



In the framework of the *Professional Training on EU Affairs – PONT* project, co-funded by the ERASMUS+/Jean Monnet Programme, TEPSA is organising a 5-day intensive training at the heart of EU politics, in Brussels. The aim of the training is to guide recent graduates (Master's), PhD students and young researchers into the practicalities of working life and to introduce them to the Brussels arena.

Professional skills such as communication, networking and policy advice are not part of most academic curricula, yet are vital for the employability of young professionals. This course aims at helping the participants to identify these skills, raise awareness of their importance, acquire a basic practical toolkit and establish useful contacts to policy-makers. The seminar will offer several interactive sessions with professionals from different fields, invited to share their knowledge and experience with the participants and to take part in the training in different ways. As a result, participants will enjoy first-hand insights into different professional fields, including work for the European institutions and think-tanks.

The general theme of this course is the **interface between research and policy-making**. We will explore the differences and similarities in the skills needed for these two types of work, and conduct training on successful interaction and communication between researchers and policy-makers.

The course maximizes personal feedback to participants and hands-on activities that facilitate deep learning.

Objective and impact of the seminar

The career skills training will enable young professionals to identify, acquire and improve their professional skills. The trainings offer a valuable complement to the education offered in universities by focussing on skills required in a professional EU environment and thereby increasing participants' employability. In particular, the seminar's participants will:

- Practice the essential drafting, communication and presentation skills that prepare them to work in a professional environment outside academia;
- Further develop capacities for analysing, assessing and advice, with a special focus on writing policy briefs and press releases and formulating policy recommendations;
- Improve communication skills (including oral presentations and preparation of press releases) especially aiming at communicating effectively one's research findings to policy-makers and taking part in debates on EU affairs;
- Meet high-level professionals from different fields, including think tanks, EU civil servants, policy advisers and politicians and learn from their experiences in their professional lives and career paths;
- Gain increased awareness of career development opportunities and personal strengths;
- Be better prepared for their job exams and interviews.



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Dates, location and format of the seminar

The career skills training is a 5-day event, organised by TEPSA and led and coordinated by Prof. Hanna Ojanen, Jean Monnet Professor at the University of Tampere, who has ample experience in conducting professional skills trainings. The training will be held in Brussels from Monday 17 October pm to Friday 21 October pm.

Participants will be asked to prepare a 2-page policy brief on a topical issue of their research domain ahead of the training.

All career skills training participants will be offered the opportunity to take part in the TEPSA Pre-Presidency Conference, a biannual flagship event promoting expert discussion on the main issues of the current EU agenda, bringing together policy-makers, academics, civil society and citizens, to discuss the agenda and challenges of the upcoming EU Council Presidency. Some participants, based on their performance in the training, will be offered the possibility to be actively involved in the conference with special tasks. Participants will have the choice to take part in the Pre-Presidency conference in Valletta on 10-11 November 2016 or in Tallinn in June 2017 (date to be determined).

Full participation to all elements of the five-day programme is compulsory. Participants in the Career Skills Training will receive a certificate of attendance after the successful completion of the training. The certificate will summarise the programme of the training as well as the skills acquired by the participant.

Target group and application procedure

The course is designed as an interdisciplinary seminar for recent graduates (Master's level), PhD students and young researchers from a broad range of disciplines with an interest in the EU political sphere and in interaction between research and policy-making or envisioning a policy-maker career.

Participants will be selected by the PONT selection committee. To apply please send 1) your CV; 2) a motivation letter explaining your research focus and interest in the seminar; 3) university transcripts (official record of applicants' performance in their graduate studies); and if possible one letter of reference to mariam.khotenashvili@tepsa.eu. Non-EU citizens are also encouraged to apply. The deadline for applications is **21 September 2016**. Applicants will be informed about the decision of the review committee on **23 September 2016**.

The participation fee for the total 5-day trainings amounts to €200 for applicants coming from or having graduated from TEPSA member institutes (list of TEPSA member institutes can be found at <http://www.tepsa.eu/category/tepsa-members/>) and €400 for applicants coming from non-TEPSA member institutes. This fee includes all training materials, access to all programme components as well as lunch during the courses.

Participants can receive a reimbursement for their travel costs up to €250. All other expenses, like accommodation, are to be covered by other sources or by the participants themselves.

After the selection decision has been communicated, participants will have five days to transfer the participation fee. Failure to do so in time will result in exclusion from the training.



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About the PONT project

PONT (Professional Training on EU Affairs) is a project that aims to provide a bridge connecting young academics and EU practitioners, in order to improve the employability of young researchers. The project is planned to take place within three years, starting with two trainings in 2016.

PONT enhances teaching and training activities in selected policy fields, with the common objective to give young academics the opportunity to develop their professional skills and prepare themselves for taking up a job in political administration, the EU institutions, NGOs, academic institutions or think tanks across Europe. Two main branches of the project are the Working Europe seminars for students and the Three Career Skills Trainings for young professionals.

More information can be found at <http://www.tepsa.eu/new-tepsa-project-professional-training-on-eu-affairs-pont>

About TEPSA

The Trans European Policy Studies Association, TEPSA was established in 1974 as the first trans-European research network. It comprises leading research institutes in the field of European affairs throughout Europe, with an office in Brussels. Its aim is to provide high quality research on European integration in order to stimulate discussion on policies and political options for Europe. This is achieved by interaction between the European and national institutions as well as the academic and research community. TEPSA is active on a wide range of research topics. Its main focus is on the issues of 'deepening', with a special emphasis on the institutional architecture, and the 'widening' of the EU, particularly the past and future enlargement rounds and the European Neighbourhood Policy.

More information on our activities can be found at <http://www.tepsa.eu/>



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