



College of Europe  
Collège d'Europe



Natolin

European Political and Governance Studies  
Academic Year 2018-2019  
Professor: Jon WORTH  
Assistant: Rachele TESEI

## **WORKSHOP IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Online Communications in EU Policymaking**

**Date: Friday 8 March (15.00-19.00) and Saturday 9 March (9.00-13.00)**

#### **Rationale**

Policy making in the European Union is opening up online, and policy makers are using social media as a means to communicate with their peers, with journalists and with a wider interested public. This poses a fascinating challenge to the traditional institutional structure of the European Union, redefining insiders and outsiders, breaking down the geographic aspect of the 'Brussels Bubble' and prioritising new actors who can navigate the complex system of online debate about the European Union.

Examples such as ACTA, Right 2 Water, the neonicotinoids pesticides ban, and ongoing controversies about TTIP, already show the importance of online communications in EU policy making, while the considerable online presence of politicians such as Neelie Kroes, Martin Schulz or Marietje Schaake demonstrates how a major online network can be a useful base of power in EU decision making. The Brexit referendum and worries about "fake news" online show the other side of this meanwhile give EU policymakers cause for concern.

Graduates from the College of Europe are going to encounter this environment the moment they start in the labour market in Brussels, either within an institution or in an interest representation or campaign organisation. This course is designed with this in mind – to equip the students with the necessary practical skills, rooted in a wider intellectual framework, to be able to be confident and able participants in online policy making and advocacy within the EU environment.

#### **Format**

The Seminar is split into 4 sections. The first sets the intellectual context of online policy making within the EU. This would draw on the intellectual work of Manuel Castells on communications and networks, Clay Shirky on citizen mobilisation online (credible commitment), and the tensions between privacy and openness.

Sections 2 and 3 are dedicated to an online practical exercise that would be worked on by teams of students representing different players in the online environment in Brussels (Commission,

Parliament, campaigners, industry associations, journalists). This exercise uses a case study based on a recent example of legislation that has passed through the EU institutions. The exercise is entirely conducted online, in a secure password protected environment.

Section 4 would comprise feedback from the exercise, and practical tips for online engagement from the students themselves.

An optional and informal meeting with bloggers and journalists active communicating about the EU in social media is offered at the end of the course.

### **About the Professor**

*Jon Worth is a Berlin-based self-employed consultant. His work covers training and teaching about online communication, teaching and analysis of EU politics (particularly Brexit), and writing.*

*Courses offered: Negotiation and Decision-Making in the European Union: a Simulation Game, Online Communications in EU Policymaking*

*Prof. Worth holds a BA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from Merton College, Oxford, and a MA in European Politics and Administration from the College of Europe, Bruges.*

*As well as teaching in Bruges he runs workshops for the Graduate Institute (Geneva), the University of Maastricht and Quadriga Hochschule (Berlin).*

*He has been responsible for the online communications for large political campaigns such as Harriet Harman for Labour Party Deputy Leader (2007), Diane Abbott for Labour Leader (2010) and the Atheist Bus Campaign (2009). He consults politicians, governments, EU institutions, trade associations and NGOs about online communications and social media. He is one the best known bloggers about the EU ([www.jonworth.eu](http://www.jonworth.eu)) and commentators about the EU on Twitter (@jonworth).*

*He is a member of the Europe Policy Group of World Economic Forum and the Advisory Board of Transparency International EU.*