

EU–Middle East Relations in a Changing Global Order

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Academic Year: 2026/27 - Spring Semester

Class Meeting Times: **Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9-11**, Aula 2D

Office Hours: Wednesday, 11-12, room 4.15 (please send an email beforehand)

Seminar objective

To give students an overview of the most important dynamics in current relations between the EU and the Middle East.

Seminar description

EU–Middle East relations are multifaceted, varied and complex, shaped by historical, political, economic, security, environmental, and migratory dynamics. This seminar provides an entry point for an informed exploration of the multiple themes, actors, structures, policies and processes that mold current EU–Middle East relations. In particular, it will explore the question how EU – Middle East relations are impacted by a changing global order, and will inquire into dynamics pertaining to security and peacebuilding, democracy and the Arab uprisings, economy and trade, migration, as well as climate change and the energy transition. The seminar will also feature expert talks on issues pertaining to EU-Turkey and EU-Gulf relations.

Textbook

Bouris, Dimitris, Daniela Huber, and Michelle Pace. 2021. *Routledge Handbook of EU–Middle East Relations*. Routledge.

Attendance and assessment

Students will receive a passing grade for reading the assigned texts, regular attendance, and participation in class discussions in the course.

DETAILED SCHEDULE

- 1) **Introduction: imagining Europe, imagining the Middle East**
08.04.2026
Readings: Handbook, Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 7 (The EU's Construction of the Middle East)
Prof. Daniela Huber
- 2) **The Arab Uprisings and EU democracy support policies: A critical analysis**
15.04.2026
Readings: Handbook, Chapter 5 (A Postcolonial Critique of EU-Middle East Relations) and Chapter 23 (On EU-Arab democratization: towards a democratic learning loop)
Dott. Ayoub Menzli
- 3) **Spatialising Security, Securitising Space: Ways into the Politics of the Middle East and North Africa**
16.04.2026, 17-19 (a registration link will be provided to all seminar participants: online attendance is recommended, but the webinar will also be registered)
Webinar co-organized by Prof. Daniela Huber with Prof. Simon Mabon and Dott. Javier Bordon (SEPAD), and Dr. Leo Goretti (The International Spectator).
Readings: Handbook, Chapter 15 (The EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council: a troubled relationship) and recommended reading: The International Spectator, Volume 61, Issue 1, 2026: [The International Spectator: Vol 61, No 1 \(Current issue\)](#)
- 4) **The region as a security complex: whose security, whose peace?**
21.04.2026
Readings: Handbook, Chapter 8 (Security within and beyond the borders of Europe: locating the European Union as a security actor) and 13 (In the shadow of the European neighborhood: political geographies of EU-Middle East relations)
Prof. Daniela Huber
- 5) **Migration and EU-Turkey relations**
22.04.2026
Readings: Handbook, Chapter 18 (Turkey and the European Union in the Middle East: potential for cooperation or continuing discord) and 37 (Migration and refugees in EU-Middle East relations)
Visiting Professor Berna Aksoy Özcan, Head of the Department of International Relations, Istanbul Nisantasi University
- 6) **A Political Economy of EU-Middle East Relations: Trade, Agriculture and Water**
(28.04.2026)

Readings: Handbook Chapter 36 (Aid, security and fortress Europe: EU development aid in the Middle East and North Africa), and 39 (Assessing EU-Middle East trade relations: patterns, policies and imbalances)

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7) The EU's Green Deal and the Energy Transition in the Mediterranean region

29.04.2026

Readings: Handbook, Chapter 6 (Everyday Middle East) and Chapter 41 (Clean growth for the benefit of both? Towards a more inclusive approach to EU-MENA environmental relations)

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8) The EU, Iran, and the nuclear question

05.05.2026

Readings: Handbook, Chapter 34 (The EU and Iran: how a critical relationship became a troubled one) and Chapter 17 (The transatlantic relationship and the Middle East: converging interests, diverging praxis)

Prof. Daniela Huber

9) Conclusions. After Multilateralism?

06.05.2026

Readings: Chapter 11 (Postcolonial theory and EU-Middle East relations: recognizing co-constitution) and "Towards Allyship in Diversity? Critical Perspectives on the European Union's Global Role", Dimitris Bouris, Nora Fisher-Onar, Daniela Verena Huber, accessible in open access on:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcms.13763>

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