



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM
Faculty of Humanities

Course manual

Jean Monnet Module

External Relations of the European Union



Study guide number: 111221806Y

Year: 2024-25

BA European Studies

1. Examiner, lecturers and contact

a. Examiners

Dr. Zamira Xhaferri & Dr. Dorian Jano

b. Lecturers

Dr. Zamira Xhaferri (Course coordinator)

Dr. Dorian Jano

c. Contact

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2. Study material

Klik hier als u tekst wilt invoeren. All information on this course and all required study materials are accessible via Canvas.

Student-staff communication is largely handled via Canvas. If you have questions, check instructions on Canvas first!

3. Content and educational objectives

a. Content

This course looks at the competences of the European Union as a global actor. It addresses the nature and scope of EU external competences and the consequences of this for the ways in which the EU engages in relations with third states and other international organizations. It analyses the EU's procedures to conclude international agreements and looks at the effects of international law in the EU legal order. In addition, various external policies will be analysed, such as trade; development; foreign, security and defence; neighbourhood policies, the EU enlargement.

This course will look at the internal and external aspects of EU external relations law. Internal aspects are the legal organisation of the EU as an international actor; its distinct legal personality; its exclusive policy competencies and those it shares with the Member States; the legal nature of treaties concluded by both the EU and its Member States (mixed agreements); and the institutional framework of EU external relations.

b. Educational objectives

At the end of course, students will be able to:

- a. demonstrate an understanding of the constitutional and legal foundations of EU foreign relations law and the legal instruments through which the EU global actorness takes shape.
- b. be familiar with the key lead issues, policy and legal instruments in EU external relations, and be able to apply these aspects in the key external policies of the EU, such as EU enlargement, foreign and security policy, trade, common foreign and security justice.
- c. demonstrate an understanding of the dynamics of the external competence division between the EU and its Member States as well as between the EU institutions and will develop a good understanding of the legal aspects of the EU as a global actor.
- d. critically engage with legal and policy debates to understand the evolution of EU enlargement policy, its legal foundations, and the political debates; to identify the state-of-play and challenges in the current accession process; to re-think the EU role, its political objectives, and policy mechanism towards EU enlargement.
- e. Develop their social and soft interpersonal skills in an applied context

c. Evaluation

Evaluation of academic education starts at the beginning of a course and is a continuous dialogue between students and lecturers. So, for example, at the beginning of a course, you can think about your expectations and your part in reaching that goal that you share with lecturers and students: the best education possible.

Students are requested by email to anonymously evaluate their courses during the final week of teaching. Lecturers are requested to reserve time for this during class. Please complete the course

evaluation, as, among others, lecturers and the programme committees use the results to improve the education in your programme!

Be critical during your course evaluation, but also be to the point, polite, and constructive. Finally, ask yourself: could I use this feedback?

4. Assessment

a. Test formats

To pass the course, students are required to complete three pass/fail assignments submitted over different weeks, submit a research proposal counting for 30% of final grade and a research law paper, which accounts for 70% of the final grade.

1. Homework assignments

Assignments will be marked pass/fail. Students must upload on Canvas the weekly assignment (4 in total). Check the submission deadlines on Canvas! If the students fail to submit 2(two) assignments, they will not be eligible to submit the research law paper in the first attempt but have to take a re-sit for the research law paper. Missed assignments cannot be re-taken.

Students will be divided into groups to actively discuss their assignment answers with fellow students and the lecturer during the seminars. All assignments must be submitted on time. In case of unforeseen circumstances (to be communicated and verified by the study advisor), assignments may be submitted up to one week late.

2. Research Paper Proposal

The research paper proposal should be 250 words (10% margin not applicable, excluding title page and references) long and consist of the following elements:

- a. Original research question that fills in a gap in the academic literature
- b. Explanation of methodological approach
- c. Outline of the paper
- d. List of at least 5 relevant references (minimal 3 academic references)

**Research Paper Proposal is due on 10th of March, 09:00 AM (Amsterdam Time Zone).
No late submissions will be accepted!**

3. Research Law Paper

A 2,500-word research law paper (10% margin not applicable, excluding the title page and references) is required for this course. The paper should focus on a topic covered within the course. If you wish to explore a different aspect of EU external relations that is not directly addressed in the course or engage with a less contemporary subject, please consult the course coordinator for approval.

