

## Master European Public Affairs

### Mastering Academic Research Skills and Methods

#### Full course description

Mastering Academic Research Skills and Methods spans from September to January (period 1 - 3), and provides advanced training on various professional and research skills related to academic communication (verbal and written), research design skills (formulation of research questions, basic design of an academic study, choice of methods), as well as working with (academic) sources. The course is designed to train students in the most important skills required to accomplish research projects in European Public Affairs, as well as to prepare them for the drafting of the MA EPA final work – the internship thesis. In particular, the course has the following components: (1) Academic writing skills: the writing of academic essays and of research papers, working with academic sources in a literature review assignment (referencing and presentation) (during MA EPA Module 1). (2) Research design skills: introduction to the research process, designing research projects, choice of theory and operationalization (during MA EPA Module 2). (3) Advanced research methods workshops: a series of small-group workshops focusing on document/content analysis and policy frame analysis, case studies and process tracing, and interviewing. Every student will choose which of these workshops to follow, depending on her/his MA thesis focus (during MA EPA Module 3). The main deliverable in the course, which is assessed by the MA thesis supervisor, is a thesis research proposal due at the end of January.

Assessment method: **Extended thesis proposal**

#### Course objectives

The main goal of the course is to equip the students with practical research design and research methodology skills indispensable for the contemporary professional in the domain of European Public Affairs.

After completion of this course, students are able to:

- identify and formulate clear research questions that help to direct the research process
- develop an analytical framework to examine the chosen research questions
- find, assess and critically analyse primary and secondary data
- plan and finalize a research proposal
- engage with and incorporate constructive peer feedback

## Prerequisites

None

## Recommended reading

- Blaikie, N. (2007). Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge. 2nd ed., Cambridge: Polity.
- Grix, J. (2019). The Foundations of Research. (3rd ed.) London: Red Globe Press
- Moses, J. and Knutsen, T. (2007). Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Toshkov, D. (2016). Research Design in Political Science, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

EPA4510

Period 1

2 Sep 2024

31 Jan 2025

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

3.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [E.J. Radulova](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), Paper(s), Presentation(s), Research, Skills, Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Assignment

Keywords:

research skills, research design

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Perspectives on European Public Affairs

### Full course description

This 8-week module lays the foundation for further study during the course of the EPA Masters Programme. In order to be able to understand today's problems that can occur in a complex, globalized, international environment, one needs to have a solid understanding of the diverging economic, legal and administrative traditions of the countries cooperating in the European Union. This module concentrates on the political and legal organization of European countries. The module starts with the context in which European integration takes place and concentrates on key theories relevant for understanding integration. As such this course is the foundation for the courses offered in the Masters Programme at a later point in the curriculum: EPA4001 Lobbying in the EU, EPA4003 Implementation and Evaluation of EU Policy.

The course provides an introduction to the key EU and national institutions, actors and stages in the decision-making process. With tools from policy analysis, agenda setting and key theories of European integration, the course provides an introduction to the complex decisionmaking process in

## Master European Public Affairs

Europe. A highlight of the course is the intensive negotiation workshop that takes place over three weeks. Within the thesis-writing trajectory, the course provides an introduction to the following elements that are covered in more detail in the Integrated Skills Track:

- (1) Formulating a feasible and insightful research question,
- (2) based on the overarching research question to be answered, choosing an appropriate research design and data strategy,
- (3) employing empirical methods competently and communicating the research findings clearly and in a compelling manner. While the course primarily provides an introduction to the political and legal dimension of European integration as well as policy analysis and integration theory, it nevertheless also touches on the effort to teach students evidence-based argumentation which will be relevant both in academic as well as professional settings.

EPA4006

Period 1

2 Sep 2024

25 Oct 2024

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

12.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [C.U. Arnold](#)

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Lobbying in the EU

### Full course description

The second module of the Master in European Public Affairs deals with interest groups and lobbying in the system of European governance. Students will explore on a conceptual level the characteristics of the EU interest representation system as well as the relationship between EU institutions and lobbying organizations, and will learn to identify the main venues for lobby access and influence in the system. Who wins lobby battles and why? What standards do we use to judge the democratic legitimacy of lobbying? All these questions and more will be explored at length in the course. Students set-up their own small research project and report their results in a short academic paper.

