

# UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

**NUMBER:** INTL 4390  
**TITLE:** European Politics

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Cas Mudde (mudde@uga.edu)  
**OFFICE:** IA Building 324  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesdays, 9:00 – 11:00, or by appointment

**TERM:** Fall 2022  
**DATE & TIME:** M-W-F, 11:30-12:20  
**ROOM:** Caldwell Hall 102  
**TWITTER:** #INTL4390 (@CasMudde)

## **Introduction:**

Europe is the continent most similar to the United States in terms of economics and politics. Although the US has a unique political system, it was heavily influenced by experiences and ideas from “the Old Continent,” most notably from France and England. Yet, most Americans know little about European politics.

European politics is undergoing many shocks in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 in the US have been followed by several waves of terrorist attacks in Europe. The Great Recession has divided the continent on a mostly North-West axis, while the so-called refugee crisis has redefined the older East-West axis. And since then we have the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian (re-) invasion of Ukraine, re-introducing inter-state war to the continent. All have affected not just national politics but also regional politics, including the European Union (EU) and the process of European integration. Political parties that have ruled supreme for half a century, if not more, are being challenged and in some cases reduced to political rubble, while new “populist” parties grab the headlines after most European and national elections.

This course aims to introduce you to the fundamentals of European politics by taking a country- and issue-centered approach. We start with a short historical and comparative overview of the key aspects and institutions of European politics. Then we move to a pure country-centered approach. We will discuss each country in three sessions; the first presents the key political aspects and institutions of that country’s political system, the second focusses on the most recent national elections, analyzing the electoral system and the main political parties; and the third addresses a specific political issue in that country, which has broader relevance across the European continent.

## **Readings:**

The class is using several chapters from the following two textbooks; you are advised to purchase Pinder & Usherwood. Don't buy Hay & Menon (all chapters will be on Elc).

**Hay, Colin and Anand Menon, *European Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.**

**Pinder, John and Simon Usherwood. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 4<sup>th</sup> edition.**

In addition to the textbook, various additional reading will be assigned to specific classes. These texts will be made available on ELC, well ahead of the relevant class. Finally, I will also use a few episodes of my podcast [RADIKAL](#), which focuses on the radical aspects of music, politics, and sports, and is available on nearly all podcast platforms for free.

## **Course objectives:**

- ☒ To introduce student to the key features of the political systems of European countries.
- ☒ To provide students with a historical background of European politics and societies.
- ☒ To discover and explain the differences and similarities between the politics and political systems of European countries.
- ☒ To explore the main political issues in contemporary Europe.

## **Teaching Methodology:**

The course is relatively lecture-heavy, given the rather short time available in each class. However, we will have special classes in which we watch and discuss documentaries as well as classes in which we discuss the current news. In those classes, student participation is not just encouraged, it is required!

- ☒ Lectures
- ☒ Class discussions
- ☒ Documentaries

## **Course Evaluation:**

- ☒ Class participation (15%)
- ☒ Midterm Exam (20%)
- ☒ Op-Ed (25%)
- ☒ Research Report (20%)
- ☒ Final exam (20%)

**Class participation (15%):** includes the preparation, i.e. reading and reflecting on the compulsory readings for each class, and participation in discussion in the classroom and/or online on the ELC course page. You are expected to regularly participate in the class discussions in an active, civilized, and well-informed manner.

**Midterm exam (20%):** the in-class midterm exam will test your knowledge of the key concepts, events, institutions, issues, and theories that have been covered in class until the date of the exam (**September, 19**). The midterm exam will include multiple choice, short answer question, and one short essay.

**Op-Ed (25%):** you will write a 900 to 1200-word opinion piece on some issue related to European politics that will be shared on Tremr, an interactive web platform (students may post anonymously). The goal of the assignment is to make an argument regarding European politics using academic research that will be easily accessible to a general audience of college students. You should email me a short outline of your op-Ed by **October 5** at 11:55 PM. The final product should be posted on Tremr by **October 19** at 11:55 PM at the latest. You are expected to write short responses to (at least) two other Tremr posts by **October 29** at 11:55 PM.

