

The European Union – Policies, Decisions and Economy in a Global Context

Code: XXX

Name: The European Union – Policies, Decisions and Economy in a Global Context

ECTS: 6

Exam: Mid-term presentation (50%) + Final presentation (50%)

Author: Dr. Anke Steinhoff

USP

The European Union is an important player in global economy: Trading partners worldwide appreciate the quality of European goods; vice versa, Europe is an interesting market and an attractive place to invest. Europe has established its internal market based on common principles like the four market freedoms and fair competition. This offers a multitude of economic chances. However, the European market is also characterized by a number of differences that are typical of the different nations. The differences cover tax or labor law as well as traditional preferences or no-goes. Consequently, understanding the European business environment is essential to build successful business relationships.

Nowadays, globalization has changed the world: international supply and value chains, digitalization and increasing mobility are typical of doing business and require a reliable international framework in the world of trade and labour. In addition to that, addressing modern challenges like climate change, ensuring sustainability and dealing with security issues, particularly armed conflicts, require international collaboration. Regarding these challenges as a matter of common concern is necessary. Therefore, European policies are closely linked to international institutions, which offer place and setting to discuss problems and reach a compromise for a common approach. The United Nations and its agencies, the World Trade Organization and the International Court of Justice are key institutions in this context.

Content and Qualification Objectives - Learning Objectives

Focus: European Business Environment

Successful students will be able to:

- Understand key aspects of European integration
- Understand characteristics of the internal market and its impact on doing business in Europe
- Consider different conditions in different member states of the EU
- Analyze business chances and challenges in Europe

Focus: International Politics

Successful students will be able to:

- Understand the relevance of reliable international relationships
- Understand the importance of common values
- Consider the nature and competences of international organizations
- Analyze progress and setbacks in addressing global challenges

Content Details

Focus: European Business Environment

Introduction

- Key Factors
- Europe, European Union, EEA, EFTA

Impact of European Integration

- Economic Performance in Europe
- United in Diversity - Differences

Business Structures

- From industrial production of goods to services
- Business Structures in Europe

Doing Business in Europe – Details

- Companies
- European Labour Market
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Finance
- Marketing

Megatrends and Future

Focus: International Politics

Introduction

- International Relations
- International Actors
- Common Principles /Legal Framework

United Nations

- Background Information
- UN Charter and Human Rights
- Structures and Main Bodies
- Reaching Agreements and Dealing with Conflicts

International Court of Justice

- Jurisdiction
- Cases

International Labour Organization

World Trade Organization

Teaching and Learning Forms

Exercises, Practice, and Application

A variety of learning methods are applied: in particular, lectures, case studies, class debates and experiential exercises. The module can also include group activities or role plays. An excursion to a European Union related institution is planned as part of this module.

Literature and Sources

John Baylis, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens: The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations (7th edition)

Gabriele Suder, Johan Lindeque: Doing Business in Europe 3rd edition

Susan Senior Nello: The European Union, Economics, Policies & History, 3rd edition

Eurostat: Key Figures on Europe, 2024 edition

Justine Pila, Paul Torremans: European Intellectual Property Law, 2016

Catherine Barnard: EU Employment Law 4th edition

Fundamentals for Smart Cities

Code: xxx

Name: Fundamentals for Smart Cities

ECTS: 6

Exam: Mid-term Presentation (50%) & Final Presentation (50%)

Author: Chris Boge

USP

They say that some cities are smarter than others. But what is it that makes these urban areas so special? And why is it that Europe and Asia are now leading the smart cities race whereas America has fallen behind?

For the first time in human history, more people live in cities than in rural areas. So our cities will need to upgrade their infrastructure with technology that meets the challenges of climate change, overpopulation and pollution.

Together, we will examine Singapore's vertical gardens and GM foods; London's smart multi-purpose lamp posts; Canberra's IoT connected waste bins; Barcelona's smart traffic management system and a lot more.

If time allows for it, we will go on an outing to visit Cologne's smart buildings and the arboretum, a special green space within the city limits.

