

# European Cultures and Identities

*Syllabus 2025*  
(Version May)

**summer**school  
**UTRECHT**



**Universiteit Utrecht**

## Materials

Course materials and readings are provided by the Utrecht Summer School

## Period

7 July – 18 July, 2025

## Credits

4.0 ECTS + Certificate of Attendance

## Faculty

[Frank Birkenholz MA](#) (Course Coordinator and Lecturer)

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[Dr. Carlotta Capurro](#) (Coordinator Summer School)

Faculty of Humanities, Utrecht University

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### Guest lecturers

[Dr. Jeroen Koch](#) (Utrecht University)

[Dr. Maria Falina](#) (Utrecht University)

## Utrecht Summer School

<http://www.utrechtsummerschool.nl>  
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## Location of course (seminars and lectures)

Utrecht University

Utrecht, The Netherlands

Room: Drift 25, room 002 (ground floor, enter via Utrecht University Library, Drift 27)

(for directions and information, see [link](#))

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# Introduction and overview

Welcome to the Utrecht Summer School and welcome to European Cultures & Identities. The aim of this course is to introduce you to Europe. This is a continent with many different countries that all maintain their own political systems, cultural traditions, and national identities. At the same time, since the second half of the twentieth century, a majority of the European countries have been engaged in a joint project aimed at economic and political integration. We will explore how this mix of particularism and unity has developed historically.

## Summer Course Format

Lecturers from Utrecht University will introduce various European topics, key conceptual frameworks, and case-studies in different educational formats: lectures, seminars, and excursions. The course can be divided into three general themes:

- 1) The idea of Europe
- 2) European Cultures and Identities: material and immaterial
- 3) European Cultures and Identities and the wider world

Within each theme there will be two or three lectures, accompanied by seminars, in which lecturers will address one of the following topics:

The Idea of Europe (theme 1)  
Nationalism (theme 1)  
Heritage and Memory (theme 2)  
Art (theme 2)  
Transnationalism (theme 3)  
Colonialism/Imperialism (theme 3)

The summer course has an interactive and intensive character. Active participation is expected from all students, particularly during seminars, where students are encouraged to engage in discussions, ask questions, and collaborate in group work. During lectures, students are expected to attend attentively and take notes. Materials covered in the seminars and lectures will be assessed in the written exam. In addition, thorough individual preparation through the assigned readings and the timely completion of portfolio assignments are essential for successfully passing the course.

Please note that the course schedule and course materials are subject to change. A finalized schedule will be provided shortly before the course begins.

## Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of the course are:

1. To obtain a grounding in European Cultures and Identities on a conceptual level, and to think critically about these topics.
2. To learn to apply conceptual knowledge about European Cultures and Identities to understand cultural expressions and learn to think about the creation of cultures and identities on a deeper level.
3. To learn to apply this knowledge to case studies by practicing with writing assignments, a presentation, and an exam.

## Assessment forms

The course will conclude with three assessments, covering all the lectures, seminars and reading materials:

### Assessment one: portfolio

For the first assessment, you will hand in a portfolio consisting of the class assignments you have made during the summer school (deadline: Wednesday 16 July; 10% of your grade). Hand in via email ([f.birkenholz@uu.nl](mailto:f.birkenholz@uu.nl))

### Assessment two: group presentation

For the second assessment, you will prepare a group presentation about one particular European state or nation, European organization or event, and discuss its relationship with the European Union and/or the concept of Europe at large. We will form groups in week 1 – presentations will be in week 2. You will be asked to relate your case study to the lectures, seminars, and reading materials, and you will be challenged to formulate your own argument accordingly (The group as a whole gets a grade which counts for 30% of your grade).

### Assessment three: exam

The third assessment will take the form of a written exam on the core themes of the course (readings, seminars, lectures) during which your knowledge acquisition of the material will be tested (60% of your grade).

# Overview of Reading Material (additional literature TBA)

## Main literature

1. Buettner, Elizabeth. "Europe and Its Entangled Colonial Pasts: Europeanizing the 'Imperial Turn'." In *Decolonizing Colonial Heritage: New Agendas, Actors and Practices in and beyond Europe*, edited by Britta Schilling and Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, 25–43. London: Routledge, 2022. [University Utrecht Library Link](#)
2. McCormick, John. *Europeanism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. (Introduction 1-16 and sections from Chapter 1: The Idea of Europe 25-40) [University Utrecht Library Link](#)
3. Pagden, Anthony. "Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent." In *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, edited by Anthony Pagden, 33–54. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. [University Utrecht Library Link](#)
4. Patel, Kiran Klaus. "An Emperor without Clothes? The Debate about Transnational History Twenty-Five Years On." *Histoire @ Politique* 26, no. 4 (2015), pages 1-16. [Open Access Link](#)
5. Wintle, Michael, *Europa and the Bull, Europe, and European Studies: Visual Images as Historical Source Material*. Amsterdam: Vossiuspers UvA, 2004. [University Utrecht Library Link](#)

