European Union Health Policy

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This course is about the politics of health care and public health in the European Union (EU). Its sessions will touch upon the funding and organisation of health systems and policies in Member States, and focus on how the European Union intervenes in areas such as health services, public health or pharmaceutical regulation.

By design, this course will ask some of the same questions that are found at the centre of policy studies: Why do national decision-makers adopt different policies, or make different progress towards common goals? How are these policies affected by the European Union, and what are the political forces, institutions and ideas that shape their formulation?

Insights about the history and politics of the EU, as well as ideas and concepts from health economics and epidemiology, will provide helpful background in answering these questions. No previous knowledge in any of these domains is required for taking the course, but curiosity in all of them will prove useful.

This course shares two sessions with Sabine Weiland’s European Food and Agriculture Policy course, which is offered within the Masters in Food Politics. The first shared session, Session 6 of this course, will be taught by myself, whereas the second one, Session 7, will be taught by Sabine. This will give you a chance to see what kind of intellectual and practical work is done at the Masters level on a policy topic that is closely related to health.
Coursework

This course is 50% lecture-based, 50% presentation-based. The 14 presentations listed in the next pages will be assigned to a group of two or three students, with each student having to present at least twice. Each presentation lists two readings, which you should read in detail and present to the class in the form of a 20-minute talk. The presentation is worth 80% of your final grade, the other 20% being attendance of, and participation from the entire class. Absences on presentation days will not be excused and will be graded 0/20.

All other readings listed in the syllabus, including the handbooks and websites listed below, will be either briefly mentioned or covered in detail during the lectures at the beginning of each class. You might want to read from them to enhance your presentations.

Students enrolling late in the course will be assigned policy memos instead of presentations.

Handbooks


Websites

European Commission · Public Health, DG Health and Food Safety
European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG)
European Observatory of Health Systems and Policies (EOHSP)
European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)
OECD · Health Data, Information and Working Papers
1. What is European Health Policy?


Selected official documents


Selected legal references

2. Stakeholders


**Presentation 1. Health Ministries**


**Presentation 2. Health Lobbies**


3. European Health Care States


**Presentation 3. Healthcare Finance**


**Presentation 4. Healthcare Systems**


4. Health Performance and Problems


Presentation 5. Measurements of Health Performance


Presentation 6. Health Problems in Advanced Health Systems


5. Communicable Disease

Note — This session is, of course, topically connected to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The presentations are therefore slightly different than the other ones in this syllabus:


Presentation 7. Covid-19 in Europe

Select a dozen or so blog posts on European countries from the HEPL blog series (Oliver 2020), and compare the responses in that sample of countries.

Presentation 8. Covid-19 and the EU Economy

Select a maximum of ten short chapters from the CEPR edited collection (Bénassy-Quéré and Weder di Mauro 2020), and present a summary of the chapters.
6. Nutrition


Presentation 9. Genetically Modified Organisms


Presentation 10. Food Labels

Hoff, A., Lelieveldt, H. and van der Does, R. 2016. “A Biased Rapporteur or Politics as Usual? Reassessing the Balance of Interests in the EU Food Information Labelling Case,” Journal of European Public Policy 23(2): 296–313 [ the article is a reply to Kurzer and Cooper 2013 ].

7. Food Safety

Reminder — This session is hosted by Sabine Weiland (see note on the first page). The two presentations listed below will be covered by the students of her class. Here are some more details about Sabine’s course and the related Master programme:

The European Food and Agriculture Policy course is offered as part of the ESPOL Masters Programme (MA) in Food Politics and Sustainable Development, which starts from the finding that food constitutes a major policy problem in today’s world, be it in relation to food production, consumption, trade, nutrition, public health, environment, animal rights, culture, or social justice.

Famines, various problems of over- and malnutrition, conflicts between states and/or enterprises, trade wars or various environmental and climate issues are all related to food and food policies. The conflicts around food issues emerge at different levels, from local and regional, to national, to international. In this array, it is particularly difficult to design food policy on various levels and among diverse actor groups and demands.

Students enrolled in this Masters learn to analyse and understand the various interdependencies of arenas and actors, which make the complexity of the field. It combines study of French, European and international political institutions and processes. The programme allows students to acquire knowledge and competences in the field of food politics required for an occupational career in public and private organisations.


Presentation SW-1. European Food Safety Policy after the BSE Crisis


Presentation SW-2. Failure in Food Safety Governance

8. Markets


**Presentation 11. Intellectual Property Rights**


Presentation 12. Cross-Border Markets


9. Austerity


Presentation 13. The Global Austerity Agenda


Presentation 14. European Fiscal Austerity


Closing readings


Appendix

Overviews of health politics


Selected health policy journals

*Eurohealth*

*Health Affairs*

*Health Economics, Policy and Law*

*Health Policy*

*Health Research Policy and Systems*

*Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*

*Journal of Health Services Research & Policy*

*Social Science & Medicine*

Selected European Union journals

*Comparative European Politics*

*European Law Journal*

*European Union Politics*

*Journal of Common Market Studies*

*Journal of European Integration*

*Journal of European Public Policy*

*Living Reviews in European Governance*

*Politique européenne*