Rethinking Europe in a changing world

The Brussels School of Governance is an alliance between the Institute for European Studies (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) and Vesalius College.
Hello & welcome

Brussels, the heart of Europe and the world’s second-largest diplomatic centre after Washington, is a natural home for the Brussels School of Governance. As a leading institution in international governance and public affairs, we embody the ambition to not only educate open-minded students but also connect deeply with policymakers and societal actors. Our mission is encapsulated in our slogan, ‘Rethinking Europe in a changing world’.

With a team of over 250 dedicated staff, we balance cutting-edge research with top-tier education, supported by a vast regional and international network. Our focus on innovation and outreach ensures we provide significant value to our stakeholders, including students, policymakers, academics, and the public.

At the Brussels School of Governance, we are more than an educational institution; we are a hub for shaping the future of governance and public affairs, driven by the ambition to lead in a transforming world.

Karel De Gucht, President
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MISSION STATEMENT
Situated in the heart of Europe, we strive to be a hub for interdisciplinary teaching and cutting-edge research. Our purpose is to understand and help tackle key societal dynamics and challenges. We focus on migration and diversity, the digital transformation of society, climate change and green transitions in the economy, as well as diplomacy, strategy and geopolitical competition. We educate open-minded students and connect to policymakers and societal actors interested in a research-informed understanding of Europe in a changing world.

POLICY-ORIENTED RESEARCH
The BSoG conducts its research through four dedicated research centres, each of which focuses on a key societal dynamic and challenge. The Centre for Digitalisation, Democracy and Innovation (CD2I) analyses the ongoing digital transformation of society. The Centre for Environment, Economy and Energy (C3E) operates at the crossroads of today’s turbulent transitions. The Centre for Migration, Diversity and Justice (CMDJ) focuses on the multilevel governance and politics of immigration, justice and home affairs, immigrant integration, diversity and equality. The Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the key contemporary security and diplomatic challenges of the 21st century – and their impact on Europe.

INNOVATIVE EDUCATION
The 100% English-taught educational portfolio of the Brussels School of Governance covers the full array of tertiary education, from Summer Schools, Certificates, Bachelors and Masters to postgraduate programmes. Our teaching staff is a unique mixture of experienced practitioners and leading academics. Our career-focused teaching methods are characterised by flexibility and a personalised approach. We also have a dedicated team focusing on teaching and learning innovation.

BROAD OUTREACH
Our school organises a large number of online and offline events throughout the year to share the output of our research with policymakers, the academic community, and the general public. We publish a series of policy briefs, papers, and newsletters to share relevant content with our various stakeholders, and respond to a vast number of press enquiries to interpret news events.
At the Brussels School of Governance, we pride ourselves in the seven core characteristics that define who we are:

- **Personalised approach**: our goal is to offer personalised experiences, ensuring individual guidance for both students and researchers, fostering an interactive and supportive learning and research environment.

- **Career focused**: our students get a real-world experience in class and are well prepared for a broad range of career options.

- **Connected & interactive**: our unique location in Brussels provides a close connection to the policy and international community, which is deeply embedded in both our research and education activities.

- **Cutting-edge**: we strive for excellence in our research as well as a close research-teaching nexus.

- **International**: for decades, the two BSoG members have built up strong reputations as frontrunners in education, research, and academic services on the international scene.

- **Diverse**: the diversity across our scholars and student community is one of the greatest strengths of our School, offering substantial added value to our work environment.

- **Interdisciplinary**: in our research as well as in our teaching we have a decidedly interdisciplinary approach, focusing on key societal dynamics and challenges confronting policymakers worldwide.

**A BRIEF HISTORY**

The Brussels School of Governance is an alliance between the Institute for European Studies (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) and Vesalius College.

As a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), the Institute for European Studies (IES) provides research, education and academic services focused on the EU in an international setting. The disciplines applied include law, social/political sciences, economics and communication sciences. The IES has a strong research focus and has built up a long-standing PhD track record. It also organises several postgraduate programmes.

Home to a thriving international community and established in 1987, Vesalius College (VeCo) offers students a truly unique educational experience, focusing on Bachelor and Master programmes. Its teaching methods are characterised by small, interactive classes, flexibility in course selection and continuous assessment. With a low student-to-professor ratio, the faculty is accessible and able to take a personal interest in the success of students to help them achieve their potential.

Since the autumn of 2019, both institutions have aligned the members of its Boards and management teams. In 2021, they launched the Brussels School of Governance.
Welcome to the Brussels School of Governance, where our vibrant research activities delve deep into understanding and tackling the most pressing societal issues of our time.

