



TEPSA _____
Trans European Policy Studies Association



Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union



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EU @ WORK SEMINAR ON AFFAIRS



REPORT

Online

29 September - 2 October 2020





Introduction

Funded by the **Europe for Citizens Programme** of the **European Commission**, the 4-day **EU@Work Seminar on EU Affairs** offered 12 Bachelor students the opportunity to gain first-hand insights from researchers, EU practitioners, and academics on the functioning of EU institutions and the most pressing issues in the European sphere.

The Seminar took place **online** due to COVID-19 restrictions, from the **29th of September until the 2nd of October 2020** and was organised under the academic lead of **Prof. Michael Kaeding** (University of Duisburg-Essen).

The EU@Work Seminar on EU Affairs combined **lectures, internal meetings and networking sessions** with representatives of key EU institutions and agencies, and researchers and practitioners. Namely:

The **European Commission**,
European Parliamentary Assistants,
The **Council of the European Union**,
The **European Union Safety Aviation Agency (EASA)**,
The **Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA)**,
The **European Defence Agency (EDA)**

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Day 1

- 1 Opening session
- 2 Introductory lecture with Prof. Michael Kaeding
- 3 Info session with European Solidarity Corps

The first day of the seminar kicked off with a general presentation of TEPSA and an overview of the four-day programme. The TEPSA team welcomed the 12 participants and introduced Prof. Michael Kaeding, the Academic Coordinator of the Seminar, Jean Monnet Professor *ad personam*, and Professor of European Integration and European Union Politics at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Students introduced themselves and explained their motivation in joining the Seminar and their expectations as well as their interests in EU Institutions. Overall, the 12 participants represented six EU Member States

The opening session was followed by the introductory lecture where the Academic Coordinator provided a general overview of the European Institutions. Prof. Kaeding engaged with the students into a presentation on the role of the main institutions of the EU, their roles and relationships, and the importance of the EU in the current situation.



The day concluded with an informal online get-together with representatives of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC). Violeta Birzniece, Programme Officer in Directorate General for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport in the European Commission, presented the ESC, the different programmes, and explained the application procedure to the selected. A former volunteer of the ESC programme, Giulia Bordin, presented her experience with the ESC and encouraged the participants to take part in ESC programs in the future.



Day 2

- 1 Lecture by Prof Kaeding on the EC
- 2 Discussion with Guest Speaker from the European Commission's Secretary General
- 3 Discussion with Guest Speaker from the European Union Safety Aviation Agency (EASA)
- 4 Lecture by Prof Kaeding on the EP
- 5 Discussion with Gest Parliamentary Assistants

The second day of the seminar was opened with a lecture from Prof Kaeding on the European Commission. Prof Kaeding introduced to the students the role of Commissioners and its functions and explained the influence of European politics in the composition of the College of Commissioners. Students also debated on the priorities of the Von der Leyen Commission.

This first lecture was followed by two discussions with guest speakers. First, Laia Pinos Mataró, Project officer from the European Commission's Secretary General, in charge of the European Green Deal, presented the work of the EC Secretary General in supporting Commissioners on their policy areas and the EU's efforts and challenges in implementing the SDGs, in particular in relation to the European Green Deal. Following such discussions, Frank Manuhutu, former EASA representative in Singapore described the role of the EASA, and its representations around the world, as well as the typology of different EU agencies.

The afternoon session of the second day of the Seminar was opened by Prof Kaeding's lecture



on the EP. During such lecture, participants were briefed on the political composition of the EP and the historical evolution of its political landscape. In addition to this the many organs of the Parliament, their function and the different actors participating in the EP's work were presented.

In order to gain a practical overview of the work from MEPs, students discussed with Enric Lopez Jurado, Accredited Parliamentary Assistant and Advisor to Javi López, Member of the European Parliament, and Edwin O'Connell, Accredited Parliamentary Assistant to Giuliano Pisapia, Member of the European Parliament. During such discussion guest speakers addressed the composition of the MEPs teams, their regular work and activities, and the career perspectives of MEP assistants.



Day 3

- 1 Lecture on the European Council and the Council of the EU by Prof Kaeding
- 2 Discussion with Guest from the Council of the EU
- 3 Informal Discussion on Euroscepticism / Get Together with TEPSA representatives
- 4 Discussion on career possibilities

On the third day of Seminar, students attended Prof Kaeding's lecture on the European Council and the Council of the EU. In such lecture the differences between both institutions was explained as well as the relevance and relations with other EU institutions and the political debates taking place within the European Council and the Council of the EU. Students also debated on the priorities of the European Council's 2019-2024 Strategic Agenda.



This lecture was followed by a discussion with Jim Cloos, Deputy Director General for General and Institutional Policy at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union. Students debated during such session on the role of the different organs of the European Council and the Council of the EU, and on the role of the Council of the EU in setting the guidelines and orientation of the EU, and as crisis manager focusing on specific crisis such as the migration crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The afternoon of the third day of the seminar opened with an informal discussion on Euroscepticism between the students, Professor Kaeding and Dr. Juha Jokela, Director of the European Union Research Programme at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. The discussion addressed different national perspectives on Euroscepticism, taking as basis several views contained in TEPSA's book "Euroscepticism and the Future of Europe: Views from the Capitals".

The third day of the seminar concluded with a discussion on career opportunities within EU institutions held between students and Rafael Alamar Oliver (TEPSA Project Officer and former Schuman Trainee for the EP) and Margaux Hurtel (TEPSA Project Assistant and former Bluebook Trainee for the EACEA).