# Academic Programme

7 July – 18 July 2025

## Week 1

Monday 7 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
10:00-10:45  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Opening remarks:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<b><i>Welcome and introduction to the course; group formation presentations</i></b>
11:00-13:00  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Lecture 1:</u></b> Dr. Jeroen Koch (UU)	<b><i>European Cultures and Identities: The Idea of Europe</i></b>  <b>Readings:</b> Anthony Pagden, 'Europe. Conceptualizing a Continent', <i>The Idea of Europe</i> (2013), chapter 1, pp. 33-54.

Tuesday 8 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
11:00-13:00  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Lecture 2:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<b>European States, Nationalism and Europeanism</b>  Readings: see below (McCormick)
14:00-16:00  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Seminar 1:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<b><i>European States, Nationalism and Europeanism</i></b>  <b>Readings:</b>  McCormick, John. <i>Europeanism</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. (Introduction 1-16 and sections from Chapter 1: The Idea of Europe 25-40) <a href="#">University Utrecht Library Link</a>

		<p><b>In class assignment (no preparation needed):</b></p> <p>With the whole class together: analyse an early modern (c. 1500–1750) map of Europe and a modern map of Europe (c. 1780–1900).</p> <p><b>Portfolio assignment (deadline July 15 Wednesday)</b></p> <p>Write a 350-word text connecting the course material of yesterday's and today's lecture and seminar with our analysis of the maps.</p>
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Wednesday 9 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<b>11:00-13:00</b>  Drift 25, room 002.	<b><u>Lecture 3:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<p><b><i>Unity in Diversity : studying the history of Europe from a transnational perspective</i></b></p> <p><b>Readings:</b> see below seminar 4 (Patel)</p>
<b>14:00-16:00</b>  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Seminar 2:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<p><b><i>Unity in Diversity : studying the history of Europe from a transnational perspective</i></b></p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>Patel, Kiran Klaus. "An emperor without clothes? The debate about Transnational History twenty-five years on." <i>Histoire@Politique</i> 26, no. 4 (2015): 1-16.</p>
<b>17:00</b>  Centraal Museum Utrecht Agnietenstraat 1	<b><u>Grand Opening</u></b> <b><u>Utrecht University</u></b> <b><u>Summer School</u></b>	<p><b>Festive opening of the UU Summer School Period for lecturers and students</b></p> <p><i>(optional, not mandatory)</i></p>



Thursday 10 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<b>9:00-17:00</b>  Gather at Janskerkhof square for Bus 09:30  Gather at bus for return 17:00	<b><u>Excursion #1:</u></b> Mauritshuis Den Haag	<b>Provisional Programme:</b> 9:30 bus departure from Janskerkhof 11:00-13:00: visit to the Mauritshuis with guided museum tour  13:00-17:00: free time in Den Haag (recommendations: city tour from Den Haag Info Store – Scheveningen Beach Area)  17:00 return to Utrecht by bus

Friday 11 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<b>11:00-13:00</b>  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Lecture 4:</u></b> TBA	What is European about European Art? – by TBA (GKW Art historian)  <b>Readings TBA</b>
<b>14:00-16:00</b>  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Seminar 3:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<b><i>Art and Visual Representations of Europe from Antiquity to today – The Myth of Europe</i></b>  <b>Readings:</b> Wintle, Michael. Europa and the Bull, Europe, and European Studies : Visual Images as Historical Source Material (2004), pages 5-36.  Portfolio assignment (hand in latest Wednesday July 16)  Write a 350 word text where you relate today's lecture and seminar to visual representations of Europe.

***Weekend (12-13 July) – free time and self-study***  
**Week 2**

Monday 14 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
11:00-13:00  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Lecture 5 :</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<b><i>Europe: Colonialism, imperialism and post-colonial history</i></b>  Readings: see below (Buettner)
14:00-16:00  Drift 25, room 002	<b><u>Seminar 4 :</u></b> Frank Birkenholz (UU)	<b><i>Europe: Colonialism: imperialism and post-colonial history</i></b>  <b>Readings:</b> Buettner, Elizabeth. "Europe and Its Entangled Colonial Pasts: Europeanizing the 'Imperial Turn'." In <i>Decolonizing Colonial Heritage: New Agendas, Actors and Practices in and beyond Europe</i> , edited by Britta Schilling and Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, 25–43. London: Routledge, 2022. <a href="#">University Utrecht Library Link</a>