From the intricate nuances of migration and diversity to the frontier of the digital transformation, we are at the forefront of exploring the challenges that shape our world. Where the urgency of climate change meets the excitement of green transitions in the economy, where diplomacy intertwines with strategy - that is where we thrive. We have built a dynamic structure of four research centers to tackle these challenges head-on.

We know that these challenges demand more than just traditional approaches. They require fresh perspectives, radical ideas, and collaboration across disciplines. That is why we combine perspectives from a diverse range of academic fields, pushing the boundaries of conventional thinking.

Nestled in the heart of Brussels, our location offers a unique vantage point. We are not just observers; we are actively shaping the conversation. From understanding how global shifts affect Europe’s role on the world stage to rethinking our internal governance systems, we are here to make a difference.

So, are you ready to take on the challenge with us? Let’s make an impact together!

Florian Trauner, Dean
The Centre for Digitalisation, Democracy and Innovation (CD2I) conducts cutting-edge academic and policy-relevant research on the ongoing digital transformation of society. We critically examine the evolution of new modes of governance from an interdisciplinary perspective, specifically in terms of multistakeholder and democratic processes that involve private, public, and civil society actors, whilst paying attention to issues of power and participation.

Digital technologies contribute to a set of profound challenges to the authority and legitimacy of democratic governance. Digitalisation transforms our society and economy, questioning existing arrangements of power and regulation. Does technology break down barriers to participate in decision making? Do we govern technology or does technology govern us? Can governance of the Internet be entrusted to private actors alone? How do traditional public values translate into online environments?

Such questions address the difficulties in leveraging new technologies to enable effective citizen participation, the growing need for continued stakeholder engagement in global, European, national and local governance, and the need for concerted regulation in the digital environment. As such, the rapid pace of technological innovation upends existing forms of governance and necessitates the development of novel approaches.

The Centre for Environment, Economy and Energy (C3E) operates at the crossroads of today’s turbulent transitions, which constitute key governance challenges and opportunities in Europe and worldwide. The sustainability imperative requires private and public decision-makers to steer our societies towards decarbonised, resource efficient economies as recognised in the European Green Deal, New Generation Europe, in the 2015 Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). If governed successfully, this presents the prospect of rejuvenating our socio-economic and political systems, making them fit for a sustainable future.

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The Centre analyses and develops innovative legal and policy instruments that can be used to govern the transitions, within the EU and in its external relations. Positioning ourselves at the interface of academia with political, legal and other societal decision-making, we focus in particular on the international and European governance of the environmental, economic and energy transitions and their interactions.

Today’s transitions entail a techno-economic element about how innovation in different sectors of our (market) economies can come about and conquer the marketplace. Our researchers also pay attention to the governance of democratic transitions, and the ensuing reconciliation of diverging societal values.
The Research Centre for Migration, Diversity and Justice focuses on the multilevel governance and politics of immigration, justice and home affairs, immigrant integration, diversity and equality. It is also part of and hosts the VUB’s Interdisciplinary Research Centre on Migration and Minorities (BiRMM), which gathers more than 100 VUB researchers from 11 disciplines.

Regulating the entry and stay of foreigners and defining their rights are close to the sovereignty of nation states. Yet, elements of these policy areas have been shifted upwards to the international level (EU and international organizations), downwards to the sub-state level (regional and local authorities) and outwards (to countries of origin, transit and private actors).

Whilst many research institutes study issues such as immigration and immigrant integration, we distinguish ourselves by a multi-level governance focus.

We also prioritize three key themes that will prominently figure on European and national policy agendas in the coming decade.

- EU asylum and migration governance including its external dimension
- European anti-discrimination policies and politics
- EU Justice and Home Affairs

The Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the key contemporary security and diplomatic challenges of the 21st century – and their impact on Europe – while reaching out to the policy community that will ultimately need to handle such challenges. Our expertise in international politics and security studies will seek to establish comprehensive theoretical and policy coverage of strategic competition and its impact on Europe, whilst paying particular attention to the transatlantic relationship and the wider Indo-Pacific region. Diplomacy as a field of study will be treated broadly and comparatively to encompass traditional statecraft and foreign policy analysis, as well as public, economic and cultural diplomacy.

