



Press Release

Is peace in Europe endangered?

A seminar held simultaneously by 13 different universities gets to the bottom of this question

Great Britain's exit from the European Union, the rise of right-wing populism in Europe, the debate about the possible closure of the Central European University (CEU) in Hungary and the war in the Ukraine show how European integration as a peace project is endangered and highly controversial. Further challenges such as the financial crisis or the flow of migrants toward Europe have also been perceived as imperiling trends and have led to nationalistic movements and tendencies in parts of Europe. The perception around the „Threat to European Peace“ raises questions that have resulted in a most unique seminar format: despite the hundreds of kilometers separating them, researchers and students from 13 different universities are working together every week through a digital video platform and e-learning format for an intercollegiate lecture series. Input presentations from various researchers from Germany, Greece, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Canada will serve as the basis for discussion.

What makes the seminar particularly special is the direct student interaction through live video contact and virtual work rooms. The students in intercollegiate working groups develop questions, break down issues and create assessments about the crises they address and submit them for debate. Methodically speaking, the concept of the seminar will be rounded out through numerous opportunities to work both scientifically and journalistically, for instance, in the form of newspaper articles, video and radio programming.

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■ The goal of the intercollegiate exchange and multimedia work is to provide students a more sustainable and future-oriented approach to dealing with seminar material that moves well beyond the classic lecture environment in seminar rooms – both in terms of the subject matter as well as the methods applied. In order to ensure the concept has a long shelf life, the course content will be reconstructed into e-learning units and made available to the broader public.

Around 150 students from six universities will participate in the seminar. It is being conducted under the aegis of the task force „Curriculum and Didactics“ within the German Association for Peace and Conflict Studies (AFK).

Project homepage, including seminar program

www.ringseminar-europa.politik.uni-freiburg.de

Participating institutions

- University of Freiburg
- University of Tübingen
- University of Düsseldorf
- University of Mainz
- University of Marburg
- University of Hamburg

Cooperation partners

- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- Central European University, Hungary
- Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg
- Institute for East and Southeast European Studies Regensburg
- London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom
- University of Ottawa, Canada
- University of Oxford, United Kingdom

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Seminar for Scientific Policy

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The University of Freiburg achieves top positions in all university rankings. Its research, teaching, and continuing education have received prestigious awards in nationwide competitions. Over 24,000 students from 100 nations are enrolled in 188 degree programs. Around 5,000 teachers and administrative employees put in their effort every day – and experience that family friendliness, equal opportunity, and environmental protection are more than just empty phrases here.