

First year of the Executive Master in EU Studies

Interest Representation in the EU

Theme/Topic:	Interest Representation in the EU
Expert:	Prof. Justin Greenwood , Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen
Character:	Optional
ECTS Credits:	3 ECTS credits
Teaching methods:	Lecture, seminar and discussion at the presence workshop, guided forum
Assessment methods:	final exam at the end of the term, assignments, active participation in workshop, forum directed activities, synthesis and group discussion, case study analysis and problem solving
Skills and competences	Groupwork, problem solving, presentation, skills in identifying and trade off of different interests, synthesis, critical appraisal, content summation, exercises in working with the Transparency Register.

Objective and course content:

The course will examine:

- why the EU has become dependent upon organised civil society interests;
- the mechanisms through which organised civil society interests contribute to EU policy-making;
- the impact which such interests have upon policy-making outcomes;
- the ways in which the properties of the EU political system, and the architecture of EU decision making, structures the character and *modus operandi* of EU interest representation;
- the use made of interest organisations by EU political institutions to achieve their goals;
- whether one type of interest can routinely dominate in the EU's multi-governance system;
- the consequences of dependence upon organised interests for different kinds of legitimacy;
- the limitations of interest organisations as sources of legitimacy;
- the impact of the administrative instruments which govern the interaction between EU political institutions and outside stakeholders;
- the impact of the European Citizens' Initiative as a change agent for the EU system of interest representation;
- the factors explaining the political behaviour of different interest constituencies;
- the extent to which the EU interest representation system is unique, or shares features to be found in other political systems as a result of the presence of common elements.

Bibliographical advice and links:

- Greenwood, J., 2011. Interest Representation in the European Union. 3rd edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- The European Commission's portal on Civil Society:
http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/civil_society/
- The European Commission and Interest Representatives:
http://ec.europa.eu/civil_society/interest_groups/
- The Transparency Register:
http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index_en.htm