

EU Voices in Comparative Perspective: A Multimedia Curriculum Development Initiative

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During my visit to Washington, D.C. from May 31 to June 5, 2026, I conducted a series of interviews, meetings, and on-site recordings focused on contemporary political issues and European Union relations. The trip combined academic engagement, diplomatic outreach, and documentation work for my course-related podcasts.

My week in Washington began with a meeting at Howard University with Professor Clarence Lusane, whose expertise in global racial politics and European Union affairs provided valuable context for understanding current geopolitical dynamics. Later that afternoon, I attended the panel “Overcoming Communist Oppression: Historical Lessons and Reflections” at the Victims of Communism Museum, featuring former President of Latvia Egils Levits and historians Gatis Krums, Ilmars Mezs, and Janis Silins. The day concluded with a diplomatic, off-the-record, meeting at the Embassy of Hungary with Ambassador Szabolcs Takacs, where we discussed regional security and Central European perspectives.

The next day, I met with Ambassador Pjer Šimunović at the Embassy of Croatia, followed by attendance at a lecture on Kazakhstan and Siberia’s memory expeditions at the Victims of Communism Museum. I also recorded an on-camera segment at the Thomas Garrigue Masaryk monument, documenting themes of democratic leadership and historical legacy.

Towards the middle of the week, I continued my recordings, including a policy discussion with Donatienne Ruy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a video at the Eleftherios Venizelos monument at the Embassy of Greece, and a meeting with Ambassador Gediminas Varvuolis at the Embassy of Lithuania, further strengthening the European Union’s Baltic and Eastern European components.

Later, I met with Ambassador Kristjan Prikk at the Embassy of Estonia, followed by interviews on German politics and the rise of populism in European Union member states at Georgetown University with graduate student Luca Vozzi and Professor Jeffrey J. Anderson, respectively. I concluded the day by attending the lecture “Neighbors Under Fire: Ukraine, Moldova, and the Future of Regional Security” at Ukraine House, which provided timely perspectives on the impact of the current war in Ukraine on the European Union and its neighbors.

The final day featured a series of meetings at the Delegation of the European Union, including discussions with Ambassador Javier Sancho Velázquez, Minister Counsellor Kristian Hedberg, and Dr. Florent Bernard. These conversations offered a comprehensive view of EU policy priorities in innovation, transportation, and research.

Overall, the trip provided a rich combination of interviews, scholarly dialogue, and diplomatic insights. Thanks to the EU Jean Monnet Faculty Curriculum Development Grant, the recordings and notes from conversations gathered during the week will significantly contribute to my ongoing work on European political history, transatlantic relations, and the study of memory in post-authoritarian societies.