Day 4

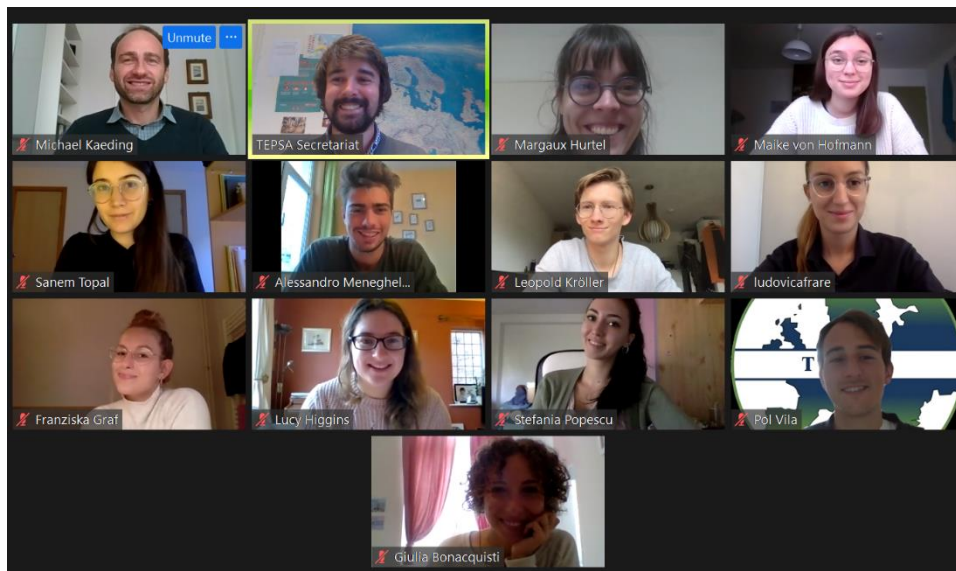
- 1 Discussion with an official from the European Defence Agency (EDA)
- 2 Closing Session and Final Remarks

During the last day of the EU@Work Seminar, students had the opportunity to take part in a final discussion with Helmut Brüls from the European Defence Agency, Media & Communications Unit. Brüls presented the role of the EU in defence matters and explained the role of the EDA as a crucial actor in the implementation on EU Defence policies.

In the closing session, Prof. Kaeding and the students made the point on the relevance and role of EU Institutions in the current context and highlighted the most relevant points that were retained by the students after all the sessions of the seminar.

During the Closing Remarks session, participants also had the chance to give their feedback on the seminar to TEPSA Staff and were invited to complete an online survey.

TEPSA would like to thank the participants for their contribution to the success of the seminar and for bringing their knowledge, ideas and enthusiasm. We are particularly grateful to all the practitioners for the time devoted to our group and for sharing with us insights from their daily work. Finally, TEPSA would like to thank the Academic Coordinator, Michael Kaeding, for enriching the seminar with his expertise.





AGENDA

TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

12:00 – 13:00

OPENING & INTRODUCTION TO THE SEMINAR by Michael Kaeding (Academic Coordinator of the Seminar) and TEPSA secretariat

13:30 – 15:00

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE by Michael Kaeding: "How the EU Institutions work and how to work with the EU institutions"

15:30 – 16:30

INFO SESSION ON THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS / INFORMAL DISCUSSION AND GET TOGETHER with:

- Violeta Birzniece, Programme Officer in charge of the EU Solidarity Corps, Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission
- Giulia Bordin (former European Solidarity Corps participant)

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WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER

09:00 – 10:30	LECTURE by Michael Kaeding “The European Commission, the largest EU institution in terms of human resources”
11:00 – 11:30	DISCUSSION with policy officers from the Unit E2 of the European Commission’s Secretary General, in charge of the European Green Deal <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Laia Pinos Mataró, Project officer
11:30 – 12:00	DISCUSSION with Frank Manuhutu, former EASA representative in Singapore
14:00 – 15:30	LECTURE by Michael Kaeding: “The European Parliament - the only directly elected institution in the EU”
16:00 – 17:00	DISCUSSION with officials from the European Parliament <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Enric Lopez Jurado, Accredited Parliamentary Assistant and Advisor to Javi López, Member of the European Parliament▪ Edwin O’Connell, Accredited Parliamentary Assistant to Giuliano Pisapia, Member of the European Parliament

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THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER

09:00 – 10:30	LECTURE by Michael Kaeding: “The European Council and the Council, at the heart of EU decision-making”
11:00 – 12:00	DISCUSSION with an official from the Council of the European Union <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jim Cloos, Deputy Director General for General and Institutional Policy at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union
14:00 – 15:00	INFORMAL DISCUSSION on Euroscepticism / GET TOGETHER with TEPSA Representatives <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dr. Juha Jokela, Director of the European Union Research Programme at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs
15:30 – 16:30	DISCUSSION “Opportunities for traineeships at EU institutions” with Rafael Alamar and Margaux Hurtel (TEPSA)

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FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER

9:00 – 10:00

DISCUSSION with an official from the European Defence Agency (EDA): “EU agencies – one of the most important groups of actors in the EU policy cycle”

- Helmut Bröls, European Defence Agency's Media & Communications Unit

10:30 – 11:30

LECTURE & DISCUSSION with Michael Kaeding: “Wrap-up and conclusion – related to thematic thread”

12:00–13:00

CLOSING REMARKS AND FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS with Michael Kaeding (Academic Coordinator of the Seminar) and TEPSA secretariat