Tuesday 15 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<b>Excursion</b> Janskerkhof square  Bus  9:30-17:00	<b><u>Excursion 2:</u></b> <i>Lakenhal Museum in Leiden</i>	<b>Provisional Programme:</b>  9:30 bus departure from Janskerkhof  11:00 Lakenhal Museum with guided museum tour  13:00 Free time in Leiden Recommendations (historical city tour, Rembrandt Tour VVV Leiden)  17:00 return to Utrecht

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Wednesday 16 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<b>11:00-13:00</b> <b>Drift 25, room 002</b>	<b><u>Lecture 6:</u></b> Dr. Maria Falina (UU)	A Divided European Memory in East and West: The Challenges of Creating A United European Memory
<b>14:30-17:00</b> <b>Drift 25, room 002</b>	<b><u>Seminar 5:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz	<b>Assessment 1: Group presentations (40%)</b>

Thursday 17 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<b>13:00-15:00</b> <b>Drift 25, room 002</b>	<b><u>Exam:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz	<b>Assessment 2: Exam (60%)</b>

Friday 18 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<b>11:30</b> UU Summer School Office Janskerkhof 30	<b><u>Handing in accommodation keys</u></b> Frank Birkenholz	Students that make use of the Utrecht Summer School accommodation option hand in their keys to the course coordinator.  The course coordinator will hand in their keys to the USS desk.
<b>16:00-18:00</b> <b>Drift 25, room 002</b>  <b>Location Drinks:</b> Hofman - Janskerkhof (see right)	<b><u>Closing remarks:</u></b> Frank Birkenholz	Closing and concluding remarks on the summer school, presentation of certificates, and farewell drinks at café Hofman  Location Hofman: Janskerkhof 17A, 3512BM Utrecht, The Netherlands

# Assessments, Attendance and Grading

## Assessments

There will be two assessments that both test your knowledge and challenge you to formulate your own argument based on the course matter:

1. Portfolio Class assignments: 10%
2. Group presentation: 30%
3. Final exam: 60%

Both assessments will take place at the end of week 2 and you need an average grade of at least 5,5 to pass the course and earn credits. Please note there is no possibility for resits or repair assignments

## Attendance and Grading

Note that full attendance is expected in all lectures, seminar sessions, and excursions. Students that fail the attendance requirements will be dropped from this course. In case of unforeseen circumstances contact the course coordinator Frank Birkenholz via email as soon as possible.

Your grades will be numerical grades according to the Dutch grading system. Dutch grades range from 0 (very bad) to 10 (excellent). At Utrecht University, a 5,5 is the lowest passing grade, though note that this might be different at other (Dutch) institutions. Also note that grade inflation has not affected the Dutch grading system as much as it has some American institutions. Grades of 9 and higher are rarely given, the most common grades are between 6 and 8. The Utrecht University student registration system (Osiris) that will produce your transcript will round off all grades to whole numerals for 5 and lower, and half numbers for 5.5 and higher. On course work and examinations, however, it is customary to receive a grade that has not been rounded off. Plusses and minuses are sometimes used, and count for one-fourth of a point, for instance: 8- = 7,75. Meaning of numerical grades:

9.00-10.00	Excellent
8.00-8.99	Very good
7.50-7.99	Good
7.00-7.49	Very satisfactory
6.50-6.99	Satisfactory
6.00-6.49	Sufficient
5.50-5.99	Acceptable; minimum pass
5.00-5.49	Insufficient; fail
4.00-4.99	Unsatisfactory
3.00-3.99	Very unsatisfactory
2.00-2.99	Bad

0.00-1.99                      Very bad

Note that conversion of grades that you have received in the Netherlands to grades at your home institution is the responsibility of your home institution, not Utrecht University. This chart should be used as an indication; no rights can be drawn from it.

\* Any case of plagiarism will be reported to the home institution and results in a course failure, meaning 1.00 as final grade for this course.

## Online Education

You have received your Utrecht University login code (SOLIS-ID) from the Summer School administration. If this is not the case, send them an e-mail at [summerschool@uu.nl](mailto:summerschool@uu.nl) or contact them by phone: +31 (0)302534400. You can use this login code to gain access to the digital teaching environment on Microsoft Teams and to the digital environment of the university library.

## Statement on use of Generative AI / ChatGPT

The use of GenAI tools such as ChatGPT affects the achievement of the learning objectives you work on during the course. Based on this, the staff make choices about the use of such tools.

In view of the learning objectives of this course, the use of GenAI as a tool is **not** allowed.

If staff suspect that you have used GenAI for an assignment, other than as permitted by this course manual, they may invite you to explain your work, and its genesis, orally. The staff then will evaluate further participation in the course.

## Current political map of Europe

