

Chair of Public Finance

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**Friedrich-Alexander-Universität
School of Business,
Economics and Society**

February 16, 2026

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR SUMMER TERM 2026

BACHELOR SEMINAR ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION (5 ECTS)

EXAMINATION NR. 62261 (WIWI), 70231 (IES), 70331 (IBS)

“ASSESSING DEBT SUSTAINABILITY: HOW DO EU COUNTRIES COMPARE?”

This seminar examines the **sustainability of public debt within the European Union (EU)**. Each Participant will conduct an **assessment of an assigned EU member state**, and we discuss and compare results in the seminar. The assessment is drawing on three major economic publications:

- European Commission (2025). *Debt Sustainability Monitor 2025*, Institutional Paper 271, Directorate General of Economic Affairs, available at https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/debt-sustainability-monitor-2025_en
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2025). *OECD Economic Outlook*, Volume 2025 Issue 2, OECD Publishing, Paris, available at <https://doi.org/10.1787/9f653ca1-en>.
- International Monetary Fund (2026). *2025 Article IV Consultation-Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director*, IMF Staff Country Reports 2026/036, available at <https://doi.org/10.5089/9798229038546.002>

Students will **critically analyze changes in the debt sustainability projections** from these sources, assessing risks and economic shocks that may not be fully accounted for in all reports.

EU member states covered in the seminar are: Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.

TIMETABLE

- Students who want to participate need to send a registration form to tim.schaerfke@fau.de by **March 1**. The registration form can be found on the website of Prof. Büttner's chair. Note that there is a limited number of places in the seminar.

- Countries for analysis in the term paper are allocated to students by **March 5** based on the preference indicated in the participation form.
- Within **one week** of receiving the allocated country, i.e. until **March 12**, students need to confirm or cancel their participation by sending an email to timmschaerfke@fau.de. If no email is received, your participation will be automatically canceled. If participation is confirmed, the failure to participate and hand in a thesis would result in grade 5.0.
- If not all places in the seminar are filled, a second round of registration will be conducted.
- An introductory meeting will take place on **April 16 at 13:45**.
- All papers are due on **June 15**.
- The seminar takes place on **July 9 and 10**.

SEMINAR PAPER

The paper has to be submitted as **PDF via email** to Timm Schärfke (timmschaerfke@fau.de) by **June 15**.

The term paper should be about **12 A4 pages** (formatted according to the chair specifications).

Please check the detailed guide for scientific work, which will help you in the preparation of your seminar work, before you start working on your seminar paper. **You will find the guide on StudOn.**

SEMINAR

The seminar will take place from **Thursday, July 9, to Friday, July 10**, at Burg Hoheneck, Ipsheim. If the number of participants is too small, the seminar will take place in the building of the department at Lange Gasse 20.

You shall prepare a **20-minute presentation** based on your term paper. Each presentation is followed by a **10-minute discussion round**, where each student is encouraged to ask questions or comment on the topic.

The grading is based on the quality of your term paper (50%), your presentation (30%) and your participation in the discussions during the seminar (20%).

COSTS

Except for a small fee (**15 Euro**), the costs for the trip from Nuremberg (main station) to Ipsheim and back as well as for the accommodation and meals (except drinks) are fully covered by the chair. The participation fee has to be paid during the introductory meeting on **April 16**.