

European Union Public Policy: from agenda setting to policy formulation and policy decision making, and through to policy implementation

Aims and Objectives

Despite definitive debates about whether the European Union (EU) can be equated with the characteristics of a fully fledged state, it is certainly beyond dispute that the EU has acquired for itself at least the policy making attributes of a modern state across an increasingly wide range of policy sectors. As a result it has also gained a considerable degree of power in order to set policy agendas, and formulate, implement and enforce policy decisions.

After a brief introduction to the EU institutions and the EU public policy process this course will take students on a journey that conceptualises the EU public policy process into four sections – agenda setting, policy formulation, policy decision-making and policy implementation. In examining these four parts of the policy process different models of analysis will be employed at different levels within the EU and at different stages of the policy process.

The final section of the course will examine a range of EU public policy areas, utilising them as case studies within the conceptual frameworks identified in the first part of the course.

Structure of the Course

The course will be taught through a series of 13 weeks of lectures and seminars.

Lecture programme:

1. The development of the European Union and the development of E.U. public policy (20.09.06)
2. Agenda-setting 1: role and purpose, E.U. political process, and the nature of agendas (27.09.06)
3. Agenda-setting 2: fragmentation and the absence of effective policy co-ordination (04.10.06)
4. Policy formulation 1: the policy communities and policy networks model (11.10.06)
5. Policy formulation 2: policy-making uncertainty, expertise and epistemic communities, multiple policy-making ‘venues’ (18.10.06)
6. Policy decision-making 1: institutional analysis (25.10.06)
7. Policy decision-making 2: decision-making in the European Parliament (01.11.06)
8. Policy implementation 1: implementation as a complex and multifaceted process (08.11.06)
9. Policy implementation 2: inter-organisational behaviour and implementation analysis, characterising implementation in the E.U. (15.11.06)
10. Regions and the E.U. public policy process (22.11.06)
11. The E.U. policy process: ‘Holidays in Euroland’ (BBC video) (29.11.06)
12. The ‘Europeanisation’ of public policy (06.12.06)

Seminar programme:

1. Has the development of European Union public policy assisted E.U. integration and added to E.U. integration theory? (25.10.06)
2. “All political systems must confront the need to develop and process a range of public policy issues. The starting point in that task is agenda-setting”. How does the European Union differ from, and how is it similar to, other political systems in the task of agenda-setting? (01.11.06)
3. If fragmentation of the institutions of the E.U. is good for a rich diversity in agenda-setting what does it mean for effective public policy co-ordination? (08.11.06)

4. How useful is the policy community and policy networks model in analysing public policy formulation in the European Union? (15.11.06)
5. How does the role of the E.U. parliament differ from that of parliaments in E.U. Member States in respect of public policy decision-making? (22.11.06)
6. What factors most undermine the negotiating position of the E.U. parliament in the public policy decision-making process? (29.11.06)
7. How can we characterise European Union public policy implementation, and what categories of factors contribute to such a characterisation? (06.12.06)
8. What do we mean when we refer to the Europeanisation of E.U. public policy? (13.12.06)
9. What are the links between regions and the E.U. in the public policy making process, and what influence do regions have in that process? (13.12.06)

Course Assessment

- a) Seminar presentation and written transcript (maximum 1,000 words/3sides of A4 paper).....**30%**
Deadline: Friday 15 December 2006 between 10.00. a.m. and 12 noon
- b) Essay (maximum 2000 words/6 sides of A4 paper).....**70%**
Deadline: Wednesday 17 January 2007 between 10.00. a.m. and 12 noon

a) Seminar presentation and written transcript

Students will be required to make one formal verbal seminar presentation in English on one of the seminar questions listed above in the Seminar programme. These will take place throughout the course, commencing in week 6 of teaching. Presentations can be made individually or as part of a group. After the presentation students will receive verbal feedback and then be required to write up (in no more than 1000 words/3 sides of A4 paper) the transcript of their final seminar paper and submit it by the deadline. Students will be marked individually on their presented final seminar paper.

b) Essay

Students will be required to submit an essay in answer to **one** of the questions shown below. The essay must be of a maximum of 2,000 words/6 sides of A4 paper, be type written, fully properly referenced, and include a full bibliography.

