



STUDY PROGRAMME

POL

ACADEMIC YEAR

2020-2021

SEMESTER

Second

COURSE TITLE

EU environmental and climate policy

COURSE PROFESSOR

Tom DELREUX

COURSE ASSISTANT

Thijs VANDENBUSSCHE

NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL)

Optional course

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

ECTS CREDITS

5

1. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The European Union has developed one of the world's most stringent sets of environmental policies. A complex framework of regulatory standards aiming to improve the state of the environment is in force in all major areas of environmental policy, including water, air, biodiversity and climate change. These policies are shaped, adopted and implemented through a complex governance system including various actors, different legal procedures and political practices, and multiple levels of governance. They have undoubtedly contributed to an improved state of the environment in Europe, but they simultaneously leave the EU with major challenges in the longer term.

The course aims to introduce to students the state of play of the EU's environmental and climate policies. It discusses the development and the driving forces of the EU's environmental policy, the main political dynamics in the policy cycle, the EU's policy instruments and activities in the traditional and the 'new' environmental subdomains, and the role of the EU in global environmental politics.

Approaching the EU's environmental and climate policies from the perspective of the debates on sustainability and transition governance, the course emphasizes the horizontal and cross-sectoral nature of environmental and climate policies, as well as their interactions with other policy domains (such as transport, energy or agriculture).

2. COURSE CONTENTS

1. Evolution and driving forces of EU environmental policy
2. EU environmental policy in a global and societal context
3. Legal basis and principles



4. Actors and policy-making
5. Environmental policy instruments
6. Traditional sectors of environmental policy
7. Climate change policy
8. Environmental policy integration and the challenge of 'greening' other policy areas
9. The external dimension of EU environmental policy

3. TEACHING METHOD

The course will be taught by means of **lectures** with active participation of the students.

Students are expected to give two **oral presentations**:

- one on a current topic in the field of EU environmental policy that has recent received media attention;
- another one on environmental policy integration and the 'greening' of other EU policies.

Students have to write a **paper** on the topic of their second presentation, i.e. the 'greening' of other EU policies.

4. FURTHER DETAILS ON THE TEACHING METHOD

- **Presentation on current topic:** In groups of two students (or in case of an odd number of students: one group of three students), students will have 15-20 minutes to deliver an oral presentation on a current issue in the field of EU environmental policy that has received media attention during the months of the course. A smart use of slides is encouraged. The aim of this presentation should be to give the course participants insights on ongoing policy developments in the field of EU environmental policy. Each presentation will be followed by a short Q&A session with the course participants.

Each group has to choose an article, recently published in a newspaper or an online news source on EU politics (e.g. Euractiv.com; Politico.eu; EUObserver.com; Agence Europe). That article should deal with a current event in the field of EU environmental, climate or sustainable development policy (e.g. adoption of legislation or key step in a policy-making process; controversy on policy-making or implementation; reaction of EU to events). During the presentation, each group is expected to

- introduce the article to the professor and their fellow students;
- contextualize the current event (what is the historical background within which the event should be understood?);
- discuss the main challenges for the EU and/or actors within the EU (political actors, societal actors, economic actors, citizens, etc);
- outline the main positions of the key actors;
- present their own critical assessment on the opportunities and challenges in the policy-making process;
- and present their prospects on the next steps (what could we expect to happen?).

Students will be informed about the composition of the groups and about the date for their presentation at the beginning of the semester. At least 14 days before the presentation, each group is expected to propose its topic (as well as the newspaper article that will serve as the starting point for the presentation) to thijs.vandenbussche@coleurope.eu. The academic assistant will verify whether the proposed topic corresponds to the requirements and whether the topic has not yet been chosen by another group of students. At least 24 hours before their presentation, students are required to send an outline of their presentation to thijs.vandenbussche@coleurope.eu. All students of each group will receive the same grade for the presentation.



- **Presentation and paper on an element of the European Green Deal:** In groups of two students (or in case of an odd number of students: one group of three students), students have to work on one element of the European Green Deal (see list below). They have to focus on the question of how environmental concerns are integrated in non-environmental policies of the EU. Indeed, as it is stated in the Green Deal, 'to deliver the European Green Deal, there is a need to rethink policies for clean energy supply across the economy, industry, production and consumption, large-scale infrastructure, transport, food and agriculture, construction, taxation and social benefits.' (European Commission, 2019: p. 4). Importantly, the groups for this presentation and paper should be composed differently than the groups of the presentation on the current topic. All students of each group will receive the same grade for the presentation and the same grade for the paper. Students have to present their findings during an oral presentation and in a written paper:
 - **Presentation:** each group will have 20 minutes to deliver an oral presentation on the element of the European Green Deal of their choice. These presentations will take place during the last sessions of the course. At least 24 hours before their presentation, students are required to send an outline of their presentation to thijs.vandenbussche@coleurope.eu. A clever use of slides is encouraged. Each presentation will be followed by a Q&A session with the fellow students. The feedback received during that Q&A session can be used by the students for finalizing their paper on the same topic (see below).
 - **Paper:** each group will write a paper of 3000 to 4000 words. All end/footnotes must be included in the word count, but annexes, cover page and the bibliography are excluded. The paper should include a cover page, with the word count clearly indicated on the cover page. For every 100 additional words, or part thereof, below the minimum or beyond the maximum limit of words, 1 point will be deducted from the final mark of the paper. Papers, saved in Word format, have to be submitted by 16/04/2021 at 12h00 to thijs.vandenbussche@coleurope.eu. For every 24 hours of delay, or part thereof, after the specified submission deadline, 2 points will be deducted from the final mark of the paper. A paper already submitted cannot be resubmitted in a different version after the deadline. Please refer to the Guide for Referencing with regard to the required referencing style, word count, etc. The plagiarism rules of the Study Regulations apply.

Groups are invited to read the European Green Deal (https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-green-deal-communication_en.pdf) and they have to choose one element of the European Green Deal from the following list:

1. supplying clean, affordable and secure energy;
2. mobilising industry for a clean and circular economy;
3. building and renovating in an energy and resource efficient way;
4. accelerating the shift to sustainable and smart mobility;
5. from 'Farm to Fork': designing a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system
6. pursuing green finance and investment and ensuring a just transition;
7. greening national budgets and sending the right price signals;
8. mobilising research and fostering innovation;
9. activating education and training;
10. a green oath: 'do no harm'.

One element can only be taken by one group of students and they are to be agreed upon with the academic assistant in charge of the course in January.

The presentation and the paper should address the following questions:

- why is the chosen element an essential element in achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal?
- what are the main initiatives and policy instruments that are already in place in this field?
- what are the main initiatives and policy instruments that the Commission wants to see adopted in the future – and how do they differ from existing policies?



- how do you evaluate the main challenges and obstacles the EU will be facing in achieving the objective in the chosen element of the Green Deal?
 - what are the prospects for a successful greening of the chosen policy domain?
- The final **written examination** will take place in May or June with questions on any subject covered in the course. The exam will consist of 2 or 3 concepts that have to be explained and 2 or 3 essay questions. The exam will take 3 hours.

5. COURSE MATERIAL

See the detailed course outline for the full reading list.

6. EVALUATION

- Presentation on current topic (15% of the final grade)
- Presentation on the European Green Deal (10% of the final grade)
- Paper on the European Green Deal (25% of the final grade)
- Written examination (50% of the final grade)¹

Assessment at second attempt

During the second examination session the course is assessed 100% on the basis of a resit exam.

¹ The evaluation modalities of the final exam may be subject to adaptations in function of the evolution of the sanitary situation