

Julie Barretta (Switzerland, Italy)

Why did you choose POL?

The POL programme was an obvious choice for me since I had never studied the EU before. Indeed, this programme offers a comprehensive and detailed overview of European integration.

The courses look at topics as varied as the political economy of European integration, institutional law and EU policies and politics, but also more specialized topics such as EU interest representation, public finances or EU energy policy.

The POL programme therefore offers detailed insight into the mechanisms of the European Union, constituting an essential and valuable basis for professional perspectives in European affairs.

In addition, the POL programme complemented my academic background, which until then had been focused on political science and international relations.

How do you think your experiences in the Department will help you in the future?

My experience in the POL department will prove valuable in many ways.

First of all, several courses have a practical dimension to them through simulation or debate exercises, which allow us to get an idea of what our future tasks might look like.

Secondly, the Department offers the possibility for students to take part in a consulting project on the reform of public administrations in partnership with Accenture, the European Centre for Government Transformation and the Lisbon Council. This project was a truly enriching experience for me, and will without doubt be an important asset for my future career.

Furthermore, the possibility of meeting the speakers of the many seminars and conferences proposed throughout the year, whose quality and experience are incomparable, is a major value-added of studying at the College of Europe.

Finally, writing an MA thesis represents a valuable opportunity to meet professionals from the sector we are interested in, and to build connections which will without doubt be useful in the future.

What advice would you give to prospective students?

I would recommend this year of studies in the POL Department to anyone with an interest in regional integration and governance. The environment and the academic programme offered by the College of Europe are of unparalleled quality and interest, whichever your personal convictions on the European project.

Whatever your future projects may be, POL is by far the most enriching programme offered by the College of Europe. It gives you the possibility to know the European institutional set-up in depth, and provides with all the tools you will need for your future career, be it European or not.