

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
EUROPEAN DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE
Course Descriptions and Bibliographies
ACADEMIC YEAR 2007-2008
European Studies (Postgraduate)

**EST5230 Comparative Politics of the European Union
(2 credits – 4 ECTS)
Assessment – Presentation, Assignment and Final Exam
Lecturer – Mark Harwood**

The aim of this course is to give students an understanding of the comparative method as well as a knowledge of the most popular topics of research in the area of comparative politics of the EU. Topics to be covered include the links between executive and legislative politics in Europe, the power of Member States over the EU's decision-making machinery, the scope and role of regions in formulating policies, the methods of lobbying the EU as well as the EU's place in the general debate on globalisation.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed as stipulated in the regulations. This will involve a mark awarded for your coursework and a separate exam, which will take place at the end of the semester. Course work accounts for 40% of your final, overall mark while the exam will account for the other 60%. However, within your course work, your grade will be an amalgamation of your assignment, your presentation and your participation record within seminars. The assignment will account for 50% of your course work mark while your presentation and participation will account for the other 50%, each having equal weight.

Readings:

A detailed bibliography is provided below for each seminar. Many of the texts cited are taken from books and periodicals that are available in the library or on the internet. Some of the material may prove more problematic to find so I have taken the liberty to leave copies of the more obscure material at Paperclips. All texts highlighted in blue are available at Paperclips.

For each seminar, students are obliged to read the core text stipulated. This will constitute a chapter/s from the following book. Students are advised to purchase this book for the course.

'European Union: power and policy-making', Jeremy Richardson (ed.). (3rd Edition, Routledge, UK. 2006)

Bibliography – EST5230 – 2005-2006

Students will find the following books useful and form part of the readings allocated for the seminars.

'Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: an introduction', Todd Landman. (1st Edition, Routledge, UK. 2002)

'The Political System of the European Union', Simon Hix. (1st or 2nd Edition, Palgrave, UK. 1999 or 2005)

'Policy-Making in the European Union', Helen Wallace and William Wallace. (4th Edition, Oxford University Press, UK. 2000)

'Representing Interests in the European Union', J. Greenwood. (1st Edition, Macmillan, UK. 1997)

Seminar 1: Introduction to the course and the comparative method:

This seminar will include an outline of the priorities of the course and the principle topics that will be tackled. Students will be guided in relation to the readings required for each seminar. As this is the first seminar, we will start by discussing the most important political concepts and definitions as well as looking at what constitutes the comparative approach, both past and present.

Core Text: Landman. Chapter 8-9

Readings: [Guy Peters. Chapter 1, 2, 5 and 10](#)

Rod Hague and Martin Harrop. 'Comparative Government and Politics'. (5th Edition, Palgrave, UK. 2001) Chapter 5

[R. Macridis . 'The Nature of Comparative Analysis' in 'The Practice of Comparative Politics', P. Lewis and D. Potter \(eds.\) \(1st Edition. Open University Press, UK, 1973\)](#)

['Comparative Politics: an introduction and new approach', Jan-Erik Lane and Svante Ersson. \(1st Edition, Polity Press, UK. 1996\). Chapter 6](#)

[M. Irving Lichbach and A. Zuckerman. 'Comparative Politics: rationality, culture and structure'. \(Cambridge University Press, UK. 1998\)](#)

[Chapter 1, 2](#)

[R. Chilcote. 'Theories of Comparative Politics: the search for a paradigm reconsidered'. \(2nd Edition, Westview, USA. 1994\). Chapter 3](#)

[G. Almond 'Comparative Politics' in 'The Practice of Comparative Politics', P. Lewis and D. Potter \(eds.\) \(1st Edition. Open University Press, UK, 1973\)](#)

[S. Finer. 'Comparative Government' in 'The Practice of Comparative Politics', P. Lewis and D. Potter \(eds.\) \(1st Edition. Open University Press, UK, 1973\)](#)

[Simon Hix. 'The Study of the European Community: the challenge to comparative politics' in *West European Politics* \(Vol. 17. No. 1, 1994\)](#)

[Margaret Levi. 'The Economic Turn in Comparative Politics' in *Comparative Political Studies* \(Vol. 33, No. 6/7. 2000\)](#)

Seminar 2: Issues of governance and national coordination of EU policies.

The seminar will discuss the problems, mechanisms and priorities of national systems at coordinating EU policies and policy-making. States are increasingly competitive to ensure that policy priorities and implementation systems work effectively so as to ensure the greatest possible level of influence in Brussels as well as ensuring economic competitiveness of the domestic market vis-à-vis European partners.

