



Universität zu Köln

# Comparing European Democracies

*Master Political Science Lecture*

**Winter Semester 2020/2021**

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**Tuesday, 12:00 - 13:30 (Online, see schedule)**

**Prof. Sven-Oliver Proksch**

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Office Hours: Online, by appointment

Office: IBW 3.45

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## 1. Course Description

This course introduces students to the comparative study of European politics. As political decisions in Europe are taken both in national capitals and in Brussels, this course will provide students with analytical frameworks to understand both domestic and supra-national politics in Europe. The lecture will present students with a basic toolkit to study advanced democracies (including delegation models, the spatial model of politics, formal reasoning). The goal of the lecture is not to cover a few European countries in depth, nor to survey as many facts as possible about Europe. Instead, the objective is to equip students with analytical tools to understand and examine contemporary developments and political puzzles that are of particular relevance to European democracies and to prepare them for advanced seminars on European politics, political representation, behavior, and institutions.

## 2. Course Objectives

- Become familiar with delegation and strategic models of politics in the study of European democracies
- Acquire in-depth knowledge of the political systems in Europe and the European Union
- Become familiar with different arguments in the study of European democracies, including the European Union

### **3. Prerequisites**

A basic knowledge of concepts and methods in political science is required. Students should be able to understand academic papers written in English language. Lectures and the exam will be in English.

### **4. Course Structure**

Due to the ongoing Coronavirus situation, this course will take place entirely online. Some sessions will take place synchronous and live using Zoom, while others will take place asynchronous using video lecture recordings. Please check the course schedule for live or recorded sessions. The link for the live Zoom meetings and the lecture recordings will be posted on Ilias. When we are live, Zoom class meetings will be recorded. Recordings will be made available on the course website so students experiencing technical difficulties or who cannot attend class can access materials at anytime.

### **5. Course Requirements**

The final exam will take place as an online exam at the end of the course. The date will be communicated during the semester. Students are able to receive 60 points on the exam (60 minutes). Exam registration is separate from course registration.

### **6. Bonus Points**

Every week you will find a link to a survey on the current topic of the week on ILIAS. The participation in this survey is voluntary. By regularly participating in the survey you have the opportunity to earn bonus points. Bonus points will be credited towards the final exam in February 2021 only and only if you pass the final exam. You are able to receive the top grade (1,0) on the exam without any bonus points. Details about the bonus points will be communicated at the beginning of the course.

### **7. Course Material**

The course will be based around a new textbook *Fundamentals of European Politics* by De Vries, Hobolt, Proksch and Slapin (forthcoming Oxford University Press). A pdf of the book will be available on Ilias. Links to additional journal articles will be on Ilias as well (make sure to connect via the university VPN).

## 8. Course Outline

### Week 1 **Introduction and Course Overview**

November 10 (*Note: Session on November 3 is cancelled*)  
LIVE ZOOM SESSION

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 1
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### Week 2 **Modelling Democratic Politics in Europe**

November 17  
VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapters 2-3
  - Winzen, Thomas, and Frank Schimmelfennig. 2016. "Explaining Differentiation in European Union Treaties." *European Union Politics* 17(4): 616–37.
  - Garrett, Geoffrey and George Tsebelis. 2001. "The Institutional Foundations of Intergovernmentalism and Supranationalism in the European Union." *International Organization*. 55(2) 357-390.
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### Week 3 **Ideology and Voting**

November 24  
VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 4-5
  - Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks. 2018. "Cleavage theory meets Europe's crises: Lipset, Rokkan, and the transnational cleavage" *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25:1, 109-135
  - De Vries, Catherine. 2018. "Euroscepticism and the Future of European Integration", chapter 4
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Week 4 **European Union Discussion Session**

December 1

ZOOM LIVE SESSION

An interactive discussion session on a current issue in European politics, organized by the German office of the European Parliament. Details will be communicated in advance.

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Week 5 **Electoral Systems and Direct Democracy**

December 8

VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 6
  - Schulte-Cloos, Julia. 2018. "Do European Parliament elections foster challenger parties' success on the national level?" *European Union Politics*. 19(3):408-426.
  - Hainmueller, Jens and Dominik Hangartner. 2019. "Does Direct Democracy Hurt Immigrant Minorities? Evidence from Naturalization Decisions in Switzerland." *American Journal of Political Science*, 63: 530-547.
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Week 6 **Representation**

December 15

VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 7
  - Schneider, Christina. 2020. "Public Commitments as Signals of Responsiveness in the European Union" *Journal of Politics* 82:1, 329-344
  - Proksch, Sven-Oliver and Jonathan B. Slapin. 2012. "Institutional Foundations of Legislative Speech." *American Journal of Political Science*, 56(3), 520-537.
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**Week 7 Political Parties and Party Competition**

December 22

VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 8-9
- Bonnie Meguid. 2005. "Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success." *American Political Science Review*, 99(3): 347-59.
- Ward, Dalston, Jeong Hyun Kim, Matthew Graham, and Margit Tavits. 2015. "How Economic Integration Affects Party Issue Emphases", *Comparative Political Studies* 48(10): 1227 - 1259

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**Week 8 Political Systems and Government Formation**

January 12

VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 10
- Cheibub, José Antonio, Shane Martin, and Bjørn Erik Rasch. 2019. "Investiture Rules and Formation of Minority Governments in European Parliamentary Democracies." *Party Politics*
- Klüver, Heike and Jae-Jae Spoon. 2020. "Helping or Hurting? How Governing as a Junior Coalition Partner Influences Electoral Outcomes". *The Journal of Politics*

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**Week 9 Making Laws: Governments and Parliaments**

January 19

VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 11
- Franchino, Fabio and Christopher Wratil. 2019. "Representing the compromise: How institutions serve government support coalitions in European Union policy making." *European Journal of Political Research*, 58: 1129-1151
- Martin, Lanny W. and Georg Vanberg. 2020. "Coalition Government, Legislative Institutions, and Public Policy in Parliamentary Democracies." *American Journal of Political Science*, 64: 325-340

Week 10 **Policy Outcomes in Europe**

January 26

VIDEO LECTURE

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 12
- Leinaweaver, Justin and Robert Thomson. 2016. “Greener governments: partisan ideologies, executive institutions, and environmental policies” *Environmental Politics* 25:4, 633-660
- Bol, Damien, Giani, Marco, Blais, André and Loewen, Peter J. 2020. “The effect of COVID-19 lockdowns on political support: Some good news for democracy?” *European Journal of Political Research*.

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Week 11 **Rule of Law, Judicial Politics, and Future of Europe**

February 2

LIVE ZOOM SESSION

Readings:

- Fundamentals of European Politics (FED) Chapter 13-14
- Pavone, Tom, R. Daniel Kelemen. 2019. “The evolving judicial politics of European integration: The European Court of Justice and National Courts Revisited.” *European Law Journal* 25: 352– 373.
- Kelemen, R. Daniel. 2020. “The European Union’s authoritarian equilibrium”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 27:3, 481-499

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Week 12 **Exam**

February 9

12:00-13:00 (Online)