

PO4117 Policy-Making in the European Union

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Aims and Objectives

This elective module examines EU policy-making through a detailed study of the formulation, adoption, and implementation of controversial legislation across a range of EU policy areas. On successful completion of this module, students should be able:

- To define and critically discuss major concepts and theories used to study policy making in general and EU policy making in particular
- to appreciate the role of different types of actors in shaping the EU's policy agenda, legislative decisions, and implementation outcomes
- to describe the typical intra and inter institutional decision making processes of the main EU institutions
- to evaluate the relative power of political actors in the formulation and adoption of EU policies
- to evaluate the consequences of different process and outcome characteristics of EU policy making for the Union's democratic legitimacy
- to conduct independent research on EU policy making using news sources, archives, and databases accessible online



Contents

How are EU policies made, by whom, and with what consequences? Few EU policies directly redistribute money. Yet even if they sometimes seem to focus on rather arcane technical issues, they often have profound consequences for the legal rights and welfare of individual citizens, the competitiveness of particular companies or entire industries, and the social, economic, and democratic development of Europe as a whole. If we want to evaluate the functioning of the EU as a democratic political system, we need to know who is involved in the formulation and implementation of policies, how these actors and the structural characteristics of the policy-making process combine to influence the shape and content of policies, and why different actors vary in their capacity to influence policy outcomes. This module addresses these types of questions, primarily by discussing how general theories of policy-making and decision-making apply to the case of the EU, and by providing hands-on experience in conducting small research projects in the form of policy-making case studies.

Core Readings

- Versluis, Esther, Mendeltje van Keulen, and Paul Stephenson (2011): *Analyzing the European Union Policy Process*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lelieveldt, Herman, and Sebastiaan Princen (2011/2015): *The Politics of the European Union*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.