CSDS builds on a critical mass of scholars with expertise and publication track record in the areas of diplomacy and security, and an ample network of policy and expert contacts within Brussels and beyond. Thanks to its Korea Chair and Japan Chair, CSDS is also emerging as a European hub for analysis of geopolitical and security dynamics in East Asia.
The Brussels School of Governance is home to a couple of dozen of PhD and postdoctoral researchers from different disciplines and nationalities. This enriching environment allows them to contribute to public debates and conduct fundamental as well as applied research. The School initiates annual calls for PhD projects and selects candidates on the merits of their research proposal. Keep an eye on the jobs section of our website or register for our newsletter if you are interested in becoming part of this stimulating atmosphere yourself!
Dear parents & students,

At the Brussels School of Governance, we offer an unparalleled educational journey from undergraduate to postgraduate levels, underpinned by our unique STEP approach. This ensures our programmes are Student-centred, have a strong Theoretical foundation, excel in educational Excellence, and are deeply Practice-oriented, positioning us as a leader in the interdisciplinary study of European and global governance.

Our programmes are built on decades of policy-driven research, taught by leading academics and practitioners from the Brussels policy community. The following pages provide an overview of our diverse programmes and the wide array of services available to our students.

At the BSoG, education goes beyond traditional learning, engaging students in a community at the nexus of theory and practice. At the BSoG, we are not just preparing our students for the future; we are equipping them to reshape it. Join us, and be part of a journey that transcends traditional learning, where your education is a catalyst for genuine change.

Sven Van Kerckhoven, Vice-Dean for Education
EDUCATION

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

BA Preparatory Programme
- Study skills, academic preparation, and familiarisation with university education
- Start in Spring or Fall
- 1-semester programme (5 non-credit courses)

BA in Global Business and Entrepreneurship
- 180 ECTS BA programme established in 1989
- Solid theoretical base complemented by practical skills training
- Specialisation options in several fast-developing areas

BA in International Affairs
- 180 ECTS BA programme established in 1990
- Interdisciplinary curriculum (politics, economics, law and history)
- Teaching staff includes senior policymakers and diplomats

BA in International and European Law
- 180 ECTS BA programme established in 2016
- Flexible curriculum that addresses legal issues from an international and interdisciplinary perspective
- Students acquire skills to provide both legal and policy analysis

Our undergraduate degrees are issued by Vesalius College.
EDUCATION

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

**MA Preparatory Programme**
- Academic and practical preparation for a Masters’ programme or an international working environment
- Supports second language users of English to ensure their advancement into a university graduate programme

**MA in Diplomacy and Global Governance**
- 90 and 120 ECTS options - daytime and evening classes
- A truly global exchange between theory and practice
- High-profile internship opportunities

**MA in Global Security and Strategy**
- 90 and 120 ECTS options - daytime and evening classes
- Students acquire unique theoretical foundations, practical skill-sets and high-level contacts
- Taught by senior policymakers and international academics

Our graduate degrees are issued by Vesalius College.
EDUCATION

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

LLM in International and European Law

- 60 ECTS Advanced Master degree – evening classes
- Holistic approach of emerging global legal challenges: EU external relations, sustainability, migration, human rights, economy, digital law
- Since 1971
- Unique combination of international and European law

Advanced MSc in European Integration

- 60 ECTS Advanced Master degree – evening classes
- Specialise in one key EU policy field, or enjoy a broader EU policymaking education
- Ideal for both students and professionals
- Flexibility to finish in one or two years

Our postgraduate degrees are issued by Vrije Universiteit Brussel.
EDUCATION

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMMES

Postgraduate Certificate in EU Policy Making*

• 5 online EU modules (1 academic year) + a 2-week summer or winter school.
• Ideal for full-time professionals or students with daytime schedule.
• Provides in-depth expertise on functioning of and decision-making in EU, as well as roles of various actors.
• Flexibility to finish in one or two years.

Postgraduate Certificate in Global Risk Analysis and Crisis Management**

• 5 modules (15 ECTS) from September to December.
• Faculty includes senior officials from major international organisations.
• Online and hybrid options available.

Undergraduate Certificate in European Peace and Security Studies**

• 4 interrelated courses (6 ECTS each).
• Theoretical and practical analysis of the comprehensive, civil-military nature of conflict and crisis management from a NATO, UN and EU perspective.
• 1-semester programme (Fall semester only).

Postgraduate Certificate in Public Procurement*

• 3 modules (20 and 30 ECTS options).
• Fully online, with option to follow some events in person.
• Flexibility to finish in one or two years.

