

80127 - Doing Business in Europe

TEACHING PLAN

1. Basic description

Name of the course: Doing Business in Europe

Academic year: 2022–2023

Term: 1st

Degree / Course: International Business Programme

Code: 80127

Number of ECTS credits: 6

Total number of hours committed: 45 contact hours + 105 hours of additional autonomous work

Teaching language: English

Lecturer: Eva Toth Szalvai, PhD (eva.szalvai@prof.esci.upf.edu)

Timetable: [SIGMA Schedule](#)

Office hours: Wednesday, 4.45 - 5.30 pm

2. Presentation of the course

Our increasingly globalised world is becoming more and more integrated and interdependent. As production and markets go global, businesses cannot escape from the challenges of international business practices. Governments and businesses must keep up with global trends if they wish to retain their strategic and structural competitive edge. Moreover, political, economic and social dimensions are challenged by technological advances, and businesses are tied to multiple dimensions of cultural and ethical standards. These factors increase uncertainty and drive rapid and unexpected changes in business practices. In order to accommodate these changes in the global environment and ensure their place within the constantly reorganising international context, countries tend to form different levels of economic integration. One of the most advanced examples of economic integration is the European Union.

This course aims to provide comprehensive and integrated coverage of the European Union (EU) and the Pan-European market, starting from a macro view down to companies' operations (particularly merchandising and marketing). In order to better understand how to conduct business in Europe (buying, selling or investing), the course will start by offering a global view of Europe: its historical background, differences in culture dimensions between European countries, and the evolution towards European integration. It also focuses on the expansion of the EU (history and controversial issues in joining and/or remaining in the EU), its institutions, monetary systems, legislations and requirements that regulate European businesses activities. After analysing the economic, sociocultural, technological and legal environment in the European Union, in the second part of the course you will become familiar with the national differences between European countries and companies, which will help you assess how to do business in Europe.

3. Competences to be worked in the course

General competences	Specific competences
Instrumental competences	Disciplinary competences
<p>G.I.1. Ability to search, analyse, assess and summarise information.</p> <p>G.I.2. Ability to relate concepts and knowledge from different areas.</p>	<p>E.D.2. Recognise and assess the duties of international economic institutions and their impact on business activity.</p> <p>E.D.3. Understand and recognise the geopolitical, social and cultural dimension of a wide range of economic activities.</p>
General personal competences	E.D.4. Provide an economic and political perspective of different areas in the world and facilitate critical comprehension of their current processes.
<p>G.P.1. Ability to adapt, lead and work in a group that is multicultural, interdisciplinary, competitive, changing and complex in nature.</p>	<p>E.D.5. Identify the economic, cultural, political, legal, democratic and technological environments that may represent opportunities and threats for the development of business at a worldwide level.</p>
Generic systemic competences	Professional competences
<p>G.S.2. Ability to observe.</p> <p>G.S.7. Promotion of and respect for multicultural values: respect, equality, solidarity, commitment.</p>	<p>E.P.13. Improvement of communication and negotiation skills, both oral and written.</p> <p>E.P.16. Adapt the communication style to different audiences, understand cultural differences in communication and convey multicultural abilities.</p> <p>E.P.20. Ability to confront and understand the business culture and environment and devise real solutions to specific problems in the organisation.</p>

The above competences reflect the basic competences set out in Royal Decree 1393/2007, namely:

- a. Competence to **comprehend knowledge, on the basis of general secondary education.**
- b. Competence to **apply knowledge** to day-to-day work in international management or marketing, in particular the ability to develop and defend arguments and to solve problems.
- c. Competence to **gather and interpret relevant data**, enabling the development of critical judgements on the economic and social reality.
- d. Competence to **communicate and transmit information** (ideas, problems, solutions) to a specialist and non-specialist audience.
- e. Competence to **develop learning activities** in a relatively autonomous manner.

The competences worked on in the course are divided into two groups: those seen as a development or specification of a basic competence; and those that hone graduates' professional profile with respect to general and specific competences.

Basic competence: **understanding of knowledge**

I. General competences G.S.2

II. Specific competences E.D.3, E.P.16

Basic competence: **application of knowledge**

I. General competences G.I.2

II. Specific competences E.D.5

Basic competence: **gather and interpret data**

I. General competences G.I.1

Basic competence: **communicate and transmit information**

II. Specific competences E.P.13, E.P.16

Competences that hone graduates' professional profile which are not included under basic competences

In general, these competences combine the following key elements for honing students' professional profile in the area of international business and marketing:

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- Provide students with the capacity to adapt to dynamic teams and environments.
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- Provide students with the capacity to create their own integral vision of the operation of a business or international marketing project.
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- Provide students with the capacity to take complex decisions and carry out negotiation processes.
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I. General competences G.P.1, G.S.7

II. Specific competences E.D.2, E.D.4, E.P.20

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to adapt to and empathise with a business environment operating in Europe.

