.S. (2005) 'The European Social Model: an exercise in deconstruction', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 15(3), pp.231-245.
- Kelemen, R. D. (2010) 'Globalising European Union environment policy', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 17, no.3, pp.335-349.
- Liefferink, D. Arts, B. Kamstra, J. Ooijevaar, J. (2009) 'Leaders and laggards in environmental policy: a quantitative analysis of domestic policy outputs', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 16, No.5, pp.677-700
- Mosher, J. and Trubek, D. (2003) 'Alternative approaches to governance in the EU: EU Social Policy and the European Employment Strategy', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 4:1, pp.63-88.
- Neilson, J. (1998) 'Equal opportunities for women in the European Union: success or failure?', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 8, pp.64-79.
- Room, G. (2007) 'Challenges facing the E.U.: Scope for a coherent response', *European Societies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp.229-244.
- Sinn, H-W and Ochel, W (2003) 'Social Union, convergence and migration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41, pp.869-96.
- Threlfall, M. (2003) 'European social integration: harmonization, convergence and the single social area', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 13, pp.121-140.
- Van Der Heijden, Hein-Anton. "Multi-level Environmentalism and the European Union: The Case of Trans-European Transport Networks." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30 (2006): 23-37.
- Van der Mei (2003) 'Freedom of movement for the unemployed and co-ordination of unemployment benefit schemes', *European Journal of Social Security*, 5:3, pp.214-229.
- Varela, D. (2009) 'Just a Lobbyist? The European Parliament and the Consultation Procedure', *European Union Politics*, Vol.10, No.1, pp.7-34.
- Vobruba, G. (2003) 'The enlargement crisis of the European Union: limits of the dialectics of integration and expansion', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 13 (1), pp.35-48, and responses by M. Bach and M. Rhodes.
- Wolf, Winifried. "Transport Policy in the European Union." *Debate* 14 (2006): 167-83.

Journals

Environmental Politics

European Union Politics

European Political Science

Journal of Common Market Studies

Journal of European Social Policy (the 'European Briefing' section of this journal is very useful for up-to-date EU developments)

Journal of European Public Policy

Internet

<http://europa.eu.int>

<http://www.ieep.org.uk>

**Professor John Wilton
(08.10.2025)**