In terms of applied professional content, this module equips students with the necessary skills and tools to perform on the Brussels lobbying scene. Through role-playing, students will learn how to formulate lobby plans for specific clients and focusing on an ongoing legislative file. Students will also train their media engagement and communication skills, ranging from traditional media to social media and digital tools designed specifically for public affairs management. Last but certainly not least, the module covers ethical standards in lobbying and trains students to assess various lobbying practices and behaviours from the standpoint of their ethical acceptability.

## Prerequisites

Only accessible for selected EPA students

## Recommended reading

- Chari, R., Hogan, J., Murphy, G., & Crepaz, M. (2019). Regulating lobbying: A global comparison (2nd edition). Manchester University Press.
- De Bruycker, I., & McLoughlin, A. The public affairs plan: Seven steps to success rooted in science and practice. Journal of Public Affairs, e2567
- Klüver, H. (2013). Lobbying in the European Union: interest groups, lobbying coalitions, and policy change. Oxford University Press.

EPA4008

Period 2

28 Oct 2024

20 Dec 2024

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

12.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [A. Nastase](#)

Teaching methods:

Assignment(s), Skills, Training(s), Work in subgroups, Lecture(s), Research

Assessment methods:

Presentation, Assignment, Final paper

Keywords:

Lobbying, pitch, policy analysis

## Master EPA Internship Track

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Governing EU Policies and Contemporary Challenges

### Full course description

This course will help students to familiarize themselves with evidence-based research and academic state of the art EU public policy debates and contemporary challenges, such as digitalisation and maintaining responsible climate policies. The course covers key policy domains of European integration, such as Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the budget of the European Union, as well as topical areas of policy innovation and change, such as the EU digital single market, the green transition, and the (new) EU industrial policy. The course also introduces new developments in EU public policy, such as the European Green Deal and NextGenerationEU. These are important for MA EPA students to understand comprehensively, as they generate advocacy efforts by public, private, and civil society actors.

## Course objectives

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- acquire in-depth knowledge and understanding of evidence-based research and academic state of the art EU public policy debates on contemporary challenges;
- apply knowledge and understanding of key economic domains of European integration, such as Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the budget of the European Union, and the EU digital single market that have to do with managing important ongoing contemporary challenges;
- formulate judgments and communicate one's understanding and evaluation of key EU policies and financial instruments, such as the European Semester, the European Green Deal, and NextGenerationEU;
- learn how to update one's knowledge of the latest debates in the studied area and keep up with the state of the art.

## Recommended reading

- Buti, M. and Fabbrini, S. (2023). Next generation EU and the future of economic governance: towards a paradigm change or just a big one-off?, *Journal of European Public Policy* 30(4), 676-695, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2022.2141303
- Di Carlo, D. and Schmitz, L. (2023) Europe first? The rise of EU industrial policy promoting and protecting the single market, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 30(10), 2063-2096, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2023.2202684
- Jones, E., Kelemen, R.D., and Meunier, S. (2021). Failing forward? Crises and patterns of European integration. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28(10), 1519-1536, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2021.1954068
- Moschella, M., Quaglia, L., & Spendzharova, A. (Eds.) (2023). *European Political Economy: Theoretical Approaches and Policy Issues*. (First ed.) Oxford University Press. The New European Union Series.
- Schelkle, W. (2017). *The Political Economy of Monetary Solidarity. Understanding the Euro Experiment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

EPA4010

Period 4

3 Feb 2025

4 Apr 2025

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

12.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [A.B. Spendzharova](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), PBL, Assignment(s), Work in subgroups, Presentations

Assessment methods:

Take home exam, Presentation

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

# Researching and Writing the MA EPA Research Report

## Full course description

The Research Report is a great choice for students who want to gain hands-on research experience, learn how to use research methods, and train to collect and interpret data. This course is for students who aim to pursue a professional career where practice-based research is of relevance. Developing a research topic connected to specialised practices will ensure that the students get immersed in the professional context, and develop an analytical capacity about the processes of European policy-making.

The final course deliverable – the Research Report – should contribute to existing professional debates in the field of European Public Affairs. Students are encouraged to work on issues related to contemporary policy-making and legislative activity in the European Union, identifying the public policy and PA relevance.