* Certificate issued by Vrije Universiteit Brussel.
** Certificate issued by Vesalius College.
**Short Programmes**

**Summer School on EU Policy Making***
- Intensive 5 ECTS inter-university summer school
- 1 week in Brussels, 1 week in Vienna.
- Suitable for students and professionals
- Provides in-depth expertise on functioning of and decision-making in EU, as well as roles of various actors.

**Undergraduate Summer School**
- 7-week programme
- Students select up to 2 courses (6 ECTS each) out of a wide variety of subjects, ranging from art & culture to business, communication & media, management, politics and international affairs.

**Winter School on EU Policy Making***
- 2-week online programme (5 ECTS) - February
- Crash course in EU policy making
- Exclusive insight sessions with senior practitioners from EU institutions, UN and OSCE

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* Certificate issued by Vrije Universiteit Brussel.
** Certificate issued by Vesalius College.
EDUCATION

STUDY ABROAD

Brussels, at the heart of the European Union, offers an unparalleled opportunity for students with diverse interests and majors to enhance their undergraduate journey. The Brussels School of Governance (BSoG) invites students to immerse themselves in its Study Abroad programme.

The BSoG stands out as a tight-knit community within a larger university framework, offering courses exclusively in English amidst the bilingual backdrop of Brussels. It provides a cosmopolitan and culturally rich atmosphere for its students.

Advantages of studying abroad at the Brussels School of Governance:

- **Central location**: situated in Brussels, the epicentre of the European Union, offering a rich, practice-oriented learning environment.
- **Cosmopolitan environment**: the BSoG is embedded in a diverse and multicultural city.
- **English-taught classes**: all courses are conducted in English, catering to a global student body.
- **Personalised attention**: you will benefit from a low student-teacher ratio, ensuring interactive classes and individualised support.
- **Academic internships**: opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings through enriching academic internships.
- **Seminars and workshops**: access to events featuring key EU decision-makers and leaders.
- **Comprehensive facilities**: Full access to the Vrije Universiteit Brussels's facilities, including libraries, cafeterias, and sports amenities.

Interested?

Prospective participants are encouraged to begin planning for their Study Abroad semester at least six months in advance. This timeline allows for thoughtful course selection and approval from their home institution. Those hailing from partner universities should liaise with their Study Abroad Office to confirm eligibility for the programme at BSoG. Applicants from non-partner institutions are advised to reach out directly to the BSoG’s Study Abroad Office at studyabroad_bsog@vub.be

Our Study Abroad programme is organised by Vesalius College.
The Brussels School of Governance (BSoG) offers students the best of both worlds: the personal attention and community environment of a small school, as well as access to the resources of major universities. The school shares relevant academic events and guest lectures, and also participates in exchanges with other faculties of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and with the Université Libre de Bruxelles, among others.

The BSoG highly prioritises the active participation of its students in the school’s governance. Annual elections are held to select student representatives from its Bachelor, Master, and Advanced Master programmes. These representatives contribute to the Board and Education Council meetings of the BSoG. Furthermore, the school supports an active Student Government, which plays a significant role in various aspects of the school’s operations.
At the Brussels School of Governance, we want to offer our students not only valuable academic preparation, but also the opportunity to test career options, gain practical experience and build relationships with professionals and organisations in their areas of interest, before they graduate.

We offer a variety of internship opportunities to students, both in our BA and MA programmes. The internship is evaluated with a letter grade and is worth 1 academic course in ECTS credits. Our internship partners are prestigious and internationally renowned organisations and companies, ranging from European agencies to small start-up businesses, from think-tanks to international corporations. They provide our students with an excellent opportunity to implement what they have learned in the classroom and apply it to the real world, in a professional environment in Brussels, the Capital of Europe.

Our Internship Programme benefits both students and partners alike: whether having full responsibility for a project or working as part of a team in an organisation, our students apply their skills and provide the internship partner with valuable support.

For many years, the two members of the Brussels School of Governance alliance have built a solid reputation for enhancing both teaching and learning through the use of technology. Long before the COVID-19 pandemic, blended and online learning was part of its educational portfolio. With the establishment of an Office for Teaching and Learning Innovation (OTLI) in the spring of 2020, our School has taken the next step in this essential development towards high-quality and future-proof education.

The OTLI serves as a knowledge hub for the School’s teaching staff and focuses on pedagogical innovation and the use of technology to enhance learning. Concretely, its dedicated team works on the design and implementation of evidence-informed educational policies, teaching scenarios and guidelines that aim to improve the student learning experience for all course formats, from face-to-face to blended to fully online. They provide professional development initiatives for faculty, and they work on quality assurance through course evaluations and support for external evaluations (NVAO). The team also manages and supports the student information system CICS (Peoplesoft Campus Solutions) and the learning platform Canvas. Our objective is to optimise (administrative) processes as part of the complete student lifecycle.