**Research Report (20%):** Since Russia invaded Ukraine, for the second time, in February 2022, the war has profoundly impacted politics around the world, but particularly in Europe. You will write a research report on how the war has impacted the politics in one specific European country. During the semester, you will twice meet up with your “research group” to discuss your progress on the report so far (I will assign students to groups in week 3 or 4). The report should be max. 2,000 words, should reference **at least five academic sources** of which **at least two from the course literature**. Deadline: **November 22**, 11:55 PM EST.

**Final Exam (20%):** you have an in-class exam in which you have to answer **one essay** question, which draws upon knowledge of the whole course, in maximum 2.5 pages. The exam is “open book” in the sense that you can use **your own notes** (but not the articles and books). The exam will be on **December 9, 12:00 – 3:00**.

**Grading:**

| Letter Grade | Points          |
|--------------|-----------------|
| A            | 93 – 100 points |
| A-           | 90 – 92 points  |
| B+           | 87 – 89 points  |
| B            | 83 – 86 points  |
| B-           | 80 – 82 points  |
| C+           | 77 – 79 points  |
| C            | 73 – 76 points  |
| C-           | 70 – 72 points  |
| D+           | 67 – 69 points  |
| D            | 63 – 66 points  |
| D-           | 60 – 62 points  |
| F            | 59 and below    |

**Classroom Attendance and Activity**

Students learn so much more when they attend classes and for *some* students mandatory attendance is the only way they will regularly attend, and therefore participate, in most classes. However, as I treat you as an adult, who can make their own decisions, attendance for this course is **voluntary**. I really hope you will attend regularly, but you do not have to.

Irrespective of whether you attend in person or not, you are expected to have **read and reflect upon** the compulsory readings *before* the relevant class, **to follow key events in European politics** in the media, and to **participate actively** in online discussions (on the Elc course page). Participation is **15%** of your final grade!

**Academic Integrity:**

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty”

found at: <http://www.uga.edu/honesty>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

### **Visual or Audio Recording**

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability, students may **not** make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

### **Disability Statement:**

UGA is committed to the success of all learners, and we strive to create an inclusive and accessible online environment. In collaboration with the [Disability Resource Center](#), we work with students who have documented disabilities to access reasonable accommodations and academic supports. For more information or to speak with a Disability coordinator, please call the Disability Resource Center at (706) 542-8719, TTY only phone (706) 542-8778.

### **COVID-19 INFORMATION**

UGA continues to follow Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH) guidance on COVID. Self-isolation is the expectation for faculty, staff, and students who test positive for COVID-19, i.e.,

- Isolate for 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave isolation.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

If you have been in close contact with someone who is COVID-positive, but you are not sick, GDPH and CDC urge you “...to monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19 during the 10 days following the last time you were in close contact with a sick person with COVID-19.”

While the University Health Center continues to stock COVID-19 vaccines, surveillance testing and Dawg Check have been suspended. Mask-wearing is not mandatory on campus (and we cannot require students to wear masks nor ask about vaccination status). We will continue to post signs in our building that read: “You are encouraged to wear a face covering based on your preference and assessment of personal risk.” These signs, authorized by UGA, were first posted in early spring 2022.

At this time, the Dean’s office does not have information about prospects for UHC securing vaccines for Monkeypox.

### **Other Important Resources for Students**

UGA has a vast array of resources to support students facing a variety of challenges. Please don't hesitate to come speak with me or contact these resources directly:

**Office of Student Care & Outreach** (coordinate assistance for students experiencing hardship/unforeseen circumstances) – 706-542-7774 or by email [sco@uga.edu](mailto:sco@uga.edu)

**Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)** - 706-542-2273 (during regular business hours) *After Hour Mental Health Crisis:* 706-542-2200 (UGA Police—ask to speak to the CAPS on-call clinician).

**Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention** – 706-542-SAFE (Please note, faculty and staff are obligated to report any knowledge of sexual assault/relationship violence to UGA’s Equal Opportunity Office. The advocates at RSVP can provide student confidentially).

### **Third-Party Software and FERPA:**

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these are required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identifiable/sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

### **Some Course Ground Rules:**

**1. It is not my practice to give incompletes.** However, if there is suitable reason – subject to my approval and supported by appropriate written documentation – an exception to the “no incompletes” rule may be possible. With respect to these first ground rules, *if you have problems in completing assigned work, please let me know about it.*

**2. Laptops, tablets, phones, etc. are not allowed!** Be ready with pen and paper to make notes during the class. If you use any of these banned devices in class, you will be punished with a deduction of **10 points** of your *final grade!*

3. I do not expect that your views on and perceptions of the often controversial themes discussed in class are identical with those of your classmates or me, either now or at the completion of the course. This course is a place for the free (and perhaps even heated) exchange of ideas. Thus I expect you to **challenge viewpoints** that differ from your own, but I also expect you to **substantiate your arguments** on the basis of the readings, lectures and discussions.