Students work with a thesis supervisor (coach) who meets with them on a regular basis to guide them in the research process, providing valuable feedback.

## Course objectives

After completion of this course, students are able to:

- identify and formulate clear research questions that help to direct the research process
- use concepts, models or perspectives in order to academically frame and examine the chosen research question
- find, assess and critically analyse primary and secondary data
- critically reflect upon the relations between concepts, methodology, and empirical findings and use these insights to build an academic argument of relevance for the professional practice of EPA
- plan, carry out and finalize their own research within a fixed time-frame
- write a complete research report that is well-documented
- engage with and incorporate constructive (academic) feedback

## Recommended reading

- Blaikie, N. (2007). Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge. 2nd ed., Cambridge: Polity.
- Grix, J. (2019). The Foundations of Research. (3rd ed.) London: Red Globe Press
- Toshkov, D. (2016). Research Design in Political Science, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

EPA4014

Period 4

3 Feb 2025

4 Apr 2025

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

9.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [E.J. Radulova](#)

Teaching methods:

Research, Coaching

Assessment methods:

Final paper

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Internship Work and Report

### Full course description

The internship is a crucial part of the EPA program. Students can take up their internships from 1 April once Period 4 has ended. Students must complete an internship related to European public affairs of at least 12-weeks duration, though some end up with longer internships up to six months. Students might find their own internship. They choose an internship based on their own interests – some will be seeking a career in one of the EU institutions, others opting for the world of public affairs and consultancy, while others may be keen to focus on national governmental organizations or think tanks. Whatever the destination, the aim of the internship is to put the lessons learned during the taught modules into practice. There is no better way to practice this, than by doing the job for real. The internship thus forms a crucial opportunity to gain hands-on experience in the field of European public affairs, and often provides the opportunity to smoothly enter the job market in Brussels or elsewhere. At the end of the internship students are required to complete a short internship report of 2,000 words that reflects on the objectives of the internships, the tasks performed, and how their professional insights link back to the theory and concepts introduced in the taught courses. The report also includes an evaluation from the internship supervisor or line manager in the host organization.

EPA4996

Period 5

7 Apr 2025

6 Jun 2025

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

12.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [I.W.P. de Bruycker](#)

## Master EPA Thesis Track

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Governing EU Policies and Contemporary Challenges

## Full course description

This course will help students to familiarize themselves with evidence-based research and academic state of the art EU public policy debates and contemporary challenges, such as digitalisation and maintaining responsible climate policies. The course covers key policy domains of European integration, such as Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the budget of the European Union, as well as topical areas of policy innovation and change, such as the EU digital single market, the green transition, and the (new) EU industrial policy. The course also introduces new developments in EU public policy, such as the European Green Deal and NextGenerationEU. These are important for MA EPA students to understand comprehensively, as they generate advocacy efforts by public, private, and civil society actors.

## Course objectives

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- acquire in-depth knowledge and understanding of evidence-based research and academic state of the art EU public policy debates on contemporary challenges;
- apply knowledge and understanding of key economic domains of European integration, such as Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the budget of the European Union, and the EU digital single market that have to do with managing important ongoing contemporary challenges;
- formulate judgments and communicate one's understanding and evaluation of key EU policies and financial instruments, such as the European Semester, the European Green Deal, and NextGenerationEU;
- learn how to update one's knowledge of the latest debates in the studied area and keep up with the state of the art.

## Recommended reading

- Buti, M. and Fabbrini, S. (2023). Next generation EU and the future of economic governance: towards a paradigm change or just a big one-off?, *Journal of European Public Policy* 30(4), 676-695, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2022.2141303
- Di Carlo, D. and Schmitz, L. (2023) Europe first? The rise of EU industrial policy promoting and protecting the single market, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 30(10), 2063-2096, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2023.2202684
- Jones, E., Kelemen, R.D., and Meunier, S. (2021). Failing forward? Crises and patterns of European integration. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28(10), 1519-1536, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2021.1954068
- Moschella, M., Quaglia, L., & Spendzharova, A. (Eds.) (2023). *European Political Economy: Theoretical Approaches and Policy Issues*. (First ed.) Oxford University Press. The New European Union Series.
- Schelkle, W. (2017). *The Political Economy of Monetary Solidarity. Understanding the Euro Experiment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

