

Economic policy of European integration

Prof. Armando Barani

Course aims

➤ Knowledge and understanding skills

The course aims to introduce students to an understanding of the economic, political, and legal aspects of the European integration process.

The study of the role of macroeconomic indicators in national economic policy decisions, also in relation to public budget trends, is accompanied by an examination of the mechanisms underlying the European Central Bank's (ECB) monetary policy choices for the euro area countries.

The stages of the evolutionary process that began with the European Communities and led to the current structure of the European Union, in the transition from a common market to a European internal market, highlight the relationship between Member States and the European Union in the coordination of national economic policy measures and in the definition of Community support policies and initiatives.

Of particular relevance today are the framework of the Next Generation EU package, including the Recovery and Resilience Facility; the role of the European Central Bank in managing inflation; and the examination of the ReArm Europe – Readiness 2030 initiative put forward by the European Commission in 2025 to strengthen the Union's military capabilities.

The course also covers the role of EU institutions and the structure and effectiveness of the EU legal system, both in the founding treaties and in secondary legislation (regulations, directives, and decisions). Finally, it highlights the influence of the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) on the development of European integration, through an analysis of the most relevant cases for the promotion of the internal market and the approximation of national legislation, up to the harmonisation of legislation in certain sectors.

➤ Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

By the end of the course, the student should be able to:

- understand the mechanisms of the European integration process, recognising strengths and weaknesses in relations between Member States and the Union in terms of economic and monetary policy, also with a view to future developments (learning ability);
- approach the discipline with an independent and critical perspective, applying the analytical skills acquired to historical, political, and economic circumstances that may influence the level of European integration (independent judgement);
- express themselves using appropriate terminology, presenting and discussing in a clear and effective manner the knowledge and skills acquired in the field of EU economic policies and the EU legal system (communication skills).

Course contents

- Defining aspects of the discipline
- Economic policy and macroeconomic indicators; taxation and public budget; monetary policy
- The role of the European Union in defining the economic policy of EU Member States
- The succession of treaties underpinning the economic policy of European integration
- The origins of European integration: the three Communities (objectives, structure, and competences)

- The common market: customs union; the four fundamental freedoms (free movement of goods, services, persons, and capital)
- The relationship between the European Community and other forms of trade association in Europe (EFTA) and worldwide (EU–Canada Agreement – CETA)
- From the common market to the internal market (practical examples and analysis of case law)
- From the harmonisation of national production standards to regulatory uniformity and related risks
- The division of powers between the European Union and Member States
- The institutional structure of the European Union (composition and functions)
- The main aspects of the EU legal system, including secondary legislation and its effectiveness
- Instruments for implementing economic policies: the EU budget and the Multiannual Financial Framework
- Economic and social cohesion policy (overview)
- The economic and monetary policy of the Union (EMU):
 - monetary union and the European Central Bank (ECB); inflation control
 - the Stability and Growth Pact
 - implications at national level
- Competition policy: enterprises and state aid (overview)
- European Union financial instruments to combat the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular the Next Generation EU package (Recovery Fund and other instruments; the National Recovery and Resilience Plan – PNRR; measures taken by the ECB)
- The European Commission’s initiative (2025): ReArm Europe – Readiness 2030

Exam

- Oral The structure of the examination and the assessment criteria will be provided during the course.

Bibliography

- Attending students:
Lecture notes; teaching materials – relating to documentary, regulatory and case law sources – made available to students in electronic format (to be studied to the extent that the material has been covered in class).
- Non-attending students:
reference text (only the indicated parts should be studied):

ADAM Roberto, TIZZANO Antonio, *Manuale di diritto dell’Unione europea*, Fourth edition, 2024, Giappichelli Editore

[Introduzione: Capitoli I e II; Parte Prima: Capitoli I, II, III, IV; V; Parte II: Capitoli III e V; Parte III: Capitolo III; Parte Quarta: Capitoli I, II, III e VIII; approximately 415 pages)

Lalir, Latit Mantova 24 ottobre 2025