Late submissions of research law paper will not be accepted! Permission for late submission may be granted if you contact the study adviser before the assignment deadline. Re-sits submitted after the due date will not be marked, unless an exception is granted by the study adviser.

Length: Max 2500 words (excluding footnotes), Times New Roman, Font 12, Line spacing 1,5. If students exceed the word limit, the grade will be lowered with 1 point.

Plagiarism: The paper must be the result of original and individual work by the students—the presumption of fraud results in a grading with 0.

The Research Law Paper is due on 25th of March 2025, 09:00 AM CET (Amsterdam Time Zone). No late submissions will be accepted!

The students should choose one of the themes discussed within the course for the research paper proposal and the research paper. Within the research paper we assess the research question and the contribution of the paper to the academic literature, and the understanding of the theme discussed.

See Canvas course page for guidance on writing a research law paper and examples of anonymised ones.

b. Exam material

The primary literature for this course consists of a ground-breaking textbook edited by Ramses Wessel and Joris Larik (eds), *EU External Relations Law*, 2nd (Hart 2020).

In addition to the individual chapters in the book, students will be reading case law and legal sources relevant to the weekly classes. Short blog posts and newspaper articles on current topics will be posted on Canvas for the specific classes.

For more background readings, please consult:

- a. Eleftheria Neframi, and Mauro Gatti (eds), *Constitutional Issues of EU External Relations Law*, Luxembourg Legal Studies, 2018 (accessible online via the UvA library).
- b. Panos Koutrakos, *EU International Relations Law*, Hart Publishing, 2016.
- c. Pieter Jan Kuijper, Jan Wouters, Frank Hoffmeister, Geert De Baere, and Thomas Ramopoulos. *The Law of EU External Relations: Cases, Materials, and Commentary on the EU as an International Legal Actor*. 2nd edition Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- d. [Piet Eeckhout, *EU External Relations Law \(Second Edition\)*, OUP 2011.](#)

Recommended readings:

Students can find additional literature at the end of each chapter in the Wessel & Larik textbook. Please note that the recommended bibliography is meant to draw further inspiration on each topic discussed weekly. Kindly note that such sources are optional for students to read and will not be discussed during the weekly classes. Students are expected to read the required readings in preparation for the weekly classes.

The course consists of a mixture of (guest) lectures and seminars. Classes will take place on-site and attendance is expected in all sessions.

c. Exam dates/deadlines

The students have to choose one of the themes discussed within the course for the research paper proposal and the research paper. Within the research paper we assess the research question and the contribution of the paper to the academic literature, and the understanding of the theme discussed.

Resits submitted after the due date will not be marked, unless an exception is granted by the study adviser.

d. Assessment and weighting

Week 1	Homework Assignment	14 February, 09:00 AM CET	Pass/Fail
Week 2	Homework Assignment	21 February, 09:00 AM CET	Pass/Fail
Week 3	Homework Assignment	28 February, 09:00 AM CET	Pass/Fail
Week 4	Research Paper Proposal	10 March 2025, 09:00AM CET	30% of final grade
Week 5	Homework Assignment	14 March 2025, 09:00 AM CET	Pass/Fail
Week 7	Research Paper	25 March 2025, 09:AM CET	70% of final grade

Test results lapse after the end of the semester in which the final mark was awarded. If a student does not complete a course that is a compulsory part of their degree programme in one semester, they will have to retake the course at a later opportunity.

e. Results

The results will be posted on Canvas no more than 15 working days after the exam (and at least 5 working days before the resit).

f. Feedback and inspection

All feedback has been positive

g. Resit

For the resit, a research paper of **2500 words (10% margin not applicable, excluding title page and references)** has to be submitted on a new topic that you did not cover in the initial research paper or the research paper proposal. If you want to pick a topic on EU external action not covered within the course or engage with a less contemporary subject, please consult the course coordinator.

Block 5	Resit Research Paper	12 May 2025, 09: AM	70% of final grade
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Resit and compensation:

- If the grade of the research law paper is below 5.5, a resit is required. General requirements for the resit can be found on Canvas.
- The weekly assignments are not subject to retake.
- If you have missed the deadline for an assignment, this assignment counts as 0.
- You can take a re-sit if you missed the deadline for the research paper or if you scored below 5.5. In such case, to re-sit the research law paper, you will have to choose a different research question from the first attempt.

