

BEUR100 The EU as a Political and Economic Union

ECTS Value 5 ECTS

Overall Objectives and Outcomes

The European project was set up with the aim of ending the frequent and destructive wars between neighbouring countries which reached their culmination in the Second World War. The Schuman Declaration of 9th May 1950 led to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community which began to unite European countries in order to secure lasting peace. This module will discuss how the promoters of European integration intended to create a system built on peace, freedom and prosperity, one in which nation states no longer followed the unilateral and destructive policies which led to their engagement in two major wars. It will explain, from a political-economic perspective, the main theories which underpinned European integration, and which attempt to explain its process and outcome.

It will highlight milestones in European integration including the Hague Summit of 1969 which was aimed towards the completion, deepening and enlargement of the European integration project. In addition, it will illustrate how the EU has been built through a series of binding treaties, highlighting their importance vis-a-vis the working of the EU institutions and new areas of cooperation. The part played by the Lisbon Treaty will be stressed.

This module will enable learners to understand how the creation of the European Economic Community aimed to establish a common market in Europe characterised by a customs union and the gradual removal of tariffs. It will look at the adoption of the euro as the single currency for the majority of EU Member States and will show how the goal of a political union was facilitated through the great transfer of power to the EU level following the euro crisis.

Finally, this module will demonstrate that what had begun primarily as an economic union has progressed into a unique political and economic partnership which implements legislation in a wide range of areas.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

Competences

- a. establish the goals and determinants of European integration;
- b. highlight milestones in European integration which render the EU a political and economic union;
- c. establish how the theories of European integration help to clarify how the EU has developed over time;
- d. manage own learning by conducting further research to enhance his/her understanding of how the politics of the EU differ from those of other institutions and states.

Knowledge

- a. identify the four fundamental freedoms namely the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons;
- b. recognise the part played by the euro in European integration;
- c. demonstrate understanding of the role played by the EU in international trade;
- d. display understanding of the political structure of the EU;
- e. describe the process of decision making in the EU following the Lisbon Treaty.;
- f. Outline the roles played by the Single European Act in enhancing political co-operation between the Member States of the European Communities, and the Maastricht Treaty in introducing elements of a political union.

Skills

- a. demonstrate a deep understanding and knowledge of the EU as the largest trade bloc in the world;
- b. apply knowledge of the aims behind the Hague Summit;
- c. use the information gathered from various sources to discuss the advantages of the common currency including the elimination of transaction costs and the fact that the euro reinforces Europe's economic standing in the world;
- d. evaluate statistics pertaining to intra-EU trade
- e. apply his/her increased knowledge and understanding of the division of the Community's competences into three areas, namely the EU's competences, shared competences and competences in which decisions are made independently by the individual Member States of the EU.

Mode of Delivery

This module adopts a blended approach to teaching and learning. Information related to the structure and delivery of the module may be accessed through the IfE Portal. For further details, kindly refer to the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedures found on the Institute for Education's website.

Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Critical Analysis, Presentation, Forum Contribution/s

Suggested Readings

Core Reading List

1. Baldwin, R. and Wyplosz, C. (2015) *The Economics of European Integration*. New York City: McGraw-Hill Education.
2. Bilbao-Ubillos, J. (2016). *The Economic Crises and Governance in the European Union: A Critical Assessment*. UK: Routledge,
3. Senior Nello, S. (2011) *The European: Economics, Policy and History*. UK: McGraw-Hill Education.
4. El-Agraa, A.M. (2011), *The European Union: Economics and Policies*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

Supplementary Reading List

1. Strasbourg l'Europeenne (2017) *Milestones in European Construction*. Retrieved from <http://en.strasbourg-europe.eu/milestones-in-european-construction,3375,en.html>
2. European Commission (n.d.) *Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union*. Retrieved from <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/other/5presidentsreport.en.pdf>
3. European Parliament (2017) *Subsidiarity as a means to enhance cooperation between EU Institutions and National Parliaments*. Retrieved from <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/58225de1-0e02-11e7-8a35-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-76211845>