

DATABASE BA-THESIS RESEARCH PROJECTS EUROPEAN STUDIES 2014-2015
UPDATED 15/11/2014 and 21/01/2015

**Three year international bachelor programme ES (ESB)/
Third year bachelor programme BSK-ES (Double Diploma)**

If you are interested in a project, directly contact the UT supervisor mentioned in the project outline. Most supervisors reside in the Ravelijn-building. The telephone numbers listed below are UT-extensions (053-489xxx).

As soon as you have chosen a project, please send an e-mail to the theses coordinator Rik Reussing g.h.reussing@utwente.nl, in order to keep the database up-to-date.

If you have plans to come up with your own subject, or in case you plan to combine your thesis research with the International Management Sustainable Development minor thesis, then also inform the theses coordinator (g.h.reussing@utwente.nl). If possible make mention of the (provisionary) thesis title and the (intended) supervisor.

NB !! All students from now on have to enrol at the Blackboard-site of the course 'Bachelor Thesis ES'. On the CES-site is further information on writing your bachelor thesis: <http://www.utwente.nl/bms/ces/ba-dd/Writing%20your%20Bachelor%20thesis/>

Bachelor thesis circles:

In addition to the individual assignments *bachelor thesis circles* are offered. These bachelor thesis circles are offered by the department Public Administration (PA). The subjects are:

- Democracy in the European Union: Elections, Political Parties, and Voters (dr. Martin Rosema)
- The Voting Behaviour of Regional Organizations in the United Nations General Assembly (dr. Andreas Warntjen)
- The Design of International Organizations (dr. Andreas Warntjen)
- The Governance of Discontinuation (dr. Peter Stegmaier)
- The Qualitative Research Experience (dr. Peter Stegmaier)
- Content Analysis (dr. Kostas Gemenis)
- Voting Advice Applications (dr. Kostas Gemenis)
- Youth and Police in Europe (prof. dr. Sawitri Saharso and dr. Jörgen Svensson)
- Migrants, Attitudes and Welfare Outcomes (dr. Ann Morissens)

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-1 (bachelor thesis circle)
STATUS	
Title of project	Content analysis
Central problem to be addressed	
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	What are the positions of political parties on immigration? What is populism and how can it be measured? Does the policy focus of the European Commission change over time? These are some of the many questions that can be answered through content analysis. In this bachelor thesis circle, students are asked to formulate an empirical research question (like the ones provided above), carry out a literature review and try to answer it by content analysing (either by hand or by using a computer) a number of relevant texts.
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	Dr. Kostas Gemenis (3256) http://www.utwente.nl/mb/pa/staff/gemenis/
External organisation involved (if any)	
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	Readings: Klaus Krippendorff, <i>Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology</i> , second edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004), Chapters 4-7 and 10-13.

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-2 (bachelor thesis circle)
STATUS	
Title of project	Voting advice applications
Central problem to be addressed	
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Voting Advice Applications (VAAs), such as Wahl-O-Mat in Germany or StemWijzer in the Netherlands, are online tools aiming to help citizens to vote by matching their policy preferences to those of parties or candidates. In this bachelor thesis circle students are asked to investigate any aspect of voting advice applications (assumptions, design, or effects) using empirical evidence such as national election studies, data collected by VAA log files, or data collected through experiments.
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	Dr. Kostas Gemenis (3256) http://www.utwente.nl/mb/pa/staff/gemenis/
External organisation involved (if any)	
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	<u>Readings:</u> Gemenis, K. & Van Ham, C. (2013) Comparing methods for estimating parties' positions in Voting Advice Applications, in: Marschall, S., Garzia, D. (Eds.), Matching Voters with Parties and Candidates. ECPR Press. Mendez, F. (2013) What's behind a matching algorithm: A critical assessment of how VAAs produce voting recommendations, in: Marschall, S., Garzia, D. (Eds.), Matching Voters with Parties and Candidates. ECPR Press. See publications at: http://www.preferencematcher.org/