4. If you need to use outside **reference works**, please consult Joel Krieger, et. al., *Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) as a place to start for political terms or concepts – **do not use Webster or other dictionaries for political science definitions.** For outside research sources, please use Galileo. Please do **not** use the notoriously unreliable Wikipedia until or unless this source emphasizes accuracy as much as it does volume and speed.

5. If you believe that you should have received a better grade, please provide **an explanation** to me *in writing* and *within a week* of receiving the grade. I will then grade your *whole* exam/paper again and issue a “new” grade, which will be either the same, a higher, or a lower grade.

6. Please use proper etiquette when emailing me (see ELC course page). **Emails with questions that can be answered by reading the syllabus will not be answered.** Remember, I am a human being, and only work **Monday to**

**Friday, 9-5** (excluding holidays). Hence, I will respond to your emails (only) during this period, irrespective when *you* send your email!

**Important Dates:**

|                 |                                     |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| September, 5    | Labor Day (no class)                |
| September, 21   | No Class                            |
| September, 23   | Midterm Exam (in class)             |
| October, 5      | Deadline Op-Ed Outline              |
| October, 19     | Deadline Op-Ed                      |
| October, 27     | Deadline Op-Ed Responses            |
| October, 28     | Fall Break (no class)               |
| November, 22    | Research Report                     |
| November, 23-25 | Thanksgiving Break (no class)       |
| December, 9     | Final Exam (in class, 12:00 – 3:00) |

**Finally:**

*THE COURSE SYLLABUS IS A GENERAL PLAN FOR THE COURSE; DEVIATIONS ANNOUNCED TO THE CLASS BY THE INSTRUCTOR MAY (AND MOST PROBABLY WILL) BE NECESSARY!*



## THEMATIC OUTLINE

### **08/17 – Introduction**

*We will discuss the intentions and outline of the course as well as our mutual expectations. We will further assess your 'general' background in European politics and identify some of the best sources to follow current European political events.*

### **08/19 – Europe Today: Unity in Diversity**

*Europe is the most politically integrated continent in the world. Most European countries are members of the EU and share a comprehensive legal and political framework. Notwithstanding this political integration, Europe remains a continent with significant cultural, linguistic, religious, and social divisions.*

**Discussion question:** What are the possible political consequences of the key distinctions within Europe?

#### Reading:

Almond, Gabriel A., Russell J. Dalton, G. Bingham Power, Jr. and Kaare Strøm (eds.), *European Politics Today*. New York, etc: Longman, 2010, 4th edition, chapter 1.

### **08/22 – European Integration**

*Although we focus primarily on national political systems in this course, contemporary European politics cannot be understood without the proper international context, most notably that of the European Union. To understand the EU, however, one has to understand the history of European integration.*

**Discussion question:** What are the most important consequences of EU membership for national states?

#### Reading:

Pinder, John and Simon Usherwood. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, chapters 1-2.

### **08/24 – European Union**

*The European Union has gone through various "crises" recently: Brexit, the so-called refugee crisis", and the COVID-19 pandemic, to name just some of them. While often declared (almost) dead, it is still around. But what is its current state and what its most likely future?*

**Discussion question:** How has the EU changed in the 2010s?

Reading:

Pinder, John and Simon Usherwood. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, chapter 3.

**08/26 – The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)**

*For its member states, the European Union constitutes a unique combination of domestic and foreign policy. But under the banner of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and the leadership of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, the EU's "State Secretary," the EU is also an actor in its own right in the world.*

**Discussion question:** How will the Ukraine War change the CFSP?

Reading:

Pinder, John and Simon Usherwood. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, chapters 9-10.

**08/29 – Executives and Courts**

*Politics is essentially about power, and power is most notably exercised through the implementation of policies. However, the power relationships between the various political institutions differ among post-industrial democracies. Here we look in particular at the different systems of executive power and the role of the courts.*

**Discussion Question:** How do the executives and courts in Europe compare to those in the United States?

Readings:

Conant (15) and Peters (14) in *European Politics*.