Content and Qualification Objectives

Learning Objectives

Successful students will be able to:

- be familiar with objectives for designing smart cities, fields of application and various digital technologies discussed in this context
- describe the relationship between selected objectives, digital technologies and suitable fields of application
- analyse technologies in relation to smart city goals
- relate technologies to municipal participation strategies

Content

Focus area: Framework and Infrastructures of Smart Cities

- Smart Cities - basic concepts including international and German examples
- Goals of Smart Cities
- Digitalization and sustainability
- Smart city goals and exemplary fields of application in the areas of administration, energy, environment, mobility and society
- Municipal decisions: Democracy and digital participation
- Digital infrastructures
- Data sovereignty
- Networking and durability of digital infrastructures
- Resources and competencies for digital infrastructures

Focus area: Technologies for Smart Cities

- Selected technologies will be presented and classified in relation to possible goals and application areas, among them:
 - Internet of Things (and Services)
 - Big Data
 - Artificial Intelligence
 - Cybersecurity
 - Robotics
 - Block Chain
 - 3D printing
 - 5G

Teaching and Learning Forms

Exercises, Practice, and Application

A variety of learning methods are utilized ranging from lectures and case studies to experiential exercises. In addition, the module may include group activities, case study analysis, revision questions/quizzes, and skill-building exercises.

Sustainable Transformation

Code: XXX

Name: Sustainable Transformation - Basic concepts & Case studies

ECTS: 6

Exam: Mid-term Presentation & Final Presentation (50% each)

Author: Stephan Ley

USP

Sustainable Transformation demonstrates how to create sustainable societies and economic systems, covering everything from climate justice to the circular economy. Through practical tools and case studies, students will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to participate in developing sustainable solutions.

Content and Qualification Objectives

Learning Objectives

Successful students will be able to:

- know the origin and possible lines of development regarding “Sustainable Transformation”
- are familiar with a range of sustainability concepts and can analyze the topic of Sustainable Transformation from different perspectives
- have the theoretical foundations to be able to participate in the development of proposed solutions
- apply basic concepts of sustainable transformation to practical issues
- individually and in groups, develop opinions and positions on concrete cases from the field of Sustainable Transformation

Content

The course provides a comprehensive introduction to the theoretical foundations and practical instruments of sustainable transformation. It combines conceptual knowledge with applied approaches in order to address the complex challenges of global sustainability.

1. Fundamentals and Core Concepts

The historical development of sustainability is examined alongside key frameworks such as footprint concepts. Regional and country-specific approaches illustrate the diverse ways in which sustainability is implemented worldwide.

2. Justice, Narratives, and Society

Ethical and societal dimensions of transformation are explored, with a particular focus on climate justice, alternative economic narratives such as Post-Growth and Doughnut Economics, and the role of communication and behavioral instruments (e.g., green nudging) in shaping sustainable change.

3. Transformation of Economy and Innovation

The reconfiguration of economic systems and innovation processes is analyzed through

concepts such as the circular economy and responsible consumption practices. These perspectives highlight the pathways toward resilient and future-oriented economies.

4. Methods and Tools

A set of analytical and practical tools is introduced, including footprint calculators, materiality analysis, stakeholder analysis and strategies to detect and prevent greenwashing. These instruments provide a structured basis for evaluating sustainability challenges and developing evidence-based solutions.

Teaching and Learning Forms

Exercises, Practice, and Application

A variety of learning methods are utilized ranging from lectures and case studies to experiential exercises. In addition, the module may include group activities, case study analysis, revision questions/quizzes, and skill-building exercises.

Literature and Sources

- Rasche, A., Morsing, M., Moon, J. Kourula, A. (2023). Corporate Sustainability. Cambridge University Press.
- Archie B. Carroll; Jill Brown. (2023). Business & Society: Ethics, Sustainability & Stakeholder Management. Cengage Learning
- Hahn, Rüdiger, (2022). Sustainability Management. Rüdiger Hahn.