

SUBJECT DETAILS

Data on the subject

Full Name	Procedures before the European Commission and the European Court of Justice (ECJ)
Code	E000001233
Degree	Postgraduate in Master in International and European Business Law
Year	2025-26
Nature	Spring
ECTS Credits	2
Department	Law
Area	Law
Teaching staff	Juan Ignacio Signes de Mesa

Data on the teaching staff

Teacher

Name	Juan Ignacio Signes de Mesa
Departament / Area	
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Tutoring Schedule	Upon request from students

SPECIFIC DATA ON THE SUBJECT

Framework of the subject

Pre-requisites

None

Contribution of the degree to the professional profile

This course aims to provide an overview of the EU legal order and, particularly, a complete understanding of the procedures before the EU courts. Special emphasis is given to the procedures concerning competition law, state aids, antidumping and other fields relating to business law. Case law of the European Court of Justice and the General Court is analyzed in deep detail. The subject is also meant to provide the student

with a thorough knowledge of private application of EU law and its interaction with national law and legal procedures.

Competences - Goals

Competences to be developed

Generic Competences

- GC 2: Ability to communicate orally and in writing
- GC 4: Problem-solving skills
- GC 5: Decision-making skills
- GC 6: Team work skills
- GC 7: Ability to work in an international context
- GC 12: Ability to apply theoretical knowledge into practice

Specific Competences

- SC 4 Mastering the main rules of EU law and international law that are relevant to international business development
- SC 9 Being able to design pre-contentious (or preventive) strategies that are appropriate for the protection of proper international business development at EU level.

COURSE SYLLABUS AND CONTENT

Content

Area 1. Overview of the EU system of judicial protection

Theme 1. Introduction to the European legal order

- 1.1 Sources of EU Law.
 - Primary sources (founding treaties, agreements with third States, agreements between member States, general principles of law).
 - Secondary sources (regulations, directives and others)
- 1.2 Direct effect and Primacy.
- 1.3 Judicial review vs. Full jurisdiction
- 1.4 Union courts and the Treaty of Lisbon (Treaty of Functioning of the European Union)

Theme 2. EU Courts - structure and operation

- 2.1- European Court of Justice
- 2.2- General Court
- 2.3- Brief reference to the Civil Service Tribunal
- 2.4- Rules of Procedure of the ECJ and the General Court

AREA 2. Jurisdiction and procedure (I)

Theme 1. Action for annulment (Article 263 TFEU – Review of legality)

- 1.1 Scope of judicial review under Article 263 TFEU
- 1.2 Standing
 - Privilege and semi-privileged applicants
 - Non-privilege applicants: direct and individual concern
- 1.3 Grounds of illegality
 - Lack of competence
 - Infringement of an essential procedural requirement
 - Manifest error in law or in fact
 - Misuse of power
- 1.4 Effects of the annulment
- 1.5 Deadline
- 1.6 Case study: Competition, State aids and Antidumping proceedings

Theme 2. Enforcement proceedings against Member States (Articles 258-260 TFEU)

- 2.1 Ordinary and extraordinary infringements
- 2.2 Preconditions of the enforcement action
- 2.3 Concept of «State»
- 2.4 Procedure
 - Letter of formal notice (informal phase)
 - Reasoned opinion (administrative phase)
 - Control exercised by the Court (judicial phase)
- 2.5 Discretion of the Commission
- 2.6 Effects and application of the decision of the Court
- 2.7 Actions initiated by other Member States
- 2.8 Sanctions
- 2.9 Case study: Free movement of capital and golden shares.

Theme 3. Full jurisdiction (Article 261 TFEU)

- 3.1 Actions against fines imposed by the European Commission
- 3.2 Procedure before the Commission and the Court
- 3.3 Nature of fines
- 3.4 Case study: Fines in cartel cases (Article 101 TFEU)

Theme 4. Actions for failure to act (Article 265 TFEU)

- 4.1 Purpose and objectives
- 4.2 Preconditions
- 4.3 Capacity to bring an action
- 4.4 Cases where there is an obligation to act
- 4.5 Relationship between the action for annulment and the action against failure to act

AREA 3. Jurisdiction and procedure (II)

Theme 1. Actions based on the non-contractual liability of the EU (Article 268 TFEU)

- 1.1 Conditions of admissibility and liability
- 1.2 Types of wrongful acts
 - Administrative acts
 - Normative acts
 - Valid acts
- 1.3 Damages
- 1.4 Casual link
- 1.5 Limitation period

Theme 2. Actions based on the contractual liability of the EU (Article 272 TFEU)

- 2.1 Difference between contractual and non-contractual liability
- 2.2 Arbitration clauses

Theme 3. Plea of illegality (Article 241 TFEU – Review of legality)

- 3.1 Purpose and objectives (indirect challenge)
- 3.2 Acts against which can the plea be used
- 3.3 Types of proceedings in which article 241 can be raised

