TEACHING GUIDE - 2026-2027

Current legal issues for Europe and its legal system

UGRA_017232

Departments	Department of International, European Union and Comparative Law
Teaching Languages	English
ECTS	6
Teacher responsible	Ricardo Rodrigues de Oliveira - ricardofilipe.rodrigues@esade.edu

Course Goals

The goal of the course is to develop a robust understanding of contemporary EU law and society, while becoming aware to critical issues at the core of the EU, more precisely:

- Understand EU law in theory and in action, as well as its policy-making
- Grow awareness to current and prospective challenges critical to the EU legal landscape
- Grasp how EU law adapts in courts and develop skills to discuss its shaping

Previous knowledge

Command of English is necessary for the course.
It is likewise recommended to regularly read press articles, blog posts, and academic writings on EU law and policy, including Europa.eu, CMLR, Cahiers de Droit Européen, Politico, Euronews, EU Law Live, or European Law Blog.

Prerequisits

None

Teaching methodology

The course will employ a Socratic teaching methodology, emphasising active student participation through continuous dialogue. Students will collaboratively construct their understanding of the subject matter. Assigned readings will be provided in advance, with a particular emphasis on contemporary case studies.
The course aims to foster critical thinking skills, encouraging students to analyse and evaluate complex issues within EU law and policy.

Description

Short description

Debating the present and future of the EU and its legal tools is much needed. From Brexit to the digital transformation, environmental sustainability, constitutional crises, migratory movements, AI and data processing, or even space exploration, the EU's primary and secondary legal edifice and its

internal market keep needing to adapt, pressured by external and internal factors alike. This course looks at topical legal issues for this shared space of 450 million people and 26 million businesses, familiarizing students with legal debates that require input from related fields, such as politics, economics, or international relations.

Students are expected to sharpen their capacity to find, assess, and table legal solutions for complex challenges. Through the course, they will be given introductory and conceptual materials to discuss in class and better understand the EU's institutional functioning, policy and legal panorama, develop advocacy skills and achieve an advanced legal mind.

Bibliography

, Damian Chalmers, Gareth Davies, Giorgio Monti & Veerle Heyvaert (2024), European Union Law: Text and Materials (5th ed.), Cambridge University Press (Book)
, Alberto de Gregorio & Dimitrios Triantafyllou (eds.) (2026), Exploring the New Frontiers of EU Law, European Commission (E-book)

, CMLR, Cahiers de Droit Européen (journals) (Document)
, Europa.eu, EU Law Live, European Law Blog (Website)
, Politico, Euronews (Website)

Content

#	Topic
1	The rule of law problem: Backsliding in membership and EU values
2	European (dis)integration: Brexit and enlargements
3	Warfare in the continent and unilateral sanctions
4	COVID-19 as an opportunity for creeping competences
5	The Draghi report: External relations, competitiveness, and the Brussels effect
6	European Defence Union, security, counter-terrorism, and drugs
7	The Dublin system and border management
8	Fundamental rights and freedoms in the courtroom: From cultural heritage to PNR
9	The digital transformation and innovation: A regulatory burden?
10	Greening the EU: Quality of life and sustainable prosperity (from the livestock strategy to smart cities)

Assessment

Tool	Assessment tool	Category	Weight %
Attendance and punctuality	Attendance and punctuality	Ordinary round	20.00%
Written and/or oral exams	End of semester written examen (closed book)	Ordinary round	40.00%
Group project	Group Presentation	Ordinary round	40.00%

PROGRAMS

113-Law Exchange Program (Undergraduates: Law)
113 Year 1 (Optative)

DD05-Double Degree Program (exchange) (Undergraduates: Law)
DD05 Year 1 (Optative)

GBD20-Double Degree in Business Administration and Law (Undergraduates: Law)
GBD20 Year 5 (Optative)

GDL20-Double Degree in Law and Global Governance, Economics and Legal Order (Undergraduates: Law)
GDL20 Year 5 (Optative)

GED20-Bachelor in Law (Undergraduates: Law)
GED20 Year 4 (Optative)