- (i) Is there an imbalance and a contradiction between the processes of agenda-setting and policy implementation at the two ends of the European Union public policy cycle?
- (ii) Are we witnessing a 'Europeanisation' or a 'regionalisation' of European Union public policy making?
- (iii) Is there a contradiction between the processes of public policy formulation and decision-making in the E.U.?

Texts

Students are referred to a range of journal, book and internet texts. These include:

Books

Featherstone, K. and Radaelli, C. (eds.) ***The Politics of Europeanization***, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003. (especially the Introduction and the chapter by D. Wincott).

- Gallie, D. (ed.) *Resisting marginalisation: Unemployment experience and social policy in the EU*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Hantrais, L. *Social Policy in the EU*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000.
- Hix, S. *The Political System of the European Union*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2005.
- Jordan, A. and Liefferink, D. (eds.) *Environmental Policy in Europe: The Europeanization of National Environmental Policy*, London, Routledge, 2004.
- Kleinman, M. *A European Welfare State: European Union Social Policy in context*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002.
- McCormick, J. *Understanding the European Union* (Third edition), Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2005
- Nugent, N. *The Government and Politics of the European Union*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Richardson, J. *European Union. Power and policy-making* (Third edition), Oxford, Routledge, 2006. (alternatively, Second edition, 2001).
- Rosamond, B. *Theories Of European Integration*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2000.
- Salais, R. and Villeneuve, R. (eds.) *Europe and the politics of capabilities*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2004
- Schimmelfennig, F. and Sedelmeier, U.. (eds.) *The Europeanisation of Central and Eastern Europe*. Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, 2005.

Journal articles

- Borros, S. and Greve, B. (2004) The Open Method of Co-ordination in the European Union, special issue of *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11:2 (various articles of interest)
- Farrell, H. and Heritier, A. (2005) 'A Rationalist-Institutionalist Explanation of Endogenous Regional Integration', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12/2: pp.273-90.
- Guillen, A. and Palier, B. (2004) 'Does Europe matter? Accession to EU and social policy developments in recent and new member states', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 14:3, pp.203-209, and other articles in this special issue on *EU Enlargement, Europeanisation and Social Policy*.
- Jepsen, M. and Pascual, A.S. (2005) 'The European Social Model: an exercise in deconstruction', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 15(3), pp.231-245.
- Mosher, J. and Trubek, D. (2003) 'Alternative approaches to governance in the EU: EU Social Policy and the European Employment Strategy', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 4:1, pp.63-88.
- Neilson, J. (1998) 'Equal opportunities for women in the European Union: success or failure?', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 8, pp.64-79.
- Sinn, H-W and Ochel, W (2003) 'Social Union, convergence and migration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41, pp.869-96.
- Threlfall, M. (2003) 'European social integration: harmonization, convergence and the single social area', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 13, pp.121-140.
- Van der Mei (2003) 'Freedom of movement for the unemployed and co-ordination of unemployment benefit schemes', *European Journal of Social Security*, 5:3, pp.214-229.
- Vobruba, G. (2003) 'The enlargement crisis of the European Union: limits of the dialectics of integration and expansion', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 13 (1), pp.35-48, and responses by M. Bach and M. Rhodes.

Journals (These Journals, and the articles within them above, are also held in the FSS library)
 Environmental Politics
 European Union Politics

European Political Science
Journal of Common Market Studies
Journal of European Social Policy (the 'European Briefing' section of this journal is very useful
for up-to-date EU developments)
Journal of European Public Policy

Internet

<http://www.cec.org.uk>
<http://www.ecsa.org>
<http://europa.eu.int>
<http://ibeurope.eu.int>
<http://www.ieep.org.uk>
<http://www.policylibrary.com>

John Wilton
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