Core Text: Richardson, Chapter 1 (2006 edition)

Richardson. Chapter 8 (2001 edition)

Readings: Dionyssi Dimitrakopoulos. 'The Nature of the State and Public Policy Performance in Southern Europe: National Policy Formulation on European Issues in the Mediterranean Member States: The Cases of Italy and Greece'. <http://www.psa.ac.uk/cps/1995%5Cdimi.pdf>

Armstrong, K. and Bulmer, S. 'The United Kingdom' in *The European Union and its Member States*, Wessels and Rometsch (Manchester University Press, UK. 1996)

Cini, M. (2001) 'The Europeanization of Malta: adaptation, identity and party politics' in Featherstone and Kazamias (eds.) *Europeanization and the Southern Periphery*.

Tiilikainen, T. (2003) 'Finland: smooth adaptation to European values and Institutions' in Wessels, Maurer and Mittag (eds.) *Fifteen into One? The European Union and its member states*.

Topics for Discussion:

1. Rationalising national systems to achieve better results at the European level has become standard. What criteria should dominate benchmarking to achieve this? Why have some states been more flexible than others?
2. As a new member, Malta has only just started the adaptation process. Discuss what Malta has already done to function better at the European level and outline what should be the country's priorities vis-à-vis achieving greater effectiveness in Brussels.

Seminar 3: The role of the executive and legislative in EU decision-making and the power of the member states to control Brussels.

The seminar will begin by discussing the institutional and policy-making structure of the European Union. We will debate how best to define and understand the EU as a policy-making body. Discussion will then proceed to an analysis of the power of the member states to control developments at the European level and a debate on whether the EU can ever develop to a point where states cede all sovereignty to Brussels.

Core text: Richardson, Chapters 6 and 7

Readings: Hix. Chapter 1 and 3

Wallace and Wallace. Chapter 1 and 2

N. Nugent. 'The Government and Politics of the European Union' (5th Edition, Palgrave, UK. 2003). Chapter 19 and 20

S. Hix. 'The Study of the European Community: the challenge to comparative politics' in *West European Politics* (Vol. 17. No. 1. 1994)

Maurer, Wessels and Mittag (eds.) *'fifteen into one?'* (1st Edition. Manchester University Press, UK. 2003) Chapter 18

C. Crombez. 'The Democratic Deficit in the European Union: much ado about nothing?' in *European Union Politics*. (Vol. 4. No. 1. 2003)

Andrew Jordan. 'Over-coming the Divide between Comparative Politics and International Relations Approaches to the EC: what role for 'post-decisional politics'?' in *West European Politics* (Vol. 20. No. 4, 1997)

M. Harwood. 'Europeanization and the Challenge of Institutional Adaptation' in *EDRC/MESA Newsletter* (Issue No. 3, 2003)

Topics for discussion:

1. Discuss the EU legislative process and the multiple instance of member state involvement. How powerful do you believe the member states are compared to the other EU institutions?
2. Discuss the role and scope of the European Council. Do you believe that the Union could have evolved so rapidly without its involvement and what is its place in the new, enlarged Union?

Seminar 4: Political parties and social movements in Europe and the member states.

We will debate the nature of interest articulation, party participation and social movements in the conventional state system and then apply this understanding to a look at the European level. By analysing interest articulation at the European level, we will analyse the degree to which citizens influence and place pressure on the decision-making process in Europe, whether citizens have any recourse to action should their interests not be represented and whether interest articulation increases or is the cause of the core-periphery divide.

Core Text: Richardson. Chapter 11

Readings: Hix. Chapter 5 and 6

[G. Heckscher. 'Political Parties' in 'The Study of Comparative Government and Politics'. \(George Allen and Unwin Ltd, UK. 1957\)](#)

M. Gray and Miki Caul. 'Declining Voter Turnout in Advanced Industrial Democracies 1950 to 1997' in *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 33, No. 9. 2000)

[W. Wallace and J. Smith. 'Democracy or Technocracy? European Integration and the Problem of Popular Consent'](#)

Josep Colomer. 'How Political Parties, Rather Than Member States, Are Building the EU' in 'Widening the EU', B. Stevenberg (ed.). (Routledge, UK. 2002)

C. Anderson. 'When in Doubt, Use Proxies: attitudes toward domestic politics and support for European integration' in *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 31, No. 5. 1998)

Topics for discussion:

1. Analyse the relationship between the EP political groups and their national counterparts. What connections link the two? Can the EP catch-all parties truly meet the needs of Europe's diverse political cultures?
2. Compare the European Parliament to a national parliament. Why is it different and does this account for the widespread apathy amongst EU citizens to its workings?
3. The European voter seems to be increasingly apathetic towards voting for its parliament. Why?

Seminar 5: Lobbying and the unbalanced influence of European business on European decision-making..

Lobbying has become a principle method of achieving interest articulation in Europe. But lobbying is also big business. In this seminar we will discuss the methods of lobbying, the ethics of big business lobbying and the power of the lobbyist in the EU decision-making process.

