

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND GOALS

GOALS

This MOOC has the following goals:

1. To provide an overview of the position of human/fundamental rights amongst the policies of the EU;
2. To provide an overview of the EU institutional setting;
3. To provide an overview of the position of the EU vis-à-vis other international organizations as well as its Member States as far as the realization of human rights is concerned;
4. To provide an introduction to the approaches the EU has taken, and to the instruments it uses for promoting human rights as an objective of its policies, and to illustrate them with specific case studies;
5. To present a critical reflection on the EU's achievements in the promotion of human rights, and of the challenges lying ahead.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of the course:

- You will have learned about the breadth of competences of the European Union, namely all that the EU does which affects you on a daily basis (whether you live in the EU or not);
- You will have learned that virtually all of the EU's actions affect your human rights, willingly or not;
- You will have learned that the EU has made a strong commitment in favor of human rights as one of its foundational values, and how it is trying to turn this commitment into action, for the benefit of its own citizens and those of other countries;
- You will have learned that the EU is building a very dense network of relations with different actors in order to foster human rights at home and abroad;
- You will have learned what the EU does well, and what it needs to improve, in order to fully deliver on its commitment to human rights for all.

WEEK 1 – HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES IN EU POLICIES

Objectives:

1. To provide the overview of the course;
2. To present the EU as a human rights actor active in international affairs but also vis-à-vis its own citizens;
3. To provide information on human rights challenges which the EU needs to face when addressing related policy objectives;
4. To provide information on factors the EU will need to take into consideration when addressing the human rights issues.

WEEK 2 – THE EU AS A HUMAN RIGHTS ACTOR

Objectives:

1. To provide general information as to the EU's understanding of the notions of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, providing examples from case studies;
2. To provide basic information on the concept of coherence and its various dimensions;
3. To provide an overview of the position of human and fundamental rights amongst internal and external policies of the EU;

4. To present the institutional set up of the EU;
5. To present the alignment of competences between the EU and its Member States.

WEEK 3 – THE EU’S INTERNAL SETTING AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS POLICIES

Objectives:

1. To link the discussion of coherence with the internal institutional setting of the EU;
2. To provide the overview of the relevant EU actors (incl. agencies), instruments, and of the specific challenges they face in the area of fundamental rights policy;
3. To present the main internal protection mechanisms in the EU: Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU), EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) conundrum;
4. To illustrate fundamental rights achievements and challenges through the case of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ) (presentation of the objectives, content, and challenges of the AFSJ).

WEEK 4 - THEMES AND PRIORITIES OF EU EXTERNAL HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES

Objectives:

1. To provide an introduction to the various fields of policy in which the EU is promoting human rights, either directly (human rights and democratization policies) or through other policies (trade and development; conflict intervention);
2. To present the main features of the EU Human Rights and Democratization Policy;
3. To present the challenges and achievements of triple ‘trade, development and human rights’ nexus;
4. To illustrate the EU’s actions in relation to conflicts and illustrate the human rights challenges and achievements in this regard.

WEEK 5 – ACTORS AND GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Objectives:

1. To illustrate the fact that the EU human rights external policy is led in cooperation with a very diverse range of actors, from the global to the local;
2. To provide an overview of the way the EU engages with the UN and regional organizations;
3. To sketch the broad range of geographical priorities of the EU, with a focus on special partnerships like the ENP and the Cotonou agreement with ACP countries;
4. To highlight the ways through which the EU engages with non-state actors – especially international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and transnational corporations (TNCs).

WEEK 6: EU HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY EVALUATION

Objectives:

1. To tentatively answer the question whether the EU is making progress regarding protection and promotion of human rights at home and abroad;
2. To provide a systematic overview of challenges, and problems faced when evaluating the policy and introduction to the indicators and benchmarking exercise;
3. To draw general conclusions on EU human rights impacts;
4. To issue specific suggestions for more effective policy tools.