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<th>Jean Monnet Course - Sociology of European Integration</th>
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**Course Description**
The course has as its main objective the exploration of a set of emerging and distinctive approaches in European Integration Studies, that of sociology and political sociology. The first aim is to review the emerging and promising debate on a sociology of European integration, which wants to shed light on aspects of European integration not covered by International relations, Political Science, and Legal Studies. A second aim is to explore and clarify the advantages and disadvantages of a critical, political-sociological analysis in comparison with existing political science approaches, in particular with regard to the study of European democracy, the democratic deficit, and an emerging European political society. Such an approach is useful in terms of exploring the engagement of ordinary citizens and civil society organizations in European integration as well as in analysing the contours of the emergence of European societal dimensions. A third aim is to exemplify the fruitfulness of a political-sociological approach to European integration by looking at specific cases that regard processes of political interaction and conflict, political claims-making and justification, civic participation and contestation, and social integration and fragmentation in the European Union.

The course is divided in three parts. In the first part, we will discuss different approaches to the analysis of European integration from a sociological point of view. In the second part, we will explore to what extent politics now transcends the contours of Westphalian, national democracies, and to what extent a European political society (including, but not confined to formal EU actors and institutions) can be said to (partially) replace and successfully fulfill some of the democratic, socially integrative, and symbolic functions of national democracies. A strong emphasis will be placed on the role of political conflict, critique, claims-making and justification in different political arenas that affect and shape the EU, ranging from formal institutions, to ‘comitology’, to civil society, to informal practices. In the third part, distinct instances and events of European politics – in particular distinct moments of open political conflict and crisis - will be analysed from a political-sociological point of view, including processes of political elite socialization and decision-making (‘from above’) as well as cross-border mobilization, political action, and cohesion (‘from below’). Distinct events and crisis moments include the European Constitutional project, enduring conflict over agricultural policy, the debate on fundamental rights, and migration policy.

**Objectives of the Course**
- Familiarize students with the emerging and rich sociological interest in and analysis of European integration, and demonstrate the specific sociological dimensions of integration and post-nationalization;
- Explore a distinct set of political-sociological approaches to questions of European integration, democracy deficits, changing discourses and identities, and civil society involvement in politics;
- Explore specific sociological case-studies and acquire sociological skills in studying phenomena of integration, fragmentation, supranationalization, and Europeanization;
- Develop a critical mindset towards the process of European integration and bottom-up, civil society involvement in the process;
- Acquire knowledge of a sociology of democracy, which emphasizes the multiple, processual, and dynamic nature of democracy.

**Teaching methodology**
- Lectures;
- In-class debate;
- News flashes;
- Collaborative projects (in-class).

**Final exam**
- Final essay
Weekly Programme

Part I. Sociology and European integration

1. Introduction: A Sociological Approach to the EU
   Introduction course (agenda, prerequisites, exam, readings, main focal points)
   Why a sociology of the EU?

2. A Sociology of European Integration
   - The EU and European society
   - European identity
   - European demos

   Literature

   MA reading

   Background readings

3. Democratic Deficits: Formal and Informal Aspects
   - Input and output legitimacy
   - Civil society
   - Representative claims

4. The Construction of a European Political Society
   - Technocracy
   - Political Parties
   - Transnational Movements
   - Comitology
   - Civil Society

   Literature
Part II. Political Sociology and Europe

5. Heuristic Devices of a Political-Sociological Approach
   - Actor-based focus
   - Interpretative analysis: cultural repertoires and democratic discourses
   - Class analysis
   - Socialization
   - Networks
   - Conflict, contestation, and critique

6. The European Union and Multiple Democracies
   - Different democratic, institutional models
   - Formal and informal politics
   - Interaction between (European) politics and (European) society

7. Interpretative Approaches to European Integration
   - Role of discourses and meaning-giving
   - Pragmatic sociology

Literature
Georgakakis, Didier and Julien Weisbein (2010), 'From above and from below: A political sociology of European actors', in: Comparative European Politics, 8, pp. 93–109.

Part III. Sociological Case-studies

8. Focus I: Political Elites, Classes, Epistemic Communities
   - Case-study: Charter of Fundamental Rights
   - Case-study: Lawyers and European integration

Literature

Background readings

9. Focus II: Social Movements, Civic Actors, Contentious Politics
   - Case-study: European Social Forum
- Case-study: EU Citizenship

**Literature**

10. Focus III: Perceptions of European Democracy
- Case-study: Convention on the Future of Europe
- Summary and review
- Conclusions: A Political Sociology of European Democracy

**Literature**

**Background readings**

**Syllabus**
Some of the readings might be updated during the course.

**Prerequisites**
Some knowledge of EU institutions, European integration, and theories of politics and democracy is recommendable.

**Further relevant literature**


Liebert, Ulrike, Alexander Gattig, and Tatjana Evas (2013) (eds), *Democratising the EU from below?: citizenship, civil society and the public sphere*, Ashgate.
