



STUDY PROGRAMME(S)

(1) EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies

(2) Transatlantic Affairs

ACADEMIC YEAR

2026-27

SEMESTER

1

COURSE TITLE

External Dimensions of EU Internal Policies: Climate Change, Energy and the Environment

COURSE PROFESSOR(S)

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COURSE ASSISTANT(S)

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NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL, ELECTIVE)

(1) Compulsory course

(2) Elective course

ECTS CREDITS

2.5

3.5

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

1. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This compulsory course investigates the rapidly evolving external dimensions of European Union (EU) internal policies with the help of several emblematic case studies chosen from the policy areas of climate change, energy and the environment. It enables students to explore the manifold intersections between EU internal and external policies and the different ways in which the European Union mobilises internal policies externally to attain internal and/or external policy objectives. Four forms of EU external engagement based on internal policies are considered: (i) a first form that revolves around the EU leveraging its internal policies – deliberately or unintendedly - by means of the “Brussels Effect” (Bradford 2020); (ii) a second form that relates to the EU’s attempts to proactively externalize its internal policies, notably via enlargement and neighbourhood policies and in the wider European region; (iii) a third form by which the EU seeks to pursue objectives related to internal policies by interlinking them with, or integrating them into, external policies such as development and trade policies; and (iv) a final form of external engagement amounting to genuine bi- and multilateral ‘sectoral diplomacies’ in areas of initially internal EU policies. In the discussion of each of these four forms of EU external engagement, specific attention is paid, in a theory-informed way, to the EU’s presence and capacity (*being*) as a basis of its external action, the precise ways and instruments through which it acts (*doing*), and how and to what extent its external action based on internal policies can be and is effective (*impact*). The course takes students from a discussion of the theoretical-conceptual foundations for understanding the external dimensions of EU internal policies to the empirical analysis of relevant policies and a normative reflection on the broader implications of the analysed case examples. The course concludes by extracting cross-cutting insights and offering the opportunity for an appraisal of the relevance of the rapidly evolving external dimensions of EU internal policies in the issue areas discussed and beyond.



2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course objectives tie in with the following learning outcomes of the programme **EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies**:

- 1.1. The graduate masters the most important theoretical approaches and concepts of International Relations, EU Studies and Diplomacy Studies relevant for the analysis of the role of the European Union in international affairs.
- 1.2 The graduate can describe, explain and illustrate the current state of scientific research in the field of EU external relations in a broad sense and is able to critically assess the results of this research.
- 1.4 The graduate has acquired insights into the political, legal and economic aspects of EU external action and can use these insights to contextualise and interpret new developments.
- 1.5 The graduate is able to incorporate knowledge and understanding of various fields of EU external action and of different related disciplines (such as Political Science, International Relations, Law, Economics) at the interface between EU affairs and world politics.
- 2.2 The graduate has the ability to critically reflect upon problems in international and European affairs, to adopt well-informed points of view and to communicate them effectively orally and in writing, whether working independently or in a team.
- 2.3 The graduate can independently formulate a research question within the field of European affairs, find, select and critically assess relevant sources, answer the question using typical concepts and methods and present the research results in line with the ethical rules of the discipline.
- 2.4 The graduate is capable of processing a large amount of information within a short period of time and to work efficiently and effectively through planning, organising, setting priorities and meeting deadlines.
- 2.5 The graduate has the intellectual maturity and skills to function responsibly and autonomously in a professional context at national, European or international level and the capacity of suggesting possible action that contributes to problem-solving in a creative way.

The course objectives tie in with the following learning outcomes of the programme **Transatlantic Affairs**:

- 1.1 The graduate demonstrates advanced and critical mastery of the principal theoretical approaches and analytical concepts in their disciplinary focus (International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, Political Science, Regional Studies) or interdisciplinary focus and can apply them to the analysis of transatlantic affairs.
- 1.2 The graduate can identify, interpret and critically assess the current state of academic research on transatlantic affairs and can situate them within broader scholarly debates, in line with their (inter-) disciplinary focus.
- 1.4 The graduate can contextualise and interpret contemporary transatlantic developments by integrating historical, political, legal and economic perspectives, and can meaningfully explain how past dynamics shape current policy choices, debates and institutional frameworks.
- 1.5 The graduate can synthesise and integrate insights from multiple disciplines relevant to transatlantic affairs (e.g., International Relations, Political Science, Regional Studies or an interdisciplinary focus) and can adopt and compare both European and U.S. perspectives in analysing and evaluating transatlantic issues.
- 1.6 The graduate can analyse developments within Europe and/or the US that impact their relative geopolitical standing, thereby influencing EU and/or US interests relevant to transatlantic affairs.
- 2.2 The graduate is able to critically reflect on a wide range of issues in transatlantic affairs, to develop well-informed and evidence-based points of view, and to communicate these effectively, both orally and in writing, when working independently or collaboratively.
- 2.3 The graduate can independently transform complex transatlantic issues into a clear and feasible research question, find and evaluate relevant sources in line with their (inter-) disciplinary focus, apply appropriate concepts and methods, and present research results in accordance with the ethical standards of the field.



- 2.4 The graduate is capable of rapidly processing large volumes of information, critically analysing (inter) discipline-relevant sources, and proposing creative, feasible, and analytically grounded solutions to problems within the field of transatlantic affairs.
- 2.5 The graduate has the intellectual maturity and professional skills to function autonomously and responsibly in national or international professional environments—particularly in transatlantic contexts—by planning and organising work effectively, setting priorities, meeting deadlines, cooperating across cultural and disciplinary boundaries, and building professional networks.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

- Introduction and analytical framework
- Part 1: The EU's "Brussels Effect" – leveraging the Single European Market
- Part 2: Extending the reach of the EU's internal regime – leveraging enlargement and neighbourhood policies
- Part 3: From climate, energy and environmental policy integration to managing policy nexuses – leveraging trade, development and other external policies
- Part 4: Climate, energy and environmental diplomacy – negotiating bilateral partnerships and multilateral agreements
- Conclusion

Please refer to the intranet course page for access to the full course outline.

4. TEACHING METHOD

- Interactive lectures
- Participation: students are expected to regularly attend the class, to prepare the required readings and to participate actively in the discussions and group work.
- Tutorial: a tutorial will be offered by the course assistant to discuss the paper assignment.

Please refer to the intranet course page for access to further information and instructions.

5. COURSE MATERIAL

Please refer to the intranet course page for access to the detailed reading list (required and supplementary readings) and the slides.

6. EVALUATION

- Exam paper (100%) to which the 'restricted use' of generative AI (as per art. 38 Study Regulations) applies.

The requirements for the exam paper differ slightly for students in the Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs as compared to students in the EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies programme. Detailed instructions for students enrolled in either of the two programmes can be found in the course outline.

In case of a second-session resit or a justified absence in the first session, students will be evaluated on the basis of a two-hour written exam (100%).

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