Core Text: Richardson. Chapter 12

Readings: Hix. Chapter 7

J. Greenwood. 'Representing Interests in the European Union' (1st Edition, Macmillan, UK. 1997) Chapter 1, 3, 5

A. Broscheid and D. Coen. 'Insider and Outsider Lobbying of the European Commission' in *European Union Politics*. (Vol. 4. No. 2. 2003)

P. Bouwen. 'Corporate Lobbying in the European Union: Towards a Theory of Access' (EUI Working papers. SPS No. 2001/5)

Mats Jutterstrom. 'A Business Dilemma in EU Lobbying – Horizontal Relations and Parallel Action. (Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research. <http://www.score.su.se/pdfs/2000-7.pdf>)

Justin Greenwood. 'The White Paper on Governance and EU Public Affairs – Democratic Deficit or Democratic Overload?' (Political Studies Association. April 2002)

A. Reale. 'Representation of Interests, Participatory Democracy and Law Making in the EU: Which Role and Which Rules for the Social Partners?' (Jean Monnet Working Paper 15/03. New York School of Law, USA)

Topics for discussion:

1. What are the various methods utilised by interest groups to influence the EU decision-making process and what method do you believe to be the most effective?
2. What is the role of lobbyists in the politics of influence? Outline their function, their channels of operation and discuss whether you believe that big business is in the best position to utilise these companies for hire and, thus, have great ability influence when compared to other interest groups.
3. What have been the EU's attempts to control and monitor lobbyists and interest group activity and why has so little been achieved in this area?

Seminar 6: Regional Politics and Fragmentation.

One of the principle results of the EU integration process has been the growing importance of regional politics in EU decision-making and institutions. Membership of the Union has led to greater regional participation, even in highly unitary states. In this seminar we will discuss the allocation of competence/power to regions, the effects of such power on state unity and regional autonomy, the feasibility of achieving unity in a union encouraging fragmentation and the future of the nation-state in Europe.

Core Text: Richardson. Chapter 13

Readings: J. Greenwood. 'Representing Interests in the European Union', Chapter 9 and 10.

R. Pace. 'The Future of Europe Debate: launching the European Federation or strengthening the nation-state in Europe?' in 'The Future of the European Union: Unity in Diversity' (P. Xuereb (Ed.)) (EDRC, University of Malta, 2002)

L. Hooghe and G. Marks. 'Unravelling the Central State, But How? Types of Multi-Level Governance', *American Political Science Review*. (2003)

C. Dudek. 'Can the European Union Influence the Functioning of Regional Governments?'. (EUI Working papers. RSC No. 2000/49)

B. Smalley. 'The Regionalisation of Britain'. Taken from Regional Assemblies.co.uk.

(http://www.regionalassemblies.co.uk/3239.html?*session*id*key*=*session*id*val*)

Article: 'EU/Malta: Committee of the Regions Supports Local Authorities in Preparing for Accession'

(http://www.findarticles.com/cf_dls/m0WXI/2000_Oct_25/66323400/p1/article.jhtml)

Topics for discussion:

1. How do regions influence the EU political system? Why does it pay some regions to target national systems rather than focusing on the EU level and vice-a-versa.
2. Discuss the role and scope of the Committee of the regions. Why do some regions simply chose to ignore it?

Seminar 7: Issues in European comparative politics: the EU as a global actor, as a victim of globalisation, as a product of regional need.

We will conclude this course with an application of some of the most salient topics in comparative politics (namely: globalisation, regionalism, fragmentation, democratisation) to the European Union. We will discuss whether the EU today is a reflection of trends in globalisation or a trend-setter in its own right. We will discuss the future of Europe, the threat of regionalism in Europe and the possibilities for enlargement beyond the geographic confines of the continent itself.

Core Text: Richardson, Chapter 3

D. Verdier and R. Breen. 'Europeanization and Globalisation: politics against markets in the European Union' in *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 34, No. 3. 2001)

Readings: G. Garrett. 'The Causes of Globalization' in *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 33, No. 6/7. 2000)

L. Weiss. 'Globalisation and the Myth of the Powerless State' in *New Left Review*. (1997)

E. Thiel. 'EU and NAFTA: regional integration and transatlantic relations' in *Aussenpolitik*. (Vol. 1. 1997)

G. Garrett. 'The Causes of Globalization' in *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol.33, No. 6/7. 2000)

J. Habermas. 'The European Nation-State and the Pressures of Globalization' in *New Left Review*. (1999)

L. Griffith. 'Globalization, Security and the Authoritarian State'. Paper prepared for presentation at the 2002 International Studies Association Conference, 2002.

Topics for discussion:

1. What is Europeanization? Is Europe moving towards one standard, European model of the state or can EU members retain their individuality in the Union?
2. Are Europeanization and globalization aiding each other or working in opposition to each other?