



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



Europe Faculty



EIPA

European
Institute of
Public
Administration

PROGRAMME

Working with Europe and the EU – A New Context

**Practitioner course organised by the
European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA),
Maastricht,
on behalf of the
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)**

**London,
22-24 September 2025**

Introduction

Description

This three-day course is designed for UK civil servants who are taking up roles working in or on Europe, or who aspire to do so. It assumes a basic knowledge of the EU and international diplomacy but no substantial prior experience.

The objective is:

- to explain the range of different competences and policy processes in the EU;
- to identify the main actors and procedures in EU policy making, both for the adoption of EU internal rules that may affect UK interests, and in the EU's external action;
- to outline how non-EU countries can shape EU policy outcomes, including through non-state and informal channels;
- to summarise the legal and institutional framework for UK-EU relations, and how they operate in practice
- to consider how the UK may interact and work together with the EU on global issues, in line with the government's Global Britain ambitions.

This training is conducted using the Chatham House Rule. Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed. Therefore, any potentially sensitive topic discussed during the training will not be discussed further.

Trainers

Sabina Lange is Senior Lecturer at EIPA and Associate Professor of International Relations at the University of Ljubljana, where she received a doctorate for a thesis on strategy in EU foreign policy, case of Western Balkans. At EIPA she specialises in decision-making in the EU and in interinstitutional relations. Between 2015 and 2017 she was Senior Associate Analyst at the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), where she dealt with institutional issues in EU external action and with security and foreign policy issues related to Western Balkans.

Simon Usherwood is a Professor of Politics & International Studies at The Open University. He is also Visiting Research Fellow at the Centre for Britain and Europe, University of Surrey. Between 2022 and 2025 he is a Senior Fellow of the [UK in a changing Europe](#) initiative (of which he was previously Deputy Director), working on UK-EU relations. With qualifications from UCL, the College of Europe and LSE, he has worked on various aspects of European Union politics for many years, most recently focusing on UK-EU relations and the Brexit process.



Wolfgang Koeth is Senior Lecturer at EIPA. He has 25 years of experience working in and for the EU institutions, and brings insights into practical interaction between the EU and other actors in international settings. He was an assistant to an MEP and worked for the Commission in preparing Lithuanian accession. He was deputy head of the EC office in Pristina, in charge of liaison with stakeholders (UN, OSCE, EU Member States). He joined EIPA in 2009, where he trains EU and national officials on different aspects of EU external action, in particular trade, CFSP and enlargement.



Programme

MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

HOW DOES THE EU WORK, AND HOW CAN THE UK TRY TO SHAPE ITS POLICIES?

Sabina Lange, EIPA

- 09:30 **Opening words – Nick Pickard, Director Europe Bilateral, FCDO**
- 09.35 **Welcome, explanation of the objectives, and self-presentation of the participants**
- 09.45 **Introduction**
The day begins with an interactive session covering key points from the preliminary materials. This highlights the different kinds of powers given to the EU and how these may be of relevance for the UK; identifies the main EU actors involved; and introduces the main topics that will be addressed in the course.
- 11.00 **Break**
- 11.15 **Who does what in the EU institutional system?**
The session starts with a summary of EU legislative programming, law-making procedures and legal acts. To deepen the understanding and raise further issues of your interest, we proceed with a group exercise.

Group exercise
We present a simple model of the EU policy cycle, indicating the main roles and functions that are involved. You divide into groups and match schematic outlines with sets of institutional actors and instruments.
- 13.00 **Lunch**
- 14.00 **How can non-EU countries try to influence EU policy?**
Group exercise
Working in groups and on a basis of a scenario, we will invite you to assess the different options for following and shaping policy in the EU, and consider examples of how a non-EU country may follow and try to influence EU policies, covering both direct contacts and indirect channels.

14.45 **How can non-EU countries try to influence EU policy? (cont.)**

We continue our exploration into ways of influencing EU policy with Canadian and Norwegian experiences and perspectives which will be presented (recorded) by:

Jarrett Reckseidler, Senior Political Affairs Officer, Mission of Canada to the EU

Carsten Horn-Hanssen, Counsellor for Transport and Communications, Mission of Norway to the EU

15.15 Break

15.30 **Workshop: How to work with the EU and Europe in practice**

You now discuss how the UK coordinates its policy regarding the EU and Europe, and how you can prepare most effectively for dealing with EU counterparts and other relevant actors. An introductory presentation will be given by: *Jane Sidebottom, Deputy Director, Gibraltar Negotiations Taskforce; John O'Regan, Political Counsellor, UK Mission to the EU, Brussels*

16.45 Recap of the day

17.00 **End of Day One**

TUESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2025

HOW DOES THE FRAMEWORK OF UK-EU RELATIONS WORK?

