

Advanced Master in European Integration

Digital Sovereignty course outline

Course aims

Discussions on digital sovereignty are central to the EU's future. These discussions need to be raised in an educational setting in order to allow our students to confront one of the key issues addressing European society in the 21st Century (along with the 'green transition').

The module enables this critical reflection through both theoretical lectures and 'practitioner engagement lectures', the latter of which will be compulsory for students and open to the public.

The theoretical lectures will give students broad insights into the changing global and European policymaking landscape in the field. Starting with discussions on European Information Society policy, the module will move towards discussions on what digital sovereignty actually means for the EU and its societies. Special attention will be paid to the incorporation of viewpoints from other parts of the world. The High-Level lecture series will engage key stakeholders in discussions about very specific issues. For example what is the state of play in AI discussions in the European Union; how does the EU's cybersecurity policy help EU citizens and businesses remain safe? What is the EU doing to avoid the fragmentation of the Internet? And many related questions.

A case study exercise, carried out online will help students develop in-depth research skills and give them hands on collaborative experience. The group exercise will consist of a case study, with the assignment being to prepare and present an elaborate policy brief for a 'client' wishing to engage with European policymakers on a specific topic.

The theoretical lectures and the High-Level Lecture Series will run in parallel, in order to allow students to reflect in smaller class settings on the speeches and interactions between stakeholders in the public events. Short 'teaser-podcasts' will be provided that engage with (some) of the speakers in the high level lecture series. These short podcasts will be used to 'vulgarise' the content of the speaker's lecture in the forthcoming week. It will be managed by the principal beneficiary.

Additional information

The readings will be provided in electronic format to the students via the e-learning platform. No reader is required, but students who wish to deepen their knowledge or need more background materials will receive book recommendations.

Learning outcomes

The student has interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding of

- selected state of the art theory, concepts, research and scientific debates on the European Union and its digital policies, specifically with the transition to digital sovereignty in mind.
- the international aspects of EU digital policymaking

- the competence of the EU in this field, and how this is distributed across the different EU institutions

The student will become familiar with technological developments in EU policymaking.

Course assignments

Students will have three assignments for the module: an individual research paper, a case study exercise (done in groups), and a policy-blog (also written in groups). The case study exercise will take place at the end of the module, over an intense period of three days. All instruction in that period will be online, although groups of students will be free to meet if they wish. The policy blogs will provide students with the opportunity to publish their reflections on one of the lectures in the high level lecture series. These will be available to the public via a public channel. Students will thus be required to develop skills in 'public writing' for this assignment.

Course structure

The following list provides a proposal for the structure of classes and themes (to be confirmed upon delivery of course manual).

1. *Introduction - Making sense of the digital age*. Policy document for analysis: COM(79)650
2. *Building a digital Europe: the early years*. Policy documents for analysis: COM(99)687 and NII
3. *Europe's 'coming of age' -- toward digital sovereignty*. Case: EU4DNS
4. *A geopolitical vision on European digital policy – standardisation*. Policy document for analysis: COM(2022)31
5. *Geopolitics II: Supply chains: critical raw materials and chips*. Policy documents for analysis: COM(2023)160; COM(2022)45
6. *The EU in multilateral fora*. Case: the EU and the ITU
7. *The EU in multistakeholder fora*. Case: the IGF
8. *Managing the transitions*. Case study: Team Europe.