beua2001

2026

EU Fiscal and Social Policies

5.00 credits	30.0 h	Q1

This learning unit is not open to incoming exchange students!

Teacher(s)	Evrard Zoé ;Lapeyre de Cabanes Antoine ;
Language :	English
Place of the course	Bruxelles Saint-Louis
Main themes	This course focuses on the historical development, institutional functioning, and contemporary challenges of the EU's fiscal and social policies, including in their budgetary dimension. Taking European Political Economy as perspective, students will explore how EU-level economic and fiscal governance constraint national social and budgetary choices, but also how the EU's own budget is constituted, spent, and contested in a political context marked by successive crises. The course combines an examination of the technical aspects of the EU's governance and direct spending with an analysis of the broader political and distributive implications of these choices, including in terms of democratic legitimacy and rising inequalities.
Learning outcomes	**At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :** • Have a good understanding of the instruments, resources, and challenges of the EU's fiscal and social policies. • Be able to engage critically in debates about the EU's budgetary instruments and the policies they finance, as well as on the impact of EU economic and fiscal governance on member states. • Strengthen transversal skills including critical thinking, public speaking, discussion, and academic writing.
Evaluation methods	The final grade is based on three components: participation (15%), a role-play assignment consisting of an essay and its presentation during an in-class debate (45%), and a final exam (40%). Students may also choose to submit an optional journal article review, which can add up to two bonus points to the final grade. All assignments must be submitted in English. In the event of a resit (August session), participation grades are carried over, and no new bonus points can be earned. Students who did not pass the course and scored below 70% in either the role-play assignment or the final exam must retake that component. Grades of 70% or higher are retained and cannot be repeated. For the role-play assignment, only the essay needs to be redone (not the presentation). The use of generative artificial intelligence is not permitted, except for (1) non-substantive purposes, such as language editing; and (2) the optional journal article review, where, if used, any experimentation with AI is part of the assignment and must be documented.
Teaching methods	The course combines lectures with active learning, using preparatory tasks and mandatory readings as the basis for in-class activities.
Content	The course guides students through established policies, such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) or the social and territorial cohesion policy carried out through the European Structural and Investment Funds. Recent developments are also addressed, including the emergence of a new 'European investor state', the latest reform of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), and the debates surrounding the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). A transversal question connects these topics: is the EU moving beyond its regulatory role towards renewed economic activism and, if so, which political goal(s) is it pursuing?
Faculty or entity in charge	IEEB

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)

Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Master [120] in EU Studies	EUAB2M	5		🔍
Master [120] in European Public Governance (Circle U.)	EUCB2M	5		🔍