3.4 Relationship between the plea of illegality, the action for annulment and the preliminary ruling

AREA 4. Jurisdiction and procedure (III)

Theme 1. Application of EU Law by national courts

1.1 Enforcement through national courts

- Direct effect
- Vertical and horizontal effect
- The extension of the State

1.2 Duty of consistent interpretation (indirect effect)

1.3 Case study: direct effect of competition law provisions

Theme 2. Preliminary ruling (Article 267 TFEU)

2.1 Scope of preliminary references

2.2 Power and obligation to make a reference

2.3 The preliminary reference procedure

- Sequence of the procedure
- Making a reference
- Interim measures

2.4 Binding effects of the judgment

2.5 The role of Article 267 TFEU in the creation of the EU legal order

Theme 3. National procedural autonomy and its limits

3.1 Equivalence and effectiveness

3.2 Conditions

3.3 State liability: establishment and conditions

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

General methodology of the subject

Contact hours methodology: Activities

Socratic pragmatically-oriented method: The course is based on active methodologies and strongly relies on case-law.

The format followed for this part of the programme shall not be a lecture, but a discussion and general participation by the students commenting on the judgments and articles that are suggested and some

included in the materials. Students will have to intervene in the discussion and their participation will be taken into account in the final evaluation.

Outside class methodology: Activities

Every student is required to attend the lecturing sessions and to do the preparatory work. The instructor will provide the students with a syllabus comprising the most relevant materials (case-law and statutes) and a concrete schedule of review for these materials.

In order to follow the presentation it is necessary to have examined beforehand the relevant Articles of the Treaty and case law, as well as relevant articles of doctrine to which the student is directed to for each session according to the bibliography provided.

SUMMARY OF STUDENT WORK HOURS

NUMBER OF CONTACT HOURS		
Lecture	Case study	Evaluation
14	4	2
NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT WORK HOURS		
Lecture	Case study	Evaluation
16	6	8
ECTS CREDITS: 2 (50,00 hours)		

GRADE EVALUATION AND CRITERIA

Evaluation Activities	Indicators	Evaluation weighting
Case study (due after session II)	Students will be required to answer a hypothetical case within the realm of an action for annulment, such as (i) <i>locus standi</i> for private parties before EU courts, (ii) grounds for annulment against an act adopted by the EU institutions, and (iii) the incidental procedures of confidentiality and interim measures	40% (of which 5% participation)

Evaluation: in-class exam (final)	An in-class exam will test the theoretical and practical knowledge of students, mainly as regards (i) the concept of 'Union de droit', (ii) the preliminary ruling procedure (Article 267 TFEU), (iii) judicial review of EU acts (articles 263 and 265 TFEU) and (iv) the involvement of national courts in the application of EU law	Exam 50%
Attendance	Regular attendance to classes – control by signature of a daily sheet	10%

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

Basic Bibliography and Resources

TEXT BOOKS

- Lenaerts, K. et al., EU constitutional law, Oxford 2021.
- Schütze, R. et al., Oxford principles of European Union law. Volume I, The European Union legal order, Oxford, 2018
- Lenaerts, K. et al., EU Procedural law, Oxford, 2014.
- Ward, A., Judicial Review and the Rights of Private Parties in EU Law, Oxford, 2007

SUGGESTED ARTICLES

- Commentaire des décisions du tribunal dans les affaires T-18/10-inuit et T-262/10-microban - Antonio Creus
- Book Review: Judicial Review and the Rights of Private Parties; Angela Ward
- Facilitating Private Applicant's Access; Dominik Hanf
- Adhésion à la CEDH; Groupe de travail de la Convention Européenne
- Judicial Review of Management Assistance; Dimitros V. Skiadas
- No One Slip Through the Net; Stephan Enchelmaier
- Talking with the "pouvoir constituant" in times of constitutional reform: The European Court of Justice on Private Applicants' Access to Justice; Dominik Hanf
- [Right to an Effective Remedy](#); Erin F. Delaney
- Round Table Position Paper 070303 (English); Council of the Bars and Law Societies of the European Union
- Standing of Private Parties; Albertina Alborts-Llorens
- The Community Judiciary at the Dawn of the Third Millennium; Dr. Marie-Pierre F. Granger

WEBSITES

Court of Justice

- [Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union](#)
- [Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#)
- [Consolidated version of the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community](#)
- [Protocols: Annexes to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#)
- [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union](#)
- [Statute of the Court of Justice of the European Union](#) (1-5-2019)
- [Rules of Procedure of the Court of Justice](#) (1-1-2020)
- [Recommendations to national courts and tribunals in relation to the initiation of preliminary ruling proceedings](#) (8-11-2019)
- [Practice directions to parties concerning cases brought before the Court](#) (1-3-2020)

General Court

- [Consolidated version of the Rules of Procedure of the General Court](#) (1-4-2023)
- [Consolidated version of the Practice Rules for the Implementation of the Rules of Procedure of the General Court](#) (1-4-2023)