

STUDY GUIDE

POLITICAL CULTURE AND INTERCULTURALITY: VIEWS FROM NORTHERN EUROPE

Organised by
Karlstad University

1. IDENTIFYING DATA.		
· Course Name.	Political culture and interculturality: Views from Northern Europe 26-27 S1	
· Coordinating University.	Karlstad University	
· Partner Universities Involved.	N/A	
· Course Field(s).	Intercultural Studies	
· Related Study Programme.	CROSSING BORDERS: Interculturality and Multilingualism in Europe and Beyond	
· ISCED Code.	0314	
· SDG.	5. Gender Equality 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth 10. Reduced Inequalities 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	
· Study Level.	B	
· EUNICE Key Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green – strongly • Orange- moderately • Red – partially • Blank cell - not at all 	
	Problem solving	Orange
	Teamworking	Orange
	Communication	Green
	Self-management	Orange
	Cognitive flexibility	Red
	Digital competence	Orange

	Technical competence	
	Global intercultural competence	

· Number of ECTS credits allocated.	6
· Mode of Delivery.	Online live
· Language of Instruction.	English
· Course Dates.	14 September – 13 November 2026
· Precise Schedule of the Lectures.	<p>There are online lectures every Monday between 1 and 2.30 pm CET and online seminars every second Wednesday between 1 and 2.30 pm CET. The expected student work rate is 20 hours a week.</p> <p>Monday September 14, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 1.</p> <p>Monday September 21, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 2. Wednesday September 23, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. First seminar</p> <p>Monday September 28, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 3.</p> <p>Monday October 5, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 4. Wednesday October 7, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Second seminar</p> <p>Monday October 12, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 5.</p> <p>Monday October 19, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 6. Wednesday October 21, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Third seminar</p> <p>Monday October 26, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 7.</p> <p>Monday November 2, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lecture 8. Wednesday November 4, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Fourth seminar</p>
· Key Words.	Welfare state, The Nordics, Intercultural relations, Gender, Citizenship, Diversity, Trade unions, Labour, Political culture
· Catchy Phrase.	The Nordics – in all fairness

· Prerequisites and co-requisites.	English Level B2
· Number of EUNICE students that can attend the course.	90
· Number of EUNICE students that can attend the course per institution	10 spots per partner university
· Course inscription procedure(s).	N/A

2. CONTACT DETAILS.

· Department.	Department of Language, Literature and Intercultural Studies
· Name of Lecturer.	Staffan Löfving
· E-mail.	staffan.lofving@kau.se
· Other Lecturers.	Annika Malmsten, Ekatherina Zhukova

3. COURSE CONTENT.

The course introduces Nordic political culture and how Nordic welfare models are transferred to and reinterpreted in other parts of the world. Nordic societal models and ideals are portrayed as exceptional in comparative value studies. The course evaluates such presumed exceptionalism and the quantitative methods used to define, assess, and compare cultural values. Through an intercultural approach inspired by critical cultural theory, and by placing Nordic political culture in an international and historical context, students are offered the opportunity to reflect on welfare and "workfare," multiculturalism and segregation, trust and austerity, as well as equality and feminism.

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. give an account of various scientific approaches to Nordic political culture,
2. give an account of contemporary intercultural policy research in Nordic contexts,
3. use intercultural methods in a comparative approach to Nordic political culture, and
4. critically reflect upon Nordic exceptionalism.

5. OBJECTIVES.

6. COURSE ORGANISATION.

UNITS

1.	Introduction to Political Culture in the Nordics
2.	Gender, Feminism, and Foreign Policy
3.	The Post-Multicultural Debate
4.	Neoliberalism and Labor Relations from Welfare to Workfare

LEARNING RESOURCES AND TOOLS.

Scholarly literature, Audiovisual media, Podcasts, Websites

PLANNED LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND TEACHING METHODS.

Lectures, Group discussions, Seminars

7. ASSESSMENT METHODS, CRITERIA AND PERIOD.

Assessment is based on individual oral and written assignments.

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course.

OBSERVATIONS.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND TEACHING MATERIALS.

Books

Andersson, J. and C. Howell (eds). 2025. *Nordic Neoliberalisms: Perspectives on Economic, Social and Cultural Change in the Nordics after 1970*. London and New York: Routledge.

Byrkjeflot, H., Mjøset, L., Mordhorst, M. & Petersen, K. (red.) (2022). *The Making and Circulation of Nordic Models: Ideas and Images*. London and New York: Routledge

Saunders, Robert A. (2020). *Geopolitics, Northern Europe, and Nordic Noir: What Television Series Tell Us About World Politics*. London and New York: Routledge

Book Chapters

Fuchs, D. (2009). The Political Culture Paradigm, in Russell J. Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*. (p. 161-183) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Löfving, S. (2017). The Gift of Labor: The Town, the Union, and the Corporate State in the Demise of the Swedish Car Industry. In Durrenberger, E. P. (Editor). *Uncertain*

Times: The Anthropology of Labor in a Neoliberal World (p. 61-86) Boulder: University Press of Colorado

Journal Articles

Zhukova E, Rosén Sundström M, Elgström O. (2022). Feminist foreign policies (FFPs) as strategic narratives: Norm translation in Sweden, Canada, France, and Mexico. *Review of International Studies*. 48(1):195-216.

Zhukova, E. (2021). Postcolonial Logic and Silences in Strategic Narratives: Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy in Conflict-Affected States. *Global Society*, 37(1), 1–22.

Zhukova, E. (2023). A Struggle for Hegemonic Feminisation in Six Feminist Foreign Policies Or, How Social Hierarchies Work in World Politics. *Millennium*, 51(3), 839-865.

Zhukova, E. (2025). Silencing Commercial Sex, Assisted Reproduction, and Sex and Reproductive Tourisms in Feminist Foreign Policies. *Critical Policy Studies*, 1–19.