



# Study Tour: To Discover the European Union From Inside

Dr. Maya Sion-Tzidkiyahu

[Mayasion@mail.tau.ac.il](mailto:Mayasion@mail.tau.ac.il) +972-52-4705548

Course no. 1031.4017, 2 credit points



## Aims of the study tour

The focus of the study tour is the main **European Union** (EU) institutions in Brussels. A study tour to these institutions offers invaluable practical insights that go beyond classroom learning. It aims at:

1. **Firsthand Engagement with Policymakers and Experts:** Students can directly interact with EU officials, advisors, lobbyists, members of parliament and diplomats, allowing them to ask questions, observe diplomatic discourse, and gain real-time insights into decision-making processes. This experience helps bridge the gap between theory and practice, giving students a nuanced understanding of institutional functions and current issues.
2. **Enhanced Understanding of Institutional Dynamics (light-bulb moments/ the penny drops):** Seeing the EU in action provides a comprehensive view of their organizational structures and daily operations. This allows students to grasp complex topics, like policy formation, negotiation, and consensus-building, more effectively than theoretical lectures alone can convey.

3. **Contextual Learning of Policy Impacts:** A study tour allows participants to connect classroom knowledge with tangible outcomes and current geopolitical issues. For example, learning about EU policies and the role it plays in different local, national and international processes onsite gives a clearer picture of how these institutions influence member states and respond to international challenges, such as migration, security threats, and economic stability.
  
4. **Networking Opportunities and Professional Inspiration:** Engaging with diplomats, analysts, and EU employees can inspire students and provide networking opportunities. Exposure to career pathways within these institutions can – and did - motivate students to pursue careers related to the EU international relations, public policy, or diplomacy.

The study tour creates a well-rounded learning experience, enriching students' theoretical knowledge with practical understanding and career-oriented insights.

#### General Outline of the study tour\*

As part of the study tour, we're planning to visit the European Commission and some of its DGs, the Council of the EU, the European Parliament (EP) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). We'll meet Israeli diplomats at the Israeli Delegation to the EU and with a research institute focusing on the EU and a lobby group. In one of the evenings, we'll meet a graduate of EU studies who is working in Brussels on these issues.

*\*Please take in account that this is the general outlay of the study tour. The coordination of all the above meetings may be revised due to the availability of speakers and other constraints.*

Preliminary condition for joining the study tour: taking the course "Introduction to the European Union" (no. 1099700001).

One meeting will be held before we go on the study tour. The aim of the meeting is to hand you the study tour schedule, to give you initial instructions and coordinate expectations, answer your questions, and get to know one another.

If you have any questions in advance, please email me (see e-mail above). Administrative questions (registration, flights, hotels, etc.) should be addressed to the secretariate of the program ([polieuro@tauex.tau.ac.il](mailto:polieuro@tauex.tau.ac.il)).

### Example of a study tour schedule

The exact study tour schedule will be handed a couple of weeks before the tour and is influenced according to speakers and institutions availability.

*In purple –extra curriculum options*

Date TBA	Preliminary & preparatory meeting
Sunday	Flight Tel Aviv - Brussels  <b>Tour at the European quarter and the city center (Grand Place and surroundings)</b> <i>Shall we start our tasting tour with a Belgian Waffle? Belgian chocolate? French (most Belgian!) Fries with mayonnaise? Or go straight to sip some Belgian beer?</i>
Monday	Morning: <b>EU Commission</b> <i>Lunch break - are you coming to try 20 kinds of sauce with best "French fries" at Maison Antoine?</i> Afternoon: <b>Council of EU</b>
Tuesday	Morning: <b>European Parliament</b> Lunch break Afternoon: <b>European External Action Service</b> <i>Evening: 250 kinds of Belgian beer? Meeting with alumni EF HUJI students working in Brussels</i>
Wednesday	Morning: <b>Israeli Delegation to the EU</b> Lunch break Afternoon: <b>Research Institute/ Think-tank</b> <i>You've just got to try the best chocolatier in town</i>
Thursday	<b>Permanent Representation of EU Member State/ Interest Organisation</b>  <b>Reflection of the learning and concluding discussion – what have we experienced and learned during our time in Brussels?</b> <i>How shall we end our tasting tour? Belgian what?</i>
Friday	(depending on the flight, some activity can also take place here) Flight Brussels – Tel Aviv

## Course assignments:

There are two academic tasks. One before the study tour and another after our return. In addition, active participation during the study tour meetings is invited, welcomed and rewarded.