**08/31 – Parties and Party Systems**

*The famous American political scientist E. E. Schattschneider once said that democracy is impossible without political parties. Indeed, although the character and role of political parties differ between post-industrial democracies, they are always the most important political institution. In this class we look at the various types of parties and party systems within post-industrial democracies.*

**Discussion Question:** How do the political parties in Europe compare to those in the United States?

Reading:

Ladrech (12) in *European Politics*.

### **09/02 – Party Families**

*While almost all political parties are national parties, contesting elections only in one country, and reflecting the particular political context and history of just one country, most parties share fundamental characteristics with those in other countries. Consequently, we speak of “conservative” or “socialist” parties? These are so-called “party families”. But what are they? And what are the key characteristics of the main party families in Europe?*

**Discussion Question:** Does the concept of “party family” still make sense in today’s world? If so, what is the best criterion to define party families?

#### Reading:

Mair, Peter and Cas Mudde. “The Party Family and Its Study”, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1, 1998, pp.211-229.

### **09/05 – NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)**

### **09/07 – Lijphart’s Models**

*The Dutch-American political scientist Arend Lijphart has developed the most influential typology of democratic regimes today. Although his typology has received much criticism over the years, it is still broadly used in studies of European politics and can function as a good comparative tool for this course.*

**Discussion Question:** Are Lijphart’s models still useful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

#### Reading:

Lijphart, Arend. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2012, second edition, chapters 1-3.

**Homework:** Compare two European democracies on the basis of Lijphart’s models.

### **09/09 – The Welfare State (Video)**

*Welfare policies constitute the core of the so-called welfare state, a crucial aspect of European democracies. But while all European countries are welfare states, they differ significantly in how and what they spend. Irrespective of the type of welfare state, however, all European countries are facing pressures to fundamentally reform their welfare state.*

**Discussion Question:** What are the main effects of globalization on Europe’s welfare states?

Reading:

Hantrais in *European Politics*.

**09/12 – Doing Library Research**

You will be visiting Elizabeth White ([elizabethwhite@uga.edu](mailto:elizabethwhite@uga.edu)) in the Main Library, where she will introduce you to the best ways to make optimal use of the excellent library resources that UGA has.

**09/14 – Research Report Discussion**

This week you have to meet up with the other members of your research group and discuss your progress so far on your research project. It does not have to be on the date or time of the class, and you can meet wherever.

**09/16 – The Making and Breaking of Europe II (at home)**

In this class we will discuss the documentary “The Making and Breaking of Europe”, which focuses on the process of European integration and the intersection with mass immigration in postwar Europe.

**Homework:** write a short reflection on how immigration has affected European integration on the Elc Discussion Board.

Viewing:

[The Big Picture: The Making and Breaking of Europe \(Parts 1 + 2\)](#)

**09/19 – The German Political System (Video)**

Still wrestling with the shadows of the past, the Federal Republic of Germany has been a stable democracy despite recent fundamental changes. Germany’s political system is interesting for (at least) two reasons: (1) it was mostly the construction of the Allied Forces, which occupied Germany in the late 1940s; (2) various aspects have proven very popular among new democracies.

**Discussion Question:** In what way is the German political system shaped by Germany’s history?

Reading:

Bendix in *European Politics*.

**09/21 – NO CLASS**

**09/23 – MIDTERM EXAM**

### **09/26 – The 2021 Federal Elections**

*The 2021 German Federal Elections were the first elections in the post-Merkel era. After 16 years in power, the iconic Chancellor retired, leaving her party, German politics, and Europe as a whole in a bit of a political vacuum.*

**Discussion Question:** What Will the Post-Merkel Era Bring?

#### Listening:

RADIKAAL Podcast, episode SES3: [Kai Arzheimer](#) on the 2021 German Election.

### **09/28 – German (Re-)Unification**

*The End of Communism slowly but steadily erased the boundaries between Eastern and Western Europe. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Germany. The Fall of the Berlin Wall was followed by a hastened (re-)unification, which effects can still be felt with both parts of the (re-)unified Federal Republic of Germany.*

**Discussion Question:** Is Germany finally unified?

#### Reading:

Conradt, David P, “The Civic Culture and Unified Germany: An Overview”, *German Politics*, Vol.24, No.3, 2015, pp.249-270.