4. Contents

Understanding of Europe and the European Union: geopolitics, markets and business; specific elements of economic and business organisations in the EU.

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- Macro-analysis:
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- Historical Roots of Europe: From Feudalism to Modern Europe
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- Evolution of the European Union: Expansions, Institutions and Legal Background
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- Short Overview of Economic Integrations
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- Doing Business with the European Union
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- Being European – Managerial and Consumer Behaviour Differences through Understanding the Dimensions of Culture: Hofstede (PD, I/C, M/F, UA, LTO) and Hall (4 dimensions)
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- Evolution of the European Union: Expansions, Institutions and Legal Background
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- Standardisation vs. Adaptation: Segmenting the Single Market (Cultural, Social, Personal and Psychological Factors; Cultural and Language Barriers to Standardisation)
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- The Challenges of the Enlarged EU:
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- Central Bank of Europe and the Eurozone; the “others” (non-Euro countries)
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- North–South Differences, including East European specifics
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- EU and Brexit
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- The Future of Europe and the EU from the Standpoint of Companies
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- Who Are You Dealing With: Further Expansion (Pros and Cons) – Should the EU Split in Two?
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- Foreign Exchange Risk: The Viability of the Euro
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- What is Your Market: Nations of Regions?
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- What Regulates Your Markets: Is It possible to Form a Political Union?
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Note: The course is interdisciplinary by nature: it concentrates on theoretical and practical knowledge from different social science disciplines such as economics, management, political sciences, international business, cultural anthropology and intercultural communications.

5. Assessment

The lecturer will use different learning styles in classes. There will be several forms of assessment during this course, including continuous evaluation and synthesis: you will have quizzes, comprehensive exams, group assignment essays and presentations that you will present to the class.

Your final grade will be computed from the following elements:

Continuous evaluation: (assignments)	News presentation	5%
	3 tests (3 × 5%)	15%
	Country/sector analysis	20%
	Participation	10%

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50%

Synthesis:

Final exam

50%

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100%

Individual evaluation during the course

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- **Tests** (ongoing, 5% each). You will have 3 tests (dates will be announced) during the course to measure your progress in the various topics. The format of the test may be multiple-choice quizzes and/or short-answer questions on previously visited topics. These tests will give you a chance to evaluate your theoretical grasp of the material.
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- **Participation** (ongoing, 10%). You should attend all your classes (both lectures and seminars) and play an active role in class discussions. Your participation grade will be affected if you miss more than 3 classes.
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Group assignments

- o **News presentation** (ongoing, every class, 5%)
In groups of 3 students you will present *current - not older than 10 days to the date of presentation - business news* (related to economics, management or marketing of European businesses) relevant to the weekly topic. You should apply *theoretical terms and concepts* learnt or reviewed during the classes before your presentation. During the presentation, you will use *PPP and conduct a class discussion* based on two questions prepared on the presented subject (at the end of your presentation). You should provide proper citation for the news (source of the news, title, time and place of publication, etc.) in your PPP.
- o **Country/sector analysis.** *Analysis of a chosen sector in a European country.* Presentation and Group Paper (20%)
Preferably, 3-4 students will work together to prepare a country and sector analysis for a chosen industry in Europe. Your country analysis (ongoing) will give you an opportunity to obtain knowledge on a country (see the list below) and its relationship to the EU with regard to a particular industry chosen by your group. You will therefore prepare *two different parts of your paper*:
 - Your general country analysis part is ongoing
 - Your full paper (including both your country and sector analysis) will be due by the *last week* of the course.You may choose from the following countries:
 - Norway
 - Lithuania

UK
Germany
The Netherlands
France
Italy
Greece
Slovenia
Czech Republic

In your paper, you need to concentrate on the practical use of theoretical terms and concepts previously visited in classes:

- a. Country presentation: ongoing (*40% of your assignment grade with essay or 30% of your assignment grade if only presentation*)
- Macro-analysis of your chosen country: short historical background; political and economic system and data (GDP, unemployment, inflation, financial rating), including PESTEL analysis
 - Sociocultural specifics (demography, language, dominant religion, culture diversity, majority/minority)
 - Reason for joining the EU and its role within the EU

You will have 10–15 minutes to talk about your chosen country.

- b. Sector analysis essay and its presentation: final week of your classes (*60–70% of your grade for this assignment*)
- Short presentation of your chosen industry and its current economic challenges within the EU and globally
 - Relation to EU institutions and regulatory systems
 - Possible business challenges and opportunities when engaging in an international business activity within the industry (market structure included)
 - Suggestion for business negotiations (considering business norms, practices and protocol influenced by cultural differences)

Your group will present your findings during the final week of classes (approximately 15-min presentation). This final presentation can improve or diminish your essay grade by one grade point.

