

EXECUTIVE TRAINING SEMINAR

UNBOXING THE COMMISSION: HOW TO UNDERSTAND AND ENGAGE WITH THE EU EXECUTIVE

28th – 30th (Thursday – Saturday) September 2023

Training venue: Palazzo Buontalenti, Via Cavour 65, Florence

TEACHING AND LEARNING TEAM

Programme Coordinator

Michael BAUER | Professor, EUI School of Transnational Governance

Speakers and Trainers

José Manuel Durão BARROSO | Former President of the European Commission

Gaia TAFFONI | Teaching Associate, EUI School of Transnational Governance

Claus HAUGAARD SORENSEN | Former Head of Cabinet and Director-General, European Commission

Hussein KASSIM | Professor, ESRC Centre for Competition Policy at the University of East Anglia

Aaron MCLOUGHLIN | Partner, FleishmanHillard

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The European Commission occupies a central role in EU policymaking as an engine of EU integration. Still, its own structure and decision-making procedures are difficult to understand and follow. Moreover, a recent article in Politico called the way the Commission communicates incomprehensible to those who do not know the EU jargon. The Commission cannot operate in a vacuum – it needs policy stakeholders to be well informed and to communicate their views on its proposals. The stakeholders themselves are highly impacted by EU decisions and want to have their voices heard. The need to bridge this divide is apparent.

To this end, this practice-oriented executive training sheds light on the black box of policymaking within the European Commission. In a unique environment, we bring together three important vantage points: the academic analysis of Commission governance and operations; the "insiders' view"; and that of an outsider whose job is to have an impact on the Commission. Former members of the Commission services, including former President José Manuel Barroso, leading academics, and campaigners who have engaged with it across a host of areas will share their in-depth knowledge and experience with the participants in an interactive way.

In addition to the latest data, case studies, and policy developments, participants also have a chance to learn and practice skills for impact. From audience mapping and policy monitoring to effective communication with EU officials, the participants gain all the tools and skills they need to develop an effective strategy for engagement with the European Commission.

Learning Outcomes

This executive training will provide the participants with the state-of-the-art knowledge about the Commission and equip them with skills needed to engage with it. In the training, the participants can expect to:

- Obtain a full understanding of how the European Commission works in practice.
- Comprehend the latest academic "broad picture" views of the European Commission and data from recent studies.
- Learn how to design a campaign strategy that builds alliances inside and outside the European Commission.
- Learn how to effectively contribute to the European Commission's public consultations, write position papers, and memos aimed at the Commission officials.
- Learn how to follow the European Commission's internal policy development cycle and do proper audience mapping of its officials.
- Discuss the latest trends with high-level policymakers and campaigners who have a proven track-record of impact.

Learning Methods

- Interactive lectures from policymakers, campaigners, and academics;
- Case studies that will provide an in-depth understanding of the European Commission's internal processes and ways in which advocates can have an impact on it;
- Structured discussions around key questions regarding the European Commission's role in EU policymaking;
- Mini in-class assignments that will encourage group work and networking among the participants.

Who Should Attend

- Public affairs specialists who seek to understand the way the European Commission works in order to better argue their policy positions at the EU level;

- Policy advocates who seek to build their skills and networks;
- Government representatives that interact with the European Commission;
- Analysts and researchers who wish to update their knowledge on theories and test them against the latest policy developments;
- Employees of EU institutions who work with or in the European Commission who wish to challenge their assumptions and discuss how the institutions could work better to respond to the demands of the public and the key stakeholders.

Information for Applicants

- The training will take place in Florence at the EUI School of Transnational Governance (Via Cavour, 65a) on 28, 29 & 30 September 2023.
- The training starts in the afternoon on September 28 (2 PM) and finishes in the early afternoon on September 30 (12:30 PM).
- A general understanding of EU institutions is needed for this training that will take it to a more advanced level.
- Course instructors will share a set of pre-readings with the participants a few weeks before the start of the training.
- Participants are expected to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements for the duration of the residential part of the course.
- All participants will receive a Certificate of Attendance from the EUI School of Transnational Governance.

CONTACTS

Jakov BOJOVIC | Research Fellow, School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute, jakov.bojovic@eui.eu

Executive Education Team, School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute, STG.ExecEd@eui.eu

PROGRAMME

DAY 1

Thursday, 28 September 2023

- 14:00 – 15:15 CET** **Introduction to the executive training**
- The latest research and data on the European Commission (Part 1)**
- Michael BAUER** | Professor, EUI School of Transnational Governance
- Hussein KASSIM** | Professor, ESRC Centre for Competition Policy at the University of East Anglia
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- 15.15 – 15.45 CET** **Coffee break (30 minutes)**
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- 15:45 – 17:00 CET** **The latest research and data on the European Commission (Part 2)**
- Michael BAUER** | Professor, EUI School of Transnational Governance
- Hussein KASSIM** | Professor, ESRC Centre for Competition Policy at the University of East Anglia
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- 17:00 – 17:15 CET** **Short coffee break (15 minutes)**
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- 17:15 – 18:30 CET** **Keynote talk and discussion**
- José Manuel Durão BARROSO** | Former President of the European Commission
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- 19:30 CET** **Social dinner**

DAY 2

Friday, 29 September 2023

- 9.30 – 10.45 CET** **An insider's view into the Commission's services and processes (Part 1)**
- Claus HAUGAARD SORENSEN** | Former Head of Cabinet and Director-General, European Commission
- 10.45 – 11.15 CET** **Coffee break (30 minutes)**
- 11.15 – 12.30 CET** **An insider's view into the Commission's services and processes (Part 2)**
- Claus HAUGAARD SORENSEN** | Former Head of Cabinet and Director-General, European Commission
- 12.30 – 13.30 CET** **Lunch break (1 hour)**
- 13.30 – 14.45 CET** **Case study and discussion**
- José Manuel Durão BARROSO** | Former President of the European Commission
- 14.45 – 15.15 CET** **Coffee break (30 minutes)**
- 15.15 – 16.30 CET** **Engaging with the Commission (Part 1)**
- Aaron MCLOUGHLIN** | Partner, FleishmanHillard
- 16.30 – 16:45 CET** **Short break (15 minutes)**
- 16:45 – 18:00 CET** **Engaging with the Commission (Part 2)**
- Aaron MCLOUGHLIN** | Partner, FleishmanHillard

DAY 3

Saturday, 30 September 2023

9.30 – 10.45 CET	Case Study and Simulation Exercise (Part 1) Gaia TAFFONI Teaching Associate, EUI School of Transnational Governance
10.45 – 11.15 CET	Coffee break (30 minutes)
11.15 – 12.30 CET	Case Study and Simulation Exercise (Part 2) Gaia TAFFONI Teaching Associate, EUI School of Transnational Governance
12.30	Awarding of Executive Training Certificates