Simon Usherwood, The Open University

09.30 **Overview of arrangements**

We will start the second day by providing an overview of the arrangements that govern the bilateral relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union. This will include the EU Withdrawal Act and concept of 'retained EU law', the Withdrawal Agreement as amended by the Windsor Framework, and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

The session will include comments by *Edmund Ramsden, Head of Governance, Windsor Framework Strategy, Governance & Internal Market, Cabinet Office; and Ben Newsham, Windsor Framework Taskforce (SPS), Cabinet Office*

10.45 Break



11.00 **Current Cooperation**

In this part, we will discuss in greater detail the current areas of cooperation under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. We will look at trade in goods and services, as well as security & defence, police and judicial cooperation and participation in EU programmes. We will also consider the special arrangements for Northern Ireland.

12.00 *Group exercise*

You will now work on a group exercise to explore the challenges surrounding a new area of cooperation, to help illustrate the interaction of technical and political dimensions.

12.30 *Presentation and Debriefing*

The exercise is followed by the sharing of groups' work and a debriefing which explains how the various provisions operate in practice.

13.00 Lunch

14.00 **The Strategic Partnership**

In this part we will look at the agenda launched in May 2025 for future UK-EU cooperation. This package of work will be the focus of political attention for the foreseeable future, so it is useful to have an understanding of the underlying mechanisms.

15.10 Break

15.25 **Trade and Cooperation Agreement – Governance**

In this part we will examine the governance structures of the Withdrawal Agreement and of the TCA. The session starts with a presentation given by: *Stefan Solanki, Regulation and Level Playing Field, European and Global Issues Secretariat, Cabinet Office.*

We will also explain the various, and complex, provisions that provide for dispute settlement, the level playing field rules and termination clauses. We will exemplify the application of those provisions in a case study.

16.45 Recap of the day

17.00 **End of Day Two**



WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2025

THE EU IN THE WORLD: HOW CAN THE UK AND THE EU WORK TOGETHER ON GLOBAL ISSUES?

Wolfgang Koeth, EIPA

09.30 **Introductory overview**

09.40 **From peace project to geo-political player**

During the last decade, the EU has reviewed its position on the global stage. Is the EU still the successful peace project for which it received the Nobel prize in 2012? We address the changing self-perception of the EU as a global actor in this session, along with the consequences for the UK.

10.45 Break

11.00 **Beyond trade**

Being the biggest trading bloc in the world allows the EU to export its norms and standards beyond its borders – de jure et de facto. Foreign regulators and businesses frequently sign up voluntarily to EU regulatory ‘gold standards’, as this decreases their transaction costs. However, the EU’s position as a regulatory hegemon is increasingly challenged by China. Will the ‘Brussels effect’ give way to a ‘Beijing effect’? What will be the possible impact for the UK?

12.00 **EU relations with its partners (and their impacts on the UK)**

This session focuses on the relations that the EU has with other countries and international actors, as well as how this affects the UK. First, we look at the EU’s relations with global and regional powers (China, US, Russia, and Turkey). Second, we examine the regional dimension, discussing the EEA, EFTA, and the EU’s enlargement and neighbourhood policies. Lastly, we cover the EU’s role within multilateral organisations (UN, WTO, WHO, WB, IMF, etc.).

13.00 Lunch

14.00 **Interactive exercise: Identifying your interlocutors - who is in charge of what in the EU’s system of external action?**

This session consists of an interactive exercise in small groups. You will be invited to match schematic outlines with the main actors with which the UK may interact on external affairs, including their roles and powers. This will be followed by a debriefing.

15.15 Break



15.25 **Towards (open) strategic autonomy?**

We look at the notion of strategic autonomy in the context of security and defence (including the post-2016 drive towards a defence Union and its potential impact on NATO and transatlantic relations), before considering how the notion of strategic autonomy has spilled over to other sectors (like industrial policy), and how this might impact the EU's partners

CONCLUDING SESSION

16.10 **Thematic review of the three days and general discussion**

Wolfgang Koeth

16.30 Feedback opportunity

16.40 **Closing words – Europe Faculty Team**

16.45 **End of the course**