For the final week of classes, your group should prepare a **full essay** (about 13–15 pages) that **includes your improved country analysis and your industry/case study**. All final essays will be due by the last week of classes.

In your presentations, the lecturer will look for verbal and nonverbal clues, public speaking skills, content, format, length and time management. Your group should use your time as efficiently as possible. For further information, please check the presentation grid and guidelines posted on Moodle.

Note: In order to avoid plagiarism, all papers should use a proper form of resource citations (Harvard, Chicago, APA, etc.) for both end references and in-text citations. You are NOT permitted to cite any Wiki-sites!

General regulations during class sessions

Respect for others. Respect and tolerance for other people's points of views is required in our classes. We know that disagreements over different points of view might arise, but it is very important that you handle such disagreements with discretion.

Remember: We should embrace diversity of opinions rather than condemn them. The lecturer will not tolerate any form of disrespect to anybody in the class.

Mobile phones. Unless asked to use your phones, please turn them OFF for the duration of the class.

Plagiarism. Presenting the work of another as your own—whether through direct copying, un-cited paraphrasing or inadequate citation practices—constitutes plagiarism. *You must always cite your sources* (e.g. when defining terms you should indicate the page number of the book with full citation of your source). If you do not know how to give credit where it is due, you should check library resources.

Any paper that is *plagiarised in whole or in part will receive a zero grade*, and the paper will be turned over to the course coordinator to determine further action. Remember: plagiarism is grounds for dismissal from the university.

Final exam

In order to be admitted for final examination, you need to obtain an average grade of at least 4.0 on your continuous assessment (news presentation, three surprise tests, country analysis and participation). If you do not score at least 4.0 on these works, your final grade will be the continuous assessment average grade, which is a "Fail".

In order to pass the course, you must turn in your final exam. If you are unable to sit the final exam, your final exam grade will be noted as "No Show". In order to pass the course successfully, the **minimum grade of your final exam must be 5.0**. If you fail your final exam (i.e. do not achieve the minimum grade), your final course grade will be the grade of your final exam.

Final Exam Retake

Only students who failed their final exam (grade of under 5.0) may retake the exam.

In order to **retake your final exam**, you must have achieved at least *4.0 as the weighted grade of your continuous assessment* (news presentation, three surprise tests, country analysis, case study and class participation) and **at least a 4.0 grade on your first final exam**.

You may only retake your final exam. You cannot redo any course assignments (continuous assessment) or change their weight or grade portion. Your final grade will consist of:

Assignments (works of continuous assessment): 50 %

Final exam retake: 50 %

The time and date of your final exam retake will be determined by ESCI-UPF and will be communicated to all students in good time.

Assessment elements	Time period	Type of assessment		Assessment agent			Type of activity	Assessment		Grouping		Weight (%)
		Mandatory	Optional	Lecturer	Self-assess	Co-assess		Continuous	Synthesis	Individual	Group (#)	
News presentations	Starting Week 3, in every class	x		x			Cont. assess.	x		x		5
3 tests	Regularly	x		x			Conceptual & cont. assess.	x		x		15
Country / sector analysis and group presentation	Ongoing and end of term	x		x			Application and cont. assess.	x			x	20
Participation	Ongoing	x		x			Application & cont. assess.	x		x		10
Final exam	During exam week	x		x			Synthesis		x	x		50

Working competences and assessment of learning outcomes

	GI 1	GI 2	GP 1	GS 2	GS 7	ED 2	ED 3	ED 4	ED 5	EP 13	EP 16	EP 20	Learning outcomes
Tests		x					x		x				x
News presentation	x	x		x			x		x	x	x		x
Country analysis/case study	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Participation		x							x	x		x	
Final exam	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X

Any students found copying and/or plagiarising work, in whole or in part, will fail the subject. They will receive a final grade of zero and will not be allowed to take the make-up exam. In accordance with the UPF Disciplinary Rules and Regulations for Students, other additional sanctions may apply depending on the seriousness of the offence.

6. Bibliography and teaching resources

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 - Basic bibliography
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 - Academic papers and articles posted on Moodle
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 - Web resources on the EU and its institutions
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- Supplementary bibliography & teaching resources
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 - You should rely on academic and newspaper articles in your research.
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 - The lecturer will post additional articles & YouTube segments on Moodle and will also use movies to aid students' progress.
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 - Suggested book for culture dimensions: Hofstede, G., and G.J. Hofstede. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. (ISBN 0-07-143959-5)
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 - We might also invite guest speakers to share their personal experiences with companies from Europe. You will have a chance to ask questions and talk to them.
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7. Methodology

You are expected to actively engage with your lectures and seminars. We will have student presentations in class.