### **09/30 – Discussing European News**

*We will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!*

#### Readings:

To be determined.

### **10/03 – The British Political System**

*The United Kingdom, often erroneously referred to as England, is the European country most familiar to North Americans. This notwithstanding, its society and political system differ in many important aspects from the US. This class provides an overview of the key elements of the British political system.*

**Discussion Question:** What are the defining features of the British political system?

#### Reading:

Rosamond (4) in *European Politics*.

### **10/05 – The 2019 British Elections**

*British politics has been dominated by just one issue in the last years: EU membership. Reflecting the impression that there was a pre-Brexit and there is a post-Brexit UK, the Brits went to the polls just before the EU Referendum and a good year after. In 2019 they went again: has Brexit transformed British politics for good?*

**Discussion Question:** Has Brexit transformed British (party) politics?

#### Reading:

Cutts, David, Matthew Goodwin, Oliver Heath, Patricia Surridge, “Brexit, the 2019 General Election and the Realignment of British Politics”, *The Political Quarterly*, Vol.91, No.1, 2020, pp.7-23.

### **10/07 – Brexit (at home)**

*The issue of EU membership has always divided the United Kingdom. While Labour was initially opposed to EU membership, increasingly Euroscepticism became a Conservative sentiment. Confronted with an ever more vocal anti-EU wing within his own party, and a resurgent UKIP outside of it, British PM David Cameron called for a referendum on EU membership. But against his, and most other people’s, expectations, Brits did not vote to remain but rather to leave the EU.*

**Movie:** [How Did Brexit Happen?](#) (NL, 2020, 41:22 min)

#### Reading:

Hobolt, Sara B., “The Brexit Vote: A Divided Nation, A Divided Continent”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.23, No.9, 2016, pp.1259-1277.

### **10/10 – Research Report Discussion**

This week you have to meet up with the other members of your research group and discuss your progress so far on your research project. It does not have to be on the date or time of the class, and you can meet wherever.

### **10/12 – The French Political System**

*One of the two powerhouses of continental European politics is France. Contemporary France, also known as the Fifth Republic, has a peculiar political system, known as a semi-presidential system, which has been adopted by various new democracies around the globe (though often significantly amended shortly after).*

**Discussion Question:** Is the semi-presidential system (still) the best political system for France?

Reading:

Elgie (2) in *European Politics*.

### **10/14 – The 2022 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections**

*In the past decade, few national elections have been followed with such anticipation and anxiety as the French presidential elections. After a shocking run-off between newcomer Emmanuel Macron and outsider Marine Le Pen in 2017, which Macron won convincingly, the two again faced off in 2022. This time, the gap was much less impressive.*

**Discussion Question:** What explains the success of Macron and what are the consequences of his victories?

Reading:

Evans, Jocelyn and Gilles Ivaldi. “An Atypical Honeymoon Election? Contextual and Strategic Opportunities in the 2017 French Legislative Elections”, *French Politics*, Vol.15, No.3, 2017, pp.322-339.

RADIKAAL Podcast, episode SES6: [Rainbow Murray](#) on the 2022 French Presidential Elections.

### **10/17 – The Rise (and Transformation?) of the Radical Right**

*France’s Rassemblement National (National Rally, previously National Front) has been the prototype of the contemporary ‘third wave’ of radical right parties in Europe. It has been linked to the issue of multiculturalism, another relatively recent and broader European phenomenon, and has had a profound effect on politics in France. As a more than fifty year old party, the FN/RN has changed leaders and “rebranded”, but has it really transformed?*

**Discussion Question:** What characterizes the radical right in France/Europe and how has it changed in recent decades?

Reading:

Scrinzi, Francesca, “A ‘New’ National Front? Gender, Religion, Secularism and the French Populist Radical Right”, in Michaela Köttig, Renate Bizan and Andrea Petö (eds.), *Gender and Far Right Politics in Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2017, pp.127-140. \*

### **10/19 – The Italian Political System**

*Italy became a democracy after the defeat of Fascism in the Second World War. A relatively recent state, at least in a West European context, Italy has a tumultuous history, including a long record of regional strife. Just over two*