Grades on the research law paper may not be carried over: After the examination, all grades awarded for the research law paper expire. That means you cannot carry them over when repeating the course

the following academic year. Hence, your awarded grades expire if you have failed to mark 5.5 or higher after the repeat examination.

h.GenAI

Within this course, students are not permitted to use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) for any of the assessments. Developing your academic skills is an important part of your study at the UvA. This includes independently completing (writing) assignments. Copying material without citing the source is plagiarism and is not permitted under any circumstances.

The use of AI without the permission of the lecturer will be reported to the examination board and may lead to disciplinary measures. Please consider [potential risks and ethical dilemmas](#) before using AI, and don't forget to read the [Guidelines for GenAI in education](#).

i. Fraud and plagiarism rules

The University of Amsterdam Fraud and Plagiarism regulations apply to the assessment of this course. These regulations can be consulted at the [Plagiarism and Fraud](#) page on the student website. Also take a look at the [Academic integrity guide: fraud and plagiarism \(pdf\)](#).

5. Social safety

If you experience an unsafe situation or undesirable behaviour in this course or study programme, you can turn to the [UvA Social Safety Support Guide for students](#).

6.Ethics Committee

Be aware that all research involving participants (e.g. tests, questionnaires, interviews, observations) and/or processing personal data must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval. The conduct of the research can only start after the committee's approval.

Instructions for obtaining approval can be found via the [Ethics Committee webpage](#).

7. Course overview by week

Weeks	Lectures	Seminars
Week 1	12 February 2025	14 February 2025
Week 2	19 February 2025	21 February 2025
Week 3	24 February 2025	28 February 2025
Week 4	4 March 2025	7 March 2025
Week 5	12 March 2025	14 March 2025
Week 6	19 March 2025	21 March 2025

Lecture Week 1: 12 February 2025

Introduction to the Course & The role of the EU as a Global Actor

The first session will provide an overview of the course, including its structure and evaluation criteria. The second session will introduce the fundamentals of EU external relations and key concepts in this field. As a global actor, the EU engages with international partners such as the UN, WTO, and the USA. However, its external actions are shaped by internal legal and

institutional frameworks. Both the substance (i.e., the policy field) and the scope of EU external action are determined by these internal rules. In this introductory session, we will examine the fundamental principles governing EU external action and the key institutions involved in shaping and implementing it followed by an exploration of the internal and external dimensions of EU international relations law.

Readings

- Wessels & Larik, Chapters 1 & 2

Seminar Week 1: 14 February 2025

Readings

- [CJEU, Commission v Kingdom of Sweden, ECLI:EU:C:2010:203](#)

Lecture Week 2: 19 February 2025

EU External Competences

The EU can only act internally and externally when it has been granted competencies by the Member States. These competencies define the areas in which the EU is authorized to legislate and take action. This week, the class will focus on two key objectives. First, we will examine the existence of competence by assessing whether the EU has the authority to act in a specific policy field. This involves analyzing the legal basis for EU action as set out in the Treaties and determining whether a particular matter falls within the EU's jurisdiction. Second, we will explore the nature and scope of these competencies. This includes identifying the type of competence the EU holds in a given policy area—whether exclusive, shared, or supporting—and evaluating the extent of EU authority in shaping policies and legislation. We will also discuss how these competencies interact with those of the Member States and examine practical examples of EU action across different policy fields.

Readings

- Wessel & Larik, Chapter 3 (read-only pp. 61-100)

Seminar Week 2: 21 February 2025

Readings

- [CJEU, Commission v Council \(European Agreement on Road Transport \(ERTA\)\), Case 22-70, 31.03.1971, ECLI:EU: C:1971:32](#)
- [CJEU, Joined Cases C-626/15 and C-659/16, Commission v Council \(AMP Antarctique\), 11.2018, ECLI:EU: C:2018:925](#)
- [CJEU, Commission v Council \(PCA with Kazakhstan\), C-244/17, 04.09.2018, ECLI:EU: C:2018:662](#)

Lecture Week 3: 24 February 2025 (Guest speaker Drs. Olesia Kryvetska)

Procedures and Types of International Agreements

This week, we take a closer look at a fundamental instrument in the EU's external relations toolbox: international agreements. The session has two main objectives. First, we will explore the nature and legal significance of international agreements, distinguishing between legally binding agreements and non-legal instruments such as political declarations or memoranda of understanding. Second, we will analyze the distinction between mixed agreements, which

require ratification by both the EU and its Member States, and EU-only agreements, which fall exclusively within the EU's competence. Our discussion will focus on key examples, including the EU-Mercosur Agreement, CETA, the EU-Singapore Agreement, and the trade aspects of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, examining their legal frameworks, negotiation processes, and implications for EU external trade policy.

