**Course name: Crisis in the EU**

**Code: IR-**

**Term:** Summer

**ECTS credits:** 6

**Lessons per week:** 90 + 90 mins

**Language:** English

**Instructor:** Dr. Karen Henderson

**Form of study:** Lecture + seminar

# Prerequisites

None

# Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should have a better understanding of developments in the European Union and its member states which enables them to:

• explain the decision making processes which effect the European Union’s reaction to crises

• analyse the significance of public opinion and electoral outcomes for the future of the EU.

This includes:

• understanding the reasons why the EU enlarged both its membership and its competencies

• familiarity with the main strands of eurosceptic thinking in different member states and how they are exploited or opposed politically

• differentiating between EU policies regarding free movement of persons, migration and refugees, and analyzing any interaction

• presenting - orally and in writing - arguments which can be supported by the selection of the most relevant examples

• generating explanations for ongoing events in the European Union.

# Contents

The European Union was created in 1957 (as the European Community) with the determination ’to lay the foundations of an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe’. After many successes, including enlargement from 6 to 28 states and the creation of the Schengen Zone and the Eurozone, the EU is now faced with crises in the Eurozone, the 2015 refugee crisis and the possible exit of one of its largest members, the United Kingdom, whose prime minister wanted to be exempt from the aim of ‘ever closer union’. The Union that has managed to widen and deepen for over 50 years despite all the problems it has faced, including periods of stagnation in its development, but is it now finally faced with disintegration rather than integration?

The course looks first at the development of the EU: its aims, its decision-making processes, the extension of its policy-making powers, and also at the problems of the ‘democratic deficit’ whereby citizens feel they have no control over a union that increasingly governs more and more areas of their lives. We then look at the rise of Euroscepticism and Eurosceptic political parties in Europe and question whether they might change from being a peripheral minority to the mainstream, before examining the current crises facing the EU. Crisis from the South involves both the Eurozone crisis and the possibility of Grexit, and the difficulties of handling illegal immigration in the face of the Syrian refugee crisis. Crisis from the West looks at Brexit and the UK referendum, and also at the challenges of member states breaking up that is posed by Scotland and Catalonia. Crisis from the East encompasses both inward-looking and unconstructive reactions of leaders in the new member states to crises in the EU, and the stalling of the enlargement process as the EU appears to have reached the limit of its ‘soft power’ and its ability to export democracy. Finally, we look at ‘Crisis at the core’, and ask whether the six founding member states are closing in on themselves and failing to cater for diversity.

# Themes and Readings involved

1. Introduction: Visions of Europe.

2. Widening and deepening: How the EU has enlarged both its size and its competencies.

3. The Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: migration, asylum, policing and courts.

4. Democratic Deficit: How can the EU empower its citizens?

5. Euroscepticism: Origins and definitions.

6. Crisis from the south: The Eurozone crisis and the threat of Grexit.

7. Crisis from the south: The refugee crisis.

8. Crisis from the west: Independence movements in Scotland and Catalonia.

9. Crisis from the west: The UK referendum and the threat of Brexit.

10. Crisis from the east: The new member states and the rise of illiberalism.

11. Crisis from the east: Has soft power failed, and has enlargement ended?

12. Crisis at the core: Are the six founding member states closing in on themselves?

# Obligatory Readings

There are no obligatory readings, although reading is definitely obligatory. You should choose from the material provided on moodle, and particularly for preparing presentations and essays, you should also look for other material relevant to the topic.

The most useful textbooks are:

Cini, M. & N.P. Borragan (eds), 2016, *European Union Politics* (5th edition), Oxford: OUP.

Dinan, D., N. Nugent, & W. Paterson, (eds), 2017, *The EU in Crisis,* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

# Primary Sources

Students should follow news coverage on [www.euractiv.sk](http://www.euractiv.sk), and a wealth of primary documents can be found at [www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu).

# Secondary Sources

Useful reports are produced by:

Centre for European Reform [www.cer.org.uk](http://www.cer.org.uk)

Centre for European Policy Studies [www.ceps.eu/publications/all](http://www.ceps.eu/publications/all)

Journal articles are the best academic source for information, and some articles are available on moodle, particularly from the *Journal of Common Market Studies.*

# Supplementary Readings and Sources

Supplemetary readings and sources can be found on Moodle.

**Evaluation Criteria**

20% Written class preparation. Students should prepare in writing two or three discussion points (comments or questions, about half a page) based on their reading for the topic. These should be submitted to the lecturer via Moodle in advance, and presented to the class for discussion.

15% Presentation. Presentations should be between 5 and 10 minutes long (10-20 minutes in the case of joint presentations). Topics and dates will be agreed at the first session.

10% Test.

55% Essays. Two essays should be submitted via Moodle. The first should be about 1,500 words (maximum 2,000 words); the second should be the same (first years) and between 2,000 and 3,000 words (second years).

# Course Evaluation (%)

A – excellent: 100-93%,

B – very good: 92-84%,

C – good: 83-74%,

D – satisfactory: 73-63%,

E – sufficient: 62-51%,

Fx – fail: 50-0%.

Passing a course assumes that student was not absent at more than 4 lessons.