EPA4010

Period 4

3 Feb 2025

4 Apr 2025

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

12.0



Master European Public Affairs

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [A.B. Spendzharova](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), PBL, Assignment(s), Work in subgroups, Presentations

Assessment methods:

Take home exam, Presentation

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Researching and Writing the MA EPA Thesis

### Full course description

The MA EPA Thesis trajectory starts at the beginning of the academic year with the course 'Mastering Academic Research Skills and Methods' (MARSAM - EPA4510), which runs from periods 1 to 3. In periods 4-6 (February to June) students follow the course 'Researching and Writing the EPA Thesis'. The main deliverable in this course - the EPA thesis - consists of 8000-10000 words (excluding bibliography and annex) and should be structured as an academic research paper. It should contain a clear and narrow research question; literature review; theoretical or conceptual framework; methodology; data collection and analysis (from primary sources) and the balanced and critical interpretation of results in comparison to existing knowledge. Students work with a thesis supervisor (coach) who meets with them on a regular basis to guide them in the research process, providing valuable feedback.

### Course objectives

After completion of this course, students are able to:

- identify and formulate clear research questions that help to direct the research & writing process
- use theoretical perspectives in order to examine the chosen research question
- conduct a comprehensive literature search and bibliographic analysis, and assess the quality of the selected sources
- find, assess and critically analyse primary and secondary data
- critically reflect upon the relations between theories, concepts, methodology, and empirical findings and use these insights to build an academic argument and position themselves in an academic debate
- plan, carry out and finalize their own research within a fixed time-frame
- write a complete academic thesis of appropriate structure and length in understandable academic English that is well-documented, including quotations, footnotes, in-text references and a reference list (APA)
- engage with and incorporate constructive (academic) feedback

### Prerequisites

Successful completion of course EPA4510

## Recommended reading

- Blaikie, N. (2007). Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge. 2nd ed., Cambridge: Polity.
- Grix, J. (2019). The Foundations of Research. (3rd ed.) London: Red Globe Press -
- MacmillanToshkov, D. (2016). Research Design in Political Science, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

EPA4891

Period 4

3 Feb 2025

20 Jun 2025

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

15.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [E.J. Radulova](#)

Teaching methods:

Research, Coaching

Assessment methods:

Final paper

Keywords:

research paper, Thesis

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Policy performance in the EU

### Full course description

The central question in this last module is: what happens to European policies in practice and how do they perform? In other words, what happens at “street level” with all policies coming from the EU? The first part of the module concentrates on the implementation stage of the policy cycle. In making its legislation work, the EU is strongly dependent on the member states, as they are the ones responsible for policy delivery. National authorities may not always be willing or able to comply with new legislation coming from ‘Brussels’, as evidenced by the Dieselgate scandal, which identified national authorities as unwilling to enforce European emission standards. We analyze how Member States differently deal with the challenges of ‘doing’ EU policy. The second part of the module looks at European public policy by exploring how EU policies, programs and legislation are evaluated. What is policy success and what is failure? Who decides and on what basis? Is evaluation really independent and objective? These seemingly simple questions often prove difficult to answer, for both policy makers and evaluators because professional policy evaluation takes place in the context of highly politicized processes of judgment and reckoning. It considers how we might theorise evaluation, its purpose and value, and examines whether lessons from evaluation do or don’t influence future policy and brings about improvement. The course looks at developments since the Better Regulation Agenda and takes a practical perspective, engaging students in the analysis of real-life cases.

## Course objectives

The last module of the EPA Master aims to familiarise students with key issues in the implementation and evaluation of EU policy from both a theoretical and practical perspective. It aims to train students in solving implementation problems, and in being critically aware of the politics of policy evaluation and the key scholarly debates.

## Prerequisites

Only accessible for selected EPA students

## Recommended reading

The EPA Master in principle works with selected academic journal articles.

EPA4012

Period 5

7 Apr 2025

2 May 2025

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

- [P.J. Stephenson](#)

Teaching methods:

Assignment(s), Skills, Training(s), Work in subgroups, Lecture(s)

Assessment methods:

Presentation, Final paper, Assignment

Keywords:

implementation, evaluation, EU policy process, policy performance, compliance, transposition, accountability, learning