*decades ago the Italian political system exploded again, after years of corruption, and from the rumbles an alleged new 'Second Republic' was built.*

**Discussion Question:** What are the key characteristics of the Italian political system?

Reading:

Hine in Hay & Menon

### **10/21 – The 2022 Parliamentary Elections**

*The 2018 parliamentary elections led to three different, consecutive governments. All ended up in chaos and so, very reluctantly, the parties decided to call for elections. The outcome of these elections are anticipated with much anxiety as the (fragmented) radical right is set to win. Did the results confirm a fundamental change of the political system?*

**Discussion Question:** Has the Second Republic come to an end?

Reading:

TBD

Optional Reading and Viewing:

Chiaromonte, Alessandro, Vincenzo Emanuele, Nicola Maggini and Aldo Paparo, "Populist Success in a Hung Parliament: The 2018 General Election in Italy", *South European Society and Politics*, Vol.23, No.4, 2018, pp.479-501.

[Disrupting Democracy: Italy's 2018 Election](#) (D, 2018, 37:34 min)

### **10/24 – Corruption**

*Few European countries have been tainted with the practice and stigma of corruption as Italy. In fact, Italians have a host of terms specifically describing practices of anti-corruption and corruption, such as mani pulite (clean hands) and Tangentopoli (bribesville). At the beginning of the 1990s hundreds of local and national politicians were investigated for their involvement in political corruption. But is the so-called Second Republic free of corruption?*

**Discussion Question:** Is corruption still politically relevant in Italy today?

Reading:

Della Porta, Donatella and Alberto Vannuci, "Corruption and Anti-Corruption: The Political Defeat of 'Clean Hands' in Italy", *West European Politics*, Vol.30, No.4, 2007, pp.830-853.

### **10/26 – Discussing European News**



*We will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!*

Readings:

To be determined.

**10/28 – NO CLASS (FALL BREAK)**

**10/31 – The Greek Political System**

*Greece is the birthplace of democracy, but modern Greece is a relatively new democracy. The country shed its military junta only in 1974. Greek politics has always been different from that of other West European democracies, reflecting in part cultural and economic differences.*

**Discussion Question:** What are the key characteristics of the Greek political system?

Readings:

Tocci (8) in *European Politics*.

Pappas, Takis, “Why Greece Failed”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.24, No.2, 2014, pp.31-45.

**11/02 – The 2019 Greek Election**

*At the height of the economic crisis, the Greeks went to the polls twice in both 2012 and 2015 (as well as for a referendum). The elections created new parties and destroyed or marginalized old ones. In 2019, the center-right regained power, but have things returned to normal?*

**Discussion Question:** Has Greece returned to pre-crisis “normal”?

Reading:

Rori, Lamprini, “The 2019 Greek Parliamentary Elections: *Retour à la normal*”, *West European Politics*, Vol.43, No.4, 2020, pp.1023-1037.

**11/04 – The Economic Crisis**

*European countries have been hard-hit by the Grand Recession, the economic crisis that started in 2008. While (initially) mostly South European countries were affected – the so-called PIGS (Portugal, Italy, Greece, and Spain), the crisis soon spread through the whole Union, not in the least the Eurozone.*

**Video:** [This World: Michael Portillo's Great Euro Crisis](#)

**Discussion Question:** Why did the economic crisis hit Southern Europe so hard?

Readings:

Featherstone, Kevin, "The Greek Sovereign Debt Crisis and EMU: A Failing State in a Skewed Regime", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.49, No.2, 2011, pp.193-217.

Pinder, John and Simon Usherwood. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, chapter 4.

Recommended reading:

Matthijs, Mattias, "Mediterranean Blues: The Crisis in Southern Europe", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.25, No.1, 2014, pp.101-115.

### **11/07 – The Polish Political System**

*Poland is the largest and most well-known country in Eastern Europe – excluding the post-Soviet space. For a long time, it was considered as the prime model for post-communist success, providing hope for others in the region.*

**Discussion Question:** What are the key characteristics of the Polish political system?

Readings:

Zubek, Radoslaw, "A Core in Check: The Transformation of the Polish Core Executive", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.8, No.6, 2001, pp.911-932.