Assignment	Part of final grade	Submission date, comments
<p><i>Recommendation: read news from the “Brussels bubble” (EU) and NATO on</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Politico.eu</a> , Also, recommended to listen to Politico.eu confidential <a href="#">podcast</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">EU Observer</a> (some articles may be free of charge),</li> <li>• <a href="#">EURACTIVE</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Open Europe</a></li> </ul>		
<p><b>Active participation</b> during the tour: addressing questions or comments to the speakers. The emphasis here is on the quality of your engagement (see elaboration below).</p>	Up to 5 extra (bonus) points	(100% presence during all the study tour meetings is obligatory)
<p><b>1. Explain about contemporary challenge of the EU</b> – see in <a href="#">booklet here</a> item no. 3. <b>Submission in booklet.</b></p>	30%	9 February 2025, through the booklet
<p><b>2. Final paper</b> (literature review) on topic according to the instructions in the <a href="#">booklet here</a> item no 4-6. Submission in Moodle as word document.</p>	70%	8 April 2025, through moodle

## Active participation during the study tour

Active participation goes beyond just listening to what is said during the meetings. It involves thinking about what is said, being engaged by asking follow-up questions and sometimes commenting on what is said.

Please be attentive to the speaker if s/he prefers the questions to be asked only at the end of the talk. Also, remember we're in West Europe cultural surroundings. This also applies to codes of behavior and talk: politeness is the key word. You can be very assertive, but keep your politeness nevertheless. Adjust to the local discussion norms. If you have strong messages to express, do so politely.

If you have any sensitivity about speaking in public, let me know. You can hand your questions and comments in writing to during the meeting.

**\*Bring a notebook** (paper, not digital) so you can **write yourself a short summary** or write the question you'd like to refer to the speaker. Sitting with a laptop or your phone during a meeting prevents eye-contact with the speaker and is considered impolite.

## הנחיות האוניברסיטה ליציאה לקורסי סיורי לימוד בחו"ל:

1. **נהלים אקדמיים** - הקורס הסיור הלימודי בחו"ל הוא קורס אקדמי לכל דבר וענין, ונהלי האוניברסיטה חלים עליו בהתאם. בנוסף לכך, יש להישמע גם לנהלי הקורס הספציפיים ולהנחיות המרצה במשך כל הקורס. תלמידי ותלמידות הקורס נדרשים להשתתף בכל הפעילויות ולעמוד בלוחות הזמנים כפי שיפורסמו. כל חריגה מלוח הזמנים מחייבת עדכון ואישור של המרצה מראש. החמצת מפגשים בסיור עלולה לפסול קבלת ציון בקורס.
2. **קוד התנהגות** - במהלך הנסיעה נתארח במוסדות שונים. יש לנהוג בהתאם לחוקים ולכללים של המדינה ושל המוסד המארח, וכן לנהוג בנימוס וברגישות התרבותית המתבקשת בהתאם לנהגי התרבות המארחת.
3. **ויזה** – מי שנדרש לכך, באחריותכם לדאוג לויזה מתאימה לצורך הנסיעה.
4. **ביטוח רפואי** – כל סטודנט. ית חייבת לעשות ביטוח רפואי למשך כל ימי השהייה בחו"ל. סוג הביטוח הרפואי חייב להיות מותאם לסטנדרט הביטוחי של האוניברסיטה.
5. **חיסונים / תרופות** – במידה והנך לוקח תרופות מסוימות באופן קבוע, עליך להצטייד בכמות מספקת למשך השהייה בחו"ל.