

International Organizations for Sustainable Development in the 21st Century

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Objective of the course:

Through this course, students will gain exposure to the functioning and role of international organizations, such as the OECD, in the context of a rapidly changing global environment, and with a special emphasis on the promotion and realization of the SDGs. Lectures will be discussion-focused among class-members, teachers, as well as experts from the OECD.

Outline:

The ongoing, planetary transition to sustainability, reconciling economic growth, social well-being, and environmental protection, requires innovative action policies on a global scale. International organizations fulfill important roles in such framework, from mediating between countries to spurring collective action, from collecting data to advancing concrete policy proposals. On a more general level, these activities also translate into consciously addressing the numerous challenges emerging from an increasingly interconnected and multi-polar international system.

The United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development comprises some of the most pressing objectives for developed and developing nations. After a global collective process has led to the selection of 17 goals (SDGs), encompassing 169 indicators, states and other actors at different levels are being mobilized, and numerous initiatives have already started.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is at the forefront in the realization of the Agenda 2030. From its own unique membership and broad policy expertise, the OECD has been deploying its resources as a pivotal institution for the promotion of sustainable development, to which it has a strong institutional commitment.

In this course, we will first analyze in depth the structure and functioning of international organizations such as OECD and understand how they contribute to global efforts for sustainable development. Students will experience this firsthand through the lectures and interactions with officials from the OECD and other international organizations.

Throughout the course, students will prepare a short policy proposal based on the contents explained and their interest. Students are also expected to prepare short reports before each class as preparation for it.

This course will be of special interest for students interested in a career in international organizations and development. Whilst the course is focused on the OECD, it is designed to provide a broad understanding of the skills required to work in international organizations. Additional sessions on career advice in that sector will be held.

Pre-requisites

None. Students from all departments are welcome to join. However, a pre-selection may be carried out in case too many applications.

Expected learning outcomes:

- Deeper understanding on the role and activities of international organizations in the 21st century.
- Development of practical skills for career building at international organizations.

Evaluation

- 10% attendance
- 30% participation (including debate)
- 30% short and final reports
- 30% group work and final presentation

Calendar

Lect.	Date	Contents
#1	Sep 30 Period 4	Introduction of the 2030 Agenda and the OECD, Policy Brief (<i>Prof. Yoshikawa, Prof. Orsi and Dr. Daniel del Barrio Alvarez</i>)
#2	Oct 7 Period 4	Global governance and the role of international organizations, examples and challenges (<i>Prof. Shiroyama and Prof. Orsi</i>)
#3-#4	Oct 28 Period 4 and 5	[OECD] The role of the OECD in the new era focusing on SDGs (<i>Mr. Nobuhiro Muroya, Deputy Director General of Nuclear Energy Agency, Prof. Yoshikawa and Dr. Daniel del Barrio Alvarez</i>)
	Nov 4	No class (<i>Culture day</i>)

#5	Nov 11 Period 4	[OECD] Global governance for sustainable development, OECD and IEA (<i>Mr. Kesuke Sadamori, Director of IEA, Prof. Yoshikawa, Prof. Orsi and Dr. Daniel del Barrio Alvarez</i>)
#6-7	Nov 18 Period 4	[6] [WHO] Role of WHO in the new era focusing on SDGs [7] How do international organizations spur sustainability agenda? (<i>Prof. Yoshikawa, Prof. Orsi and Dr. Daniel del Barrio Alvarez</i>)
#8-9	Nov 25 Period 4 and 5	[OECD] Career building at international organization (<i>Ms. Michèle Pagé, Head of Human Resource Management, Mr. Makoto Miyasako, Head of the Strategy and Business Analysis Group; Ms. Ingrid Barnsley, Deputy Head, Human Resource Management Service</i>)
Open seminar	Nov 27	Ms. Josée Touchette, Director, Executive Directorate, OECD (EXD) *Note this class is on Wednesday (attendance is recommended)
#10-11	Dec 2 Period 4 and 5	[OECD] International Taxation (<i>tbc</i>)
#12	Dec 9 Period 4	Concluding debate: topic for the policy brief
#13-14	Dec 16 Period 4 and 5	Final presentation

References:

OECD related materials available online such as: website, i-library, OECD observer, and OECD on the level

Assignment:

Throughout the course, students will prepare a policy brief of a topic of their interest. This will be connected to an OECD unit or department in a topic of sustainable development. Students will first analyze the problem, finding a relevant “descriptive figure”. Findings should be directed either to (a) recommendation for OECD work, or (b) recommendation of

implementation of OECD work. Depending on number of students, final presentation will be in group. Policy brief will be individual.