Educational innovation is key for our School and the OTLI is there to support our students in their learning journey, it is where they make the difference. Therefore, the OTLI is a cornerstone of our educational strategy. With this in-house expertise and experience, we want to pass a clear message to our current and future students: no matter what type of learning experience you (will) have with us, face-to-face, blended or online, it will always be personal, flexible and high-quality.

Whether you are in an Undergraduate or Graduate programme of the Brussels School of Governance, you will always be offered hands-on services that will help you start or further advance your career. In our Undergraduate programmes, we offer students in their final year the opportunity to attend career seminars and individual coaching sessions. Workshop topics range from CV and cover letter writing to networking. Students in our programmes of which the degree is awarded by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel can benefit from VUB’s Career Centre. Its services include CV editing, interview preparation and general career advice.

- Carnegie Europe
- EUObserver
- EUREGHA
- Euronext Brussels
- European Cooperative for Rural Development
- European Security Round Table
- Extrapreneurs
- Fulbright Belgium
- International Crisis Group
- Laffineur Law Firm
- Make Mothers Matter EU Delegation
- New Europe
- SolarPower Europe
- The Jane Goodall Institute Belgium
- Time Warner
- United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (UN PRME) WG
- Various embassies (Honduras, Dominican Republic, etc.)

And many more!
The BSoG educational programmes have a large, international alumni community with whom we are regularly in touch through our quarterly Alumni Newsletters, as well as via alumni groups on social media. Various alumni are also actively engaged with our School’s activities, by giving guest lectures in our programmes, providing information to prospective students at Open Days or in webinars, hosting our interns in their organisations, etc.

Graduates from the BSoG’s undergraduate programmes go on to pursue further studies at renowned universities worldwide, showcasing the quality and global relevance of our education. You will find a few examples below. On the programme pages of our website you will find a more comprehensive list.

Meanwhile, many of those completing our graduate and postgraduate programmes secure prominent positions in a variety of sectors. Our alumni thrive in dynamic roles within international organisations, European institutions, leading corporations, prestigious law firms, and beyond.
The Brussels School of Governance encourages students to work hard to reach their academic potential, but also to live a full life away from books and classes and enjoy everything that Brussels has to offer.

Although the international business and political world form an important part of Brussels’ culture, students quickly discover that the city is vibrant and cosmopolitan with a warm, friendly charm. The quaintness of its cobblestone streets and rich variety of beer, chocolate and lace give the city a festive ambiance. More than 35% of the Brussels population is comprised of foreign nationals, so the city has something for every taste and culture in the areas of music, dancing, cuisine, art, associations and much more.

The city is home to an excellent music scene, with clubs and numerous festivals where almost any genre of music can be found from local musicians to the biggest touring bands. Brussels also has many museums and art galleries, ranging from classical to modern art, and also houses a national symphony, opera and theatre. In addition, Brussels has a rich variety of architecture including Baroque buildings from the 1600s, classic Flemish, art deco, art nouveau, and the modern architecture of the European Union buildings.

Finally, no description of Brussels would be complete without mentioning its renowned fine gastronomy. Ranging from prize-winning haute cuisine to the tastiest chocolate, beer, mussels and fries in the world, there is surely a dish for everyone.

Studying in Brussels offers students the unique opportunity to go on some great (as well as quick and inexpensive) travels and getaways. Belgium’s inter-city trains provide quick access to the Belgian seaside, Medieval Bruges, Antwerp (the diamond capital of the world), and the wooded hills of the Ardennes. Looking beyond Belgium, Brussels is the ideal base from which to visit the rest of Europe. Paris is a short 90 minutes by fast train and London, Cologne and Amsterdam are just two and a half hours away. In addition, most major European cities are two hours or less away by plane.
Brussels School of Governance

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GENERAL ENQUIRIES
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EDUCATION RELATED ENQUIRIES
Pre-application enquiries: study_bsog@vub.be
Post-application enquiries: admissions_bsog@vub.be
Study abroad: studyabroad_bsog@vub.be
Internships: studentinternships_bsog@vub.be

ACADEMIC SERVICES RELATED ENQUIRIES
Communication/press: marcom_bsog@vub.be
Events/meeting room rental: events_bsog@vub.be

www.brussels-school.be