Readings

- Wessel & Larik, Chapter 4 (only pp. 101-122);
- Wessel & Larik, Chapter 7 (only pp. 225- 229)

BIO of guest speaker

Olesia Kryvetska is a Ukrainian based lawyer specialized in EU law, international trade, and dispute resolution. Olesia has actively contributed to shaping the alignment of Ukrainian law to European legislation, particularly in areas of trade policy, sanctions, and international dispute resolution. She has worked closely with governmental bodies, international organizations, and legal experts to ensure Ukraine's legal resilience and strategic positioning within the global legal and economic landscape. Since the start of the war, she has been involved in Ukraine in legal initiatives to hold Russia accountable for war crimes and economic aggression, advocating for stronger international legal mechanisms to protect Ukraine's sovereignty and support its EU accession efforts. She continues to be a key voice in Ukraine's legal reform, post-war recovery strategies, and the broader international legal response to the war.

Seminar Week 3: 28 February 2025

Readings

- [CJEU, European Parliament v Council \(Mauritius\), Case C 658/11, 24.06.2014, ECLI:EU:C:2014:2025](#)
- CJEU, Opinion 2/15 (Singapore), 16.05.2017, ECLI:EU: C:2017:934 (see here: <https://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=190727&doclang=EN>)

Lecture Week 4: 4 March 2025

Autonomy of EU legal order

This week, we will explore the principle of autonomy in EU law, examining how the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) defines and applies this fundamental concept. The autonomy principle ensures that the EU legal order remains independent from both international and national legal systems, safeguarding its uniform interpretation and application across all Member States. It also protects the foundational principles of EU law from external influence, reinforcing the EU's distinct legal identity. A key focus of our discussion will be the impact of the autonomy principle on Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) between the EU and third countries. We will analyze how the CJEU assesses the compatibility of these treaties with EU law, particularly in relation to dispute resolution mechanisms. Special attention will be given to landmark cases where the Court has ruled on whether such mechanisms align with the EU's legal framework and the implications for the EU's external relations. By the end of this week, students will gain a deeper understanding of how the autonomy principle shapes the EU's legal system, influencing its ability to engage in international agreements while ensuring the integrity and coherence of EU law.

Readings

- Wessel & Larik, chapter 2 and chapter 5 (only pp.140-148)
- Wessel & Larik, chapter 7 (only pp. 225-229)
- [CJEU, Slovakia v Achmea BV, C-284/16, 06.03.2018, ECLI:EU: C:2018:158](#)
- [CJEU, Opinion 1/17, 30.4.2019, ECLI:EU: C:2019:341](#)

Seminar Week 4: 7 March 2025

This is a drop-in session where students can ask questions about their draft research proposals in progress. Submission of drafts is not required; students may seek guidance on specific questions.

Lecture Week 5: 12 March 2025 (Guest speaker Drs. Liesbeth A Campo, Legal Advisor, Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the European Union)

Common Foreign and Security Policy in EU External Relations

This week's sessions explore the complex relationship between international law and EU law, focusing on the fundamental question of whether—and to what extent—the European Union is bound by international law. The first session will examine how international legal norms interact with the EU legal order and the principles governing this relationship. The second focus will be on the CFSP as a distinct field of EU external relations, highlighting its legal and political dimensions. Unlike other areas of EU external action, the CFSP is subject to unique institutional and procedural rules, particularly regarding the role of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). We will analyze the CJEU's limited yet evolving jurisdiction over CFSP instruments, discussing landmark cases that illustrate the tension between political discretion in foreign policy and the rule of law. Key questions include: To what extent can CFSP decisions be challenged before the CJEU? How does the Court balance its traditionally restricted role in foreign policy with the need to ensure compliance with EU fundamental rights and legal principles? By the end of the week, students will gain a deeper understanding of the EU's dual role as both a subject and a creator of international legal norms, as well as the implications of its external action for global governance and judicial accountability.