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-3 (bachelor thesis circle)
STATUS	
Title of project	Youth and Police in Europe
Central problem to be addressed	To what extent do youths of various ethnic backgrounds differ in their experiences with the police?
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	For this bachelor assignment the candidate conducts a survey about police experiences among a limited sample of youths in another European country (e.g. Germany). This may be done in a school and/or in other places where youths of different ethnic backgrounds can be found. The results of this survey are then analysed and compared to similar data from the Netherlands, which are already available.
Specific student requirements or strengths	Interest in the subject matter (policing, equal treatment) and a preparedness to conduct this type of survey among youths of various ethnic backgrounds.
UT supervisor	Prof. Sawitri Saharso (053-4893268) and dr. Jörgen Svensson (053-4894551)
External organisation involved (if any)	None
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-4 (bachelor thesis circle)
STATUS	
Title of project	Democracy in the European Union: Elections, Political Parties, and Voters
Central problem to be addressed	<p>The functioning of democracy in the European Union has been extensively studied and debated. Politicians and scholars alike have expressed their concerns about the quality of democracy in the EU, as reflected by the notion of a “democratic deficit”. Others have argued that democracy performs no worse at the European than the national level. The normative debate about the desire for institutional changes, such as a directly elected president of the European Commission or referendums about EU treaties or EU membership, is closely linked to empirical questions about elections, political parties, and voters. For instance, to what extent do policy preferences of citizens match with those of their representatives? How much knowledge do citizens have about the European Union? Why is turnout so low in European elections? Do national political parties that form political groups in the European Union have a coherent policy platform? In this bachelor thesis project such questions are central. The project focuses on elections as instruments of democracy in the European Union and the two main actors: political parties and voters.</p> <p>In this bachelor thesis project students choose a topic within this domain, develop a research proposal, carry out the proposed research, and report on this in an individual thesis. If they wish, the thesis supervisor will provide more specific suggestions for topics that are suitable for a bachelor thesis during the first meetings (see below).</p>
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	The research method to be employed depends on the research question that the student will focus on and the deliberation about the most appropriate method for answering this research question. It is possible that this will result in the use of survey data (possibly collected by students themselves in the context of this project), interviews, experiments, literature study, or any other method from the social sciences.
Specific student requirements or strengths	Students taking part should be willing and able to meet on a regular basis with each other and the supervisor during the third and fourth quarter. Giving and receiving feedback from peers is a fundamental element of the learning process of this project. Meetings are scheduled on 4 and 18 February, 11 March, 8 and 29 April, 26 May, and 24 June (always 10.45-12.30 hours; mostly on Wednesday).
UT supervisor	dr. Martin Rosema
Additional comments	This bachelor thesis project is open to students in European Public Administration and both its predecessors European Studies and Public Administration. The maximum number of students is six. The language of the project is English (meetings and thesis). This thesis project will start in the third quarter and has to be completed before the end of the fourth quarter. No supervision is provided

	<p>during the summer break.</p>
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	<p>Students who are interested in taking part in this project should contact the lecturer by e-mail before 1 February 2015 (m.rosema@utwente.nl).</p>
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PROJECT NUMBER	2015-8
STATUS	
Title of project	Local Democracy in Europe
Central problem to be addressed	<p>The role of cities and city governments in meeting major societal challenges is increasing. Therefore the functioning of democracy at the local level is becoming increasingly important. The influential US political scientist Benjamin Barber, in his recent book “If Mayors Ruled the World” (2013), for example claims that “the city now appears to be our destiny. It is where creativity is unleashed, community solidifies, and citizenship realized”.</p> <p>The way local governments are organized varies considerably between and sometimes also within European countries. In this project we focus on these differences and on the possible effects of these differences on the democratic quality of local governance.</p> <p>In answering these questions we can learn whether some cities in some countries are better capable of meeting today’s challenges than others and also understand why.</p>
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	The research methods to be used may be either large-N studies using large-scale EU wide datasets on local politics and governance (e.g. surveys among mayors or municipal councillors), or comparative case-studies (either cross-national or comparisons within one particular country, e.g. local governments in two German Länder).
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	Prof. dr. Bas Denters & dr. Pieter Jan Klok
External organisation involved (if any)	
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-9
STATUS	
Title of project	Tradable allowances
Central problem to be addressed	The introduction of the CO2 trading system within the EU (as a prelude to implementing the Kyoto-Treaty) has given rise to analyses of the phenomenon of tradable public allowances. The problem to be addressed is to compare different types of tradable rights (think also of so-called 'milk-quota' and radiofrequency- and UMTS-rights) in EU Member States or to compare the implementation of a specific type of system of tradable rights in different EU Member States. The object of this comparison is to determine how these systems fit in with existing views on the public – private law division within the Member State(s) concerned and to determine, if relevant, to which extent EU-regulation takes this division into account
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research (literature, legal sources)
Specific student requirements or strengths	Solid legal back-ground and the ability of working independently (see Additional comments)
UT supervisor	Prof. Michiel Heldeweg (3241)
External organisation involved (if any)	-
Contact details external organisation, if any	-
Additional comments	This assignment has an exploratory nature

