

Area Study 1: Eastern European Studies

The course is an interdisciplinary field of study that provides comprehensive knowledge of the history, politics, culture, economics, and societies of Eastern Europe, Eurasia, and the Western Balkans. The main analytical approach moves beyond traditional perspectives to explore with different theoretical lenses the post-Cold War political transformations of the region, specifically focusing on post-socialist transition and the interplay between local, regional, and global dynamics in the context of the EU integration process. The overall aim is to challenge students to an inter-disciplinary and multi-perspective approach by questioning the very category of *Eastern Europe*. The general approach will be interactive, and based on most up to date relevant literature in the field, aimed at unpacking and refurbishing the ways in which we study EU integration in this specific region (both at the theoretical and methodological level). In the end the students will be equipped to start challenging many of the initial assumptions that the research agenda on Eastern Europe works with and to use those insights for analyzing current events at EU level and in region. Main skills to be developed during the course and seminar: critical reading of academic articles and policy papers; selection of credible data presented in animated infographics; public presentation skills – presentation of a case study analysis on a country of choice from the region or moderating and coordinating a debate with a foreign expert.