Readings

- Wessel & Larik, chapter 5 (only pp. 140-148); chapter 6 (only pp. 184-208);
- Wessel & Larik, chapter 7 (only pp. 236-244), chapter 9

Seminar Week 5: 14 March 2025

Readings

- [CJEU, Western Sahara Campaign UK, C-266/16, 27.2.2018, ECLI:EU: C:2018:118](#)
- [UNGA Resolution A/RES/65/276, 2011](#)
- [CJEU, PJSC Rosneft Oil Company v Her Majesty's Treasury, Case C-72/15, 28.3.2017, ECLI:EU: C:2017:236](#)

BIO of the guest Speaker

Drs. Liesbeth A. Campo is a legal expert in EU institutional law with extensive experience in academia and government advisory roles. She studied EU law and Dutch law at Maastricht University, where she later taught law courses, as well as at the University of Hasselt. Since 2013, she has worked as a legal adviser for the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, providing

counsel on EU institutional matters and external relations law. Currently, she is posted as a legal adviser at the Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the European Union, where she focuses on EU decision-making processes, comitology, and external relations law. Throughout her career, Liesbeth has been deeply involved in policy negotiations, legal analysis, and the implementation of EU law at the national and European levels. Her expertise is particularly relevant in navigating the complexities of EU governance, international agreements, and institutional reforms.

Lecture Week 6: 19 March 2025

EU Accession Criteria and Procedures

This lecture will explore the evolution and current state of the European Union (EU) accession criteria and procedures, focusing on their historical development, current challenges, and future directions. The lecture will then delve into the historical evolution of accession criteria, tracing the shift from geopolitical to political criteria and the formalization of democratic principles from the 1960s to the Copenhagen Criteria in 1993. It will examine post-Copenhagen criteria's institutionalization and ongoing adjustments, including additional requirements such as administrative capacity and good neighborhoods. The discussion will cover the transition from classical to multi-step accession procedures, emphasizing flexibility, reversibility, and the role of EU member states. The lecture will also address challenges and criticisms, such as double standards, asymmetric positioning, and the broad, inconsistent nature of accession criteria. Finally, it will explore future directions, including proposals for staged accession and transitional arrangements, and the importance of reclaiming normative consistency and prioritizing democratic values in the accession process.

Required Readings:

Jano D. (2024) 'EU Accession Criteria and Procedures: Up for the Challenge?' *Zeitschrift für Europarecht* 04. DOI: 10.36862/eiz-euz2024-04

Recommended readings:

Janse, R. (2018) The Evolution of the political criteria for accession to the European Community 1957–1973, *European Law Journal* 24(1), pp. 57 – 76

Kochenov, D. (2004) Behind the Copenhagen façade: The meaning and structure of the Copenhagen political criteria of democracy and the rule of law, *European Integration Online Papers*.

Thomas, D. C. (2006) Constitutionalization through enlargement: The contested origins of the EU's democratic identity, *Journal of European Public Policy* 13(8), pp. 1190 – 1210.

Basheska, E. (2014) The Good Neighbourliness Condition in the EU Enlargement, *Contemporary Southeastern Europe*, 2014 1(1), pp. 92 – 111, p. 99.

Seminar Week 6: 21 March 2025

State of EU Accession

This seminar will examine the process of assessing a country's readiness for EU membership through the Copenhagen criteria. It will include the European Commission's annual assessments of 33 policy areas for aspiring EU member countries. Preparedness in these areas is essential for EU accession and Europeanisation of the candidate countries. The seminar will discuss the impact of these assessments on accession processes and their broader implications for European

integration. The seminar aims to foster analytical and critical discussions on EU Accession Criteria.

Required readings:

- ESI (2024) EU preparedness – where countries are, Background Paper, October 2024. [Link](#)

Recommended readings:

- Jano, D. (2016) Compliance with EU Legislation in the Pre-accession Countries of South East Europe (2005–2011): A Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis, *Journal of European Integration* 38(1), 1-22, DOI: 10.1080/07036337.2015.1055738
- TEPSA (2023) “Building a New Future for EU Enlargement” – Discussion with Frank Schimmelfennig | EuropeChats Episode 18. [Watch Video](#) (25min).