FOUNDATIONS OF DIPLOMACY

The Challenges of European Politics in the 21st Century

Course Content

This course aims to explain recent developments across a range of issues which affect European countries.

It deals with the rise and fall of ‘New Left’ governments and then the return to power of parties of the right, examining the extent of consensus politics in the ‘post-ideological’ era.

Particular attention is paid to the role and economic power of Germany, the UK’s political divergence from the European mainstream, the challenge facing the Hollande presidency in France, and political change in Scandinavia, Italy, Greece and Iberia.

As well as country-specific studies, the course also evaluates common themes in European politics such as secularisation, post-Christianity, the domestic challenge of Islam, and the impact of Russia and Eastern Europe on West European policy.

Weekly Outline

Week 1  European politics and the revival of regional identity
Week 2  European politics, the sociology of secularisation and rise of the Left
Week 3  Electoral trends in Europe: the Left
Week 4  Electoral trends in Europe: the Right
Week 5  European politics and domestic terrorism: combining security with liberty?
Week 6  The French political system and the rise of Macron
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Week 7  The breakup of Britain halted? Scotland’s referendum vote in political context
Week 8  Ireland: beyond the politics of nationalism.
Week 9  Theresa May’s election gamble 2017
Week 10 From Berlusconi to Five Star: Italian politics in flux

Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you should have:

▪ an appreciation of European politics in late 20th century and early 21st century Europe
▪ identified the principal governmental and political features in modern European nations and appreciate both similarities and differences
▪ a growing ability to critically interpret and analyse issues in contemporary European politics