Lectures combined with seminars

You should play an active role in lectures by engaging with your lecturer and peers. The form of the classes will vary between PPP, YouTube segments, discourses etc. We will also have guest speakers, so you are expected to ask questions and comment on the presented topic. You are expected to be active during our classes as we will use a range of different activities, such as discussions, Q&A, roleplaying etc.

8. Scheduled activities

Allocation of hours between theory and practical lessons (based on the number of credits in the curriculum):

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- In 4 ECTS subjects, 2 hour 10 min of lectures combined with seminars
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Scheduling activities under the curriculum, from:

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- In the classroom: lecture classes, seminars, face-to-face tutorials, regulated practical classes (lab)
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- Outside the classroom: group work, individual work (reports, exercises), independent study
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Week	Activity in the classroom Grouping/type of activity	Activity outside the classroom Grouping/type of activity
Week 1	Course introduction. Discussion of the relevance and differences of socioeconomic data in Europe	Read Moodle material and study the map of Europe
Week 2	Historical background: creation of nations in Europe Free trade and protectionism; the history of economic development in Europe (from Smith and Ricardo through to Elizabeth I and List) including economic advantages (absolute, comparative and competitive) <i>Choose your country</i>	Read Moodle material and browse suggested websites, including YouTube videos Start group work on country analysis
Week 3	the concept of culture (cultural relativism, tradition and change in cultures). The relevance of cultural dimensions in business. Intro to Hofstede; <i>News; Country analysis</i>	Hofstede & Hofstede, Chapters 1 and 2.3 Practices on culture
Week 4	Hall's concept of culture dimensions .Exercises on cultural dimensions and their effect on business <i>News; Country analysis</i>	Moodle material; Hofstede & Hofstede, Chapters 4 and 5
Week 5	Forms of economic integration (from custom duty agreements to political unions) The aftermath of WWII: the first European agreements and cooperation <i>News; Country analysis</i>	Read Moodle material Practising material on Moodle
Week 6	Development and stages of the European Union; issues of integration based on national economic differences and managerial practices <i>News; Country analysis</i>	Individual research on the roots of the EU

Week 7	European business environment: the EU and its institutions (including the increasing role of the European Parliament); Debate on a chosen topic <i>News; Country analysis</i>	Moodle material; prepare for a debate
Week 8	The Euro and the European Central Bank; foreign exchange risk and the future of the Euro <i>News; Country analysis</i>	YouTube and other material on the ECB
Week 9	The Pan-European market: differences in consumer expectations Managerial differences in the leadership of European MNCs; <i>News;</i>	Provided material and research on the role of culture in consumer expectations and sales / promotion approach
Week 10	Can we expand the EU? Pros and cons for a political union <i>Country analysis</i> <i>Industry/case presentations</i>	Research on the future of the EU Prepare for industry/case study presentations
Week 11	<i>Country analysis</i> <i>Industry/case presentations and papers due</i>	Prepare for presentations and paper

About the Lecturer

Dr Szalvai is a Hungarian-born Spanish citizen. She earned a PhD in International Communication from Bowling Green State University, OH (2008). She also holds an MSc degree in Economics from Corvinus University of Economic Sciences, Budapest (1981), and an MA degree in Arts Administration from the University of Akron, OH (2001).

Professional experience: Before engaging with academia, she had over 20 years of international professional experience under her belt. She has worked and lived in several countries (United States, Korea, Spain and Hungary) and dealt with businesses from different nations from around the world. As an entrepreneur (an independent international business consultant), she initiated and managed foreign trade projects in industry and information technology involving Hungary, Italy, France, the United States, Korea and China. She also worked in multinational enterprises: as marketing and sales director for an American–Hungarian joint venture in Florida; and as an HRM consultant at a multinational Swedish consultancy (recruitment, selection, assessment of top executives in Spain, Hungary, Turkey and Germany). She is fluent in several languages (English, Spanish, Italian, Catalan and Hungarian) and is familiar with others (French, Russian, Hindi, Korean and Chinese).

In academia: Dr Szalvai has taught several courses in the United States: as Assistant Professor at Colby-Sawyer College, NH (2008–2012), as adjunct Professor at Stetson University, FL, and at Bowling Green State University, OH (2005–2008). She currently teaches BBA and MBA courses at a number of business schools and universities in Barcelona. Her research interest focuses on the effect of globalisation and includes a multidisciplinary approach to international business, development economics and cross-cultural management. She regularly attends international academic conferences, and her research papers have been published internationally.