### **11/09 – The 2019 Polish Parliamentary Elections**

*Over the past decades Polish elections and politics have often been covered as a story of the "Two Polands," geographically, ideologically, and politically divided. In 2015 the "conservative" Law and Justice (PiS) party came back to power, ousting the "liberal" Civic Platform (PO). Contrary to its moderate campaign, the party governed radically and divisively... and was rewarded in the 2019 elections.*

**Discussion Question:** Has Poland moved beyond the "Two Polands"?

Compulsory Readings:

Markowski, Radoslaw, "Plurality Support for Democratic Decay: The 2019 Polish Parliamentary Election", *West European Politics*, Vol.43, No., 2020, pp.1513-1525.

### **11/11 – Discussing European News**

*We will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!*

Readings:

To be determined.

**11/14 – The Role of the Church/Religion**

*Europe is a highly secularized continent where religion plays little role in day-to-day politics. While secularization in Western Europe was mostly gradual and spontaneous, in Eastern Europe it was a consequence of the anti-religious nature of the communist regimes. Still, religion did survive under communism and nowhere more so than in Poland, which remains a heavily Catholic country, where religion is often evoked in political struggles.*

**Discussion Question:** Are religion and the (Catholic) Church still major factors in Polish politics?

Reading:

Szelewa, Dorota, “Killing ‘Unborn Children’? The Catholic Church and Abortion Law in Poland Since 1989”, *Social & Legal Studies*, Vol.25, No.6, 2016, pp.741-764.

**11/16 – The Hungarian Political System**

*Hungary entered the post-communist period as a frontrunner, based on its history of so-called ‘Gulash communism’, which allowed for some economic and political freedoms. Unlike its neighbors, Hungary went through the 1990s without much political unrest, developing a relatively stable political system.*

**Discussion Question:** What are the key characteristics of the Hungarian political system?

Readings:

Ilonszki, Gabriella and Zsófia Papp, “The Paradoxes of Parliament–Citizen Connections in Hungary: A Window on the Political System”, *Journal of Legislative Studies*, Vol.18, No.3-4, 2012, pp.334-350.

**11/18 – The 2022 Parliamentary Elections**

*On 3 April 2022 Hungarians elected the 199 members of the Országgyűlés, the National Assembly. The elections were held after twelve years of uninterrupted Fidesz-rule, which had led to domestic and foreign accusations of illiberal policies, including government control of the media and manipulation of the election rules. Moreover, the elections were held just weeks after the Russian re-invasion of Ukraine, which again pitted Hungary against the EU.*

**Discussion Question:** Were the 2022 elections “free and fair”?

Compulsory Listening:

Scheppele, Kim Lane, “How Viktor Orbán Wins”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.33, No.3, 2022, pp. 45-61.

RADIKAAL Podcast, episode SES5: [Zsolt Enyedi](#) on the 2022 Hungarian Election.

**11/21 – Discussing European News**

*We will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!*

Readings:

To be determined.

**11/23 & 25 – NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)**

**11/28 – The Illiberal Backlash**

*In 2018 Premier Viktor Orbán and his Fidesz-KDNP coalition were convincingly re-re-elected to power in Hungary. They were even able to keep their constitutional majority in parliament. Despite mounting critique from within Hungary and abroad, Orbán continues his ambition to transform the country into an ‘illiberal state.’*

**Discussion Question:** Is Hungary still a democracy?

Readings:

Krekó, Péter and Zsolt Enyedi, “Orbán’s Laboratory of Illiberalism”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.29, No.3, 2018, pp.39-51.

Orbán, Viktor, [Speech at the 31st Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp](#), Balványos, Romania, 23 July 2022.

**11/30 – The EU’s “Authoritarian Equilibrium”**

*The EU has long been seen, and still bills itself, as the most successful project of transnational liberal democratic cooperation in history. And while there is much to be said for that claim, the existence of an openly ‘illiberal state’ within the EU – not to speak to wannabe-Orbáns in Slovenia and Poland, to name but a few – has created a new challenge to the institution.*

**Discussion Question:** How can the EU break its “authoritarian equilibrium”?

Reading:

Kelemen, R. Daniel, “The European Union’s Authoritarian Equilibrium”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.27, No.3, 2020, pp.481-499.

**12/02 – Discussing European News**

*We will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!*

Readings:

To be determined.

**12/05 – What Have We Learned?**

*In this final class we will discuss what you have learned. Each student should email (at least) one point to me by Friday December 2, midnight.*