



INSTEP-WFU London

THE NEW EUROPE

Course Content

Block 1 – Origins, Ideas, Actors and Institutions

1. Why Europe? The Legacy of War, Peace, and the Idea of Integration
2. Inside the EU I: Institutions
3. Inside the EU II: Decision-Making

Block 2 – The European Union in the World

4. Europe as a Global Actor I: Foreign Policy, Security, and Defence
5. Europe as a Global Actor II: Allies, Rivals, and a Changing Global Order

Block 3 – Crisis and Contestation

6. The EU Under Pressure I. European Solidarity in Times of Crisis: Eurozone, Migration, Covid, and Climate Change
7. The EU Under Pressure II. Disintegration and Fragmentation: Brexit, Populism, and the Democratic Deficit

Block 4 – Futures of Europe

8. What's Next for Europe? Enlargement, Geopolitics, and Strategic Autonomy

Block 5 – Examinations

1. Simulation Session (Examination)
2. Looking Ahead: Final Reflections and Final Exam

This course explores the evolution of the politics and international relations of Europe from the post-Cold War period to the present. It examines the foundations and development of the European Union, the ideas behind its integration, and the institutions and dynamics that shape policy-making across the Union. A central question guides the course: **Does the European Union as a project and a global actor matter in today's world?** Through this lens, students

will investigate the unique nature of the role that Europe plays at the national, supranational, and international levels and its current evolution.

The course considers Europe's position in world affairs, including its partnerships and rivalries with key global actors such as the United States, China, and the United Nations. It also evaluates the EU's external action in areas such as foreign policy, security, and defence. Particular attention is given to the crises and challenges that have faced Europe throughout the last decade or so: migration and border politics, democratic legitimacy, climate change, economic crises, and the consequences of Brexit and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Students will be encouraged to critically assess the EU's capacity to respond to crises, as well as crises' impact on the current state of European integration, to then imagine its possible futures.

Course Structure

This course is designed as a practice-oriented learning experience. Each session combines short lectures with interactive seminar discussions and fun activities rooted in the assigned readings. Students are expected to complete all essential readings in advance, as active and informed participation is central to the course.

The course incorporates a variety of interactive methods. Each class includes a different type of activity – such as debates, role-plays, simulations, and policy-building exercises – designed to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and active participation. These exercises allow students to explore EU politics not only as observers, but as decision-makers, negotiators, and analysts. Preparation and in-class participation will be a key part of the overall assessment.

In Session 5, students will participate and be assessed in a simulation exercise based on EU decision-making. This activity encourages students to take on institutional roles, negotiate policy outcomes, and critically apply what they've learnt in class.

Course Assessment

Assessment is structured to reward consistent engagement, critical thinking, and the application of knowledge in real-world contexts:

- 40% simulation exercise – preparation, role performance, post-simulation brief (session 5)
- 40% final in-class exam (1h30, session 10)
- 5% in-class Euronews contribution
- 15% prep and in-class participation