

Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

Faculty of Social Sciences, Economics, and Business Administration
Prof. Dr. Thomas Gehring, Chair of International Relations

Policy-making in the European Union

Summer Term 2023

To grasp the nature of European integration, its drivers and problems, one has to understand how European policies are made and how they develop. Without its policies, the EU would have hardly any impact on its member states and their societies. However, there is no single mode of European policy-making. Each of the European policies is shaped by its own underlying problems, constellation of interests among relevant actors, including states, non-state actors, and supranational actors, and each of them has its own institutional foundation in terms of scope, patterns of delegation, and decision-making procedures. EU policies emerge from a combined effort of decision-making at different levels of the European polity. Policy-making is influenced by intergovernmental politics at the treaty level, by legislative politics involving Commission, Council and Parliament, which occurs nowadays most frequently according to the co-decision procedure, and by decisions of more independent actors (e.g. so-called 'comitology'-committees, the European Court of Justice, the European Central Bank). Moreover, policies develop over time and are heavily path dependent. And they do not evolve independently from each other, but affect each other's development and effectiveness.

This series of lectures examines the political system of the European Union by exploring the rationales inherent in its major European policies. It analyses all major EU policies, including single market policy, environmental and social policies, internal security (justice and home affairs), competition and monetary policies, as well as distributive policies (budget, agricultural and regional policies) and external affairs. Participants will become aware of the major issues, interests and institutional foundations that shape the specific rationales of EU policies. They learn, for example, why and how European single market policy affects European environmental policy, what hampers the development of European social policy, and why it is so difficult to reform European agricultural policy, while regional policy is adapted comparatively smoothly to new circumstances. They become able to explain how internal policies affect EU external relations and on which internal sources its international power is based.

The course will be taught in a hybrid form. Virtual lectures, readings, and additional material are available at the Virtual Campus. This will be complemented by classroom meetings to discuss key issues, applications and implications, as well as questions of participants. Please attend the introductory session on April 20.

Date and Room: Thursday, 10.00 – 12.00 a.m. in room F21/02.41

ECTS: 6

Language of instruction: English

Lecturer: Thomas Gehring (thomas.gehring@uni-bamberg.de)

Assignment: final exam (90 min) to be written in English or German language

Prerequisites: This is a Master-level course open to students of the MA programme in Political Science. Other students are invited to participate, if they are enrolled in another MA programme or if they have passed the lecture Introduction to International and European Politics (Einführungsvorlesung) or equivalent.

Participants should have solid knowledge of:

- the political system of the European Union, in particular its institutions (Commission, Council, Parliament, Court of Justice) and their functions, as well as decision-making procedures;
- the successive “grand bargains” of European integration and their respective major projects (treaties of Paris, Rome, Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice, Lisbon and Single European Act);
- major theories of regional integration (intergovernmentalism, neofunctionalism, rational institutionalism).

Participants without such knowledge are strongly advised to consult an introduction to the EU, e.g. Nugent, Neill 2017: *The Government and Politics of the European Union*, London, 8th ed.; or the course material of the lecture “Einführung in die internationale und europäische Politik”.

The European Treaties in their currently valid version: https://europa.eu/european-union/law/treaties_en

EU documents are accessible through the portal of the European Union at www.europa.eu.