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-10
STATUS	
Title of project	Law; government, governance and markets
Central problem to be addressed	<p>Which are the major legal policy principles regarding the EU view on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the relationship between state/government and market(s); b. the relationship between different branches respectively different organisations (such as agencies) within government... <p>and how do these principles translate into policy-initiatives or policies regarding decisions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - privatization and possibly liberalisation - state support and public-private partnerships - powers of regulation and supervision (including the choice between public and civil law regulation and enforcement). <p>Special attention should be paid to the relation between principles on the EU level and principles and repercussions on the national level.</p> <p>Preferably a project should include a comparative element Although this project primarily entails a legal study, there will be possibilities for including (also) a more economic approach.</p> <p>A manifold of sectors offer opportunities for research: health-care, energy, public transport, drinking water, consumer protection, etc.</p>
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Study of legal and policy documents; possibly case studies on specific sectors/services
Specific student requirements or strengths	Ability to analyse legal texts and to explore complicated sectoral dossiers
UT supervisor	Prof. Michiel Heldeweg (3241)
External organisation involved (if any)	None necessarily; possibly when case study is involved
Contact details external organisation, if any	-
Additional comments	This project allows for a number of students working on different subjects.

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-11
STATUS	
Title of project	Portability of student support
Central problem to be addressed	One of the objectives of the European Union in the area of higher education is to increase student mobility. There are several initiatives and programmes of the EU to make this happen. Obviously, there are many barriers for students to study abroad. One of the issues concerns the portability of student support (grants and loans). We will ask students to discuss critically the issue of portability: What is it? Why is it a problem? How big is this problem? And what are solutions?
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research / limited number of expert interviews
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	CHEPS, Prof. Hans Vossensteyn (3809)
External organisation involved (if any)	Remains to be seen
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-12
STATUS	
Title of project	Design of a student support system at the European level
Central problem to be addressed	Within the EU, each nation state has its own student support system. However, it has been argued that given the increase in the number of students studying abroad, a European student support system would be appreciated. How could such a European system look like? What are the expected effects of such a European system? How can it be organised?
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research / limited number of expert interviews
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	CHEPS, Prof. Hans Vossensteyn (3809)
External organisation involved (if any)	Remains to be seen
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-13
STATUS	
Title of project	The Open method of coordination and higher education
Central problem to be addressed	Higher education belongs to the competences of the nation-state. EU authority is limited but it does have serious impact on national higher education policies through the open method of coordination that uses peer pressures to encourage nation-states to undertake actions. Students will be asked to write an essay on the open method of coordination in higher education. What is it? How does it work? And to what extent is it effective?
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research / limited number of expert interviews
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	CHEPS, Dr. Harry de Boer (3226)
External organisation involved (if any)	Remains to be seen
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-14
STATUS	
Title of project	Instruments used in the open method of coordination in higher education
Central problem to be addressed	Benchmarking, indicators and best practices are increasingly used in European higher education policy in order to create a European higher education area. Students will be asked to write a critical essay on these instruments. What do these instruments look like? Who sets the criteria? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such instruments?
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research / limited number of expert interviews
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	CHEPS, Dr. Harry de Boer (3226)
External organisation involved (if any)	Remains to be seen
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-15
STATUS	
Title of project	Are Bologna and Lisbon setting the stage for Europe's higher education and research?
Central problem to be addressed	The Bologna and the Lisbon process have a huge impact on higher education and research at the European and the national level. The introduction of the Bachelor-Master structure is just one example. Although the origins and form of these fascinating processes are different, they have become increasingly intertwined. Students will be asked to describe and analyse these two processes from a policy perspective and to assess their possible future impact.
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research / limited number of expert interviews
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	CHEPS, Dr. Harry de Boer (3226)
External organisation involved (if any)	Remains to be seen
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-16
STATUS	
Title of project	Gender Mainstreaming in EU policy
Central problem to be addressed	2011 marks 15 years since the signing of the Platform for Action at the UN Conference on Women in Beijing. This accord introduced gender mainstreaming as a policy instrument for gender equity in all policy arenas and processes. The project aims to review progress within European Policy. There is a preference for examining gender mainstreaming in Development Policy.
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research (literature study, analysis of EU & national documents). Possibly interviews with experts
Specific student requirements or strengths	Interest in gender.
UT supervisor	Dr. Joy Clancy (3537)
External organisation involved (if any)	
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-17
STATUS	
Title of project	Biofuels in EU policy
Central problem to be addressed	<p>The EU has a goal for 10% renewable energy in transport by 2020. This is set out in its renewable energy directive, adopted in 2009 which links addressing climate change and sustainable energy use in one package. It also has a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in road transport by 6% by 2020, compared to 2010. This is under the so-called fuel quality directive. Reaching the two goals has come down to the same thing: biofuels. Both goals could be met almost entirely by substituting traditional fossil fuels by biofuels.</p> <p>At the moment economic biofuels are produced from crops such as sugar cane/beet and sunflowers. This new product market has been used as stimulus to rural areas to increase farm income through diversification both within Europe and in developing countries.</p> <p>However, the EU has come under intense pressure from environmental and development NGOs about the changes in developing countries that are linked to biofuels production (eg land grabbing) and it is claimed that some biofuel production generates more greenhouse gases than it saves. At the beginning of October the EU responded to these criticisms and announced a change to its renewable energy target by proposing a cap on biofuels from food crops at 5% in 2020.</p> <p>What impact does this have on European farmers who grow crops for biofuels? Farmers in developing countries? What are the implications for biofuel processors?</p>
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research (literature study, analysis of EU & national documents). Possibly interviews with experts
Specific student requirements or strengths	
UT supervisor	Dr. Joy Clancy (3537)
External organisation involved (if any)	
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-18
STATUS	
Title of project	Promoting green energy in Europe
Central problem to be addressed	Climate change and energy security are two energy policy issues within Europe that are acting as a driver towards green energy. The aim here is to assess the current status of the 'green energy agenda' within the Netherlands and other European States. What policy instruments are used to promote the agenda? Does this European agenda also influence EU development policy?
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Desk research (literature study, analysis of EU & national documents). Possibly interviews with experts
Specific student requirements or strengths	Ability to read Dutch.
UT supervisor	Dr. Joy Clancy (3537)/Prof Hans Bressers
External organisation involved (if any)	Said Abdallah
Contact details external organisation, if any	sm_abdallah@yahoo.com
Additional comments	This research is linked to a PhD jointly supervised by the supervisors (Clancy/Bressers). Mr Abdallah is from Kenya. He needs help with accessing national documents not published in English.

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-19 (bachelor thesis circle)
STATUS	
Title of project	The Governance of Discontinuation: how functions the political phase-out of socio-technical systems?
Central problem to be addressed	Not all politics and socio-technical systems we know today will be there for ever. It's a constitutive part of giving shape to society that incumbent investments, policies, infrastructures, institutions, regimes etc. are subject to transition and, in some cases, abandonment. However, the scientific observation of this part of public administration, politics, management, and governance is still underdeveloped. Take part in the context of a chilling international ORA funded research project called DiscGo and contribute your findings!
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	Explorative research designs, reconstructive and interpretive data analysis, generating typologies and theory
Specific student requirements or strengths	Highly motivated, committed to even complex issues and to investigative curiosity, and able to do theory and data grounded comparative empirical research in English language
UT supervisor	Dr. Peter Stegmaier (3775)
External organisation involved (if any)	SPRU Brighton, IFRIS SenS Paris, Manchester Business School, Technology Studies Group TU Dortmund
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	

PROJECT NUMBER	2015-20 (bachelor thesis circle)
STATUS	
Title of project	The Qualitative Research Experience
Central problem to be addressed	<p><i>How to research society and humans if we assume that both are not to be measured like physical phenomena, but characterised through more or less distinct life-worlds and multiple realities and where the inhabitants of which always already have made sense of their own, before a research comes and interprets what is going on?</i></p> <p>You get acquainted with the main forms and assumptions of key approaches in explorative-interpretative-reconstructive research (EIR) within the social sciences that are relevant for governance studies. You make a transfer of approaches and methods to a research question of your choice, so that you can start practically applying what you have learnt to course work and the preparation of your bachelor thesis.</p> <p>This provides you with hands-on experience of working with key methods, individually and in teams, which allow you to improve your course work during the bachelor and carry out basic research for project courses and the bachelor thesis.</p> <p>The basic attitude of this course is that we intend to carry out curious research: to discover changing or new aspects of social life, to better understand social life-worlds of which we always thought we would know all about, generate hypotheses and concepts instead of just applying them—by systematically taking into account the perspective of those studied. This is meant with researching exploratively and interpretatively. This is all the more important as in our society we increasingly find a complexity and confusion of ways of life and of ways how policy/politics is made which are not really familiar to us.</p>
Brief outline/characterisation of research methods to be used	<p>Explorative research designs, participation & observation, investigative field work, reconstructive and interpretive data analysis, hermeneutics, generating typologies and grounded theory, interviewing, multilingual data analysis, abductive research logic, analysing pictures, video, and web content; document analysis.</p> <p>The choice of methods depends on the needs and interests of the participants.</p>
Specific student requirements or strengths	Highly motivated, committed to even complex issues and to investigative curiosity, and able to do theory and data grounded comparative empirical research in English language
UT supervisor	Dr. Peter Stegmaier (3775)
External organisation involved (if any)	
Contact details external organisation, if any	
Additional comments	