



Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Europe (B27)

Credit weighting:	4.0 ECTS credits
Teaching period(s):	6 July 2026 - 17 July 2025
Level:	Bachelor
Teaching methods:	102 hours of lectures/field excursions + assignments (self-study).
Course leader:	Bart Toering, MSc
Lecturer(s):	Bart Toering, MSc Ruud Verschuur, EMP

 Dive into Europe's innovative and transformative landscape

 Collaborate with talented peers from around the world

 Work towards final presentations whilst developing key skills

Description

This course focuses on the value of knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship in European business and will familiarize students with the interplay between science and technology and the commercialization of knowledge and design. It will be challenging and we will visit some top-companies in the Netherlands. The course covers two weeks and if you like you can add one week in Italy (course B46) to the course.

Building business models form an in-depth understanding of the gap between innovation and business in Europe. You will explore innovation challenges faced by European companies, gain insights into how governments and business cultures in the European Union influence innovation, and discover the traits of innovative ventures and people.

We start with the focus of successful clusters in the Netherlands. Agribusiness is one of them, and so is the Food Valley Netherlands.

Having the capacity to adapt to an ever-changing business environment is turning out to be the single most important factor for companies to remain successful. With the European Union (EU) struggling for its once crucial role in the global economy, this perhaps goes even more for European companies than for those on other continents. Incredibly tough competition -both within the EU as well as from other parts of the world-, an economic crisis that does not seem to end, and the legislative opportunities and barriers within the EU, are all factors that are challenging European companies and initiatives in remaining successful players in their field.

This two-weeks' course provides you with the opportunity to explore these challenges and the solutions companies find, as well as gain an insight into how the different business cultures in the EU influence the choices that are made. Optimization of supply chains, emergence of new business models, implementation of corporate social responsibility, focus on sustainable innovation, and creative approaches to value proposition and brand identity – these are all (parts of) innovation strategies used by European companies to deal with their challenges and prepare for the future.

The rapidly changing business world also affects today's job market and increases the need for innovative and entrepreneurial individuals. Often, this requires more than a brilliant idea or unique skill set. For the next generation of leaders this course offers the opportunity to develop the integral field of expertise mind-set, skills, competencies and experiential learning that enable you to promote innovation either as a productive member of an emerging firm or as an entrepreneur. You will work on topics like personal values, communication, and team diversity enabling you to develop your own creativity, opportunity-seeking and opportunity-recognizing abilities.

The course combines a theoretical and practical approach. Interactive lectures, group assignments and company visits will help you to shape your views on what works and what doesn't.

You will build your own innovative business model.

During the course we will pay attention to the supply chain. The focus will be on production, logistics, inbound aspects and marketing strategy. If you decide to add-on the study-trip to Italy (B46) you will also focus on the market-proposition, and will so 'close' the exploration of business modelling.

As part of the course, you will build your own innovative business model.

NB: This course is part of:

The five-weeks track: [Innovation in European Business](#). This five-week track can also be extended to six weeks by adding the Global Management Simulation programme (B47);

the six-weeks track is B45 ([Innovation in European Business XXL](#))

What previous students say about this course

"I thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of the classes, the programme leader was an incredible professor and made lessons so much fun. The social programmes were great and I met a lot of wonderful people from across the globe. Every interaction taught me something new and exciting".

"This is a very interesting course. If you're looking to meet lots of new friends and a good and interactive professor with a broad perspective, it is absolutely perfect. It will give you a good and trustworthy look into (sustainable) business, innovation and entrepreneurship in Europe.

Target audience

This course is an interesting challenge for students in Business Studies, and is also open to Bachelor and Master students from other fields. The main requirement is that students have either some background or an interest in innovation, trends and issues in the EU.

A good command of English is necessary! Given the interactive nature of teaching, students must have the capabilities to actively contribute in class and communicate (understand and speak) in English well, ideally min level B2.

Aim of the course

- Analyzing mega trends
- Planning a Scenario for an idea/innovation
- Developing skills in Idea Generation
- Deconstruction Supply Chain
- Understanding and apply marketing strategy basics
- Developing knowledge on Dutch clusters, such the agribusiness
- Developing knowledge on innovation models and business models
- Final objective: build your own sustainable innovative business model: from idea to launch

Study load

102 hours of lectures/field excursions + assignments (self-study).

Please note: You must attend all learning activities (e.g. workshops, fieldwork) to be able to receive the Certificate of Participation and/or the credits for this course, unless absence is officially approved by the teachers and the coordinator of the Utrecht Summer School.

Course calendar

The day to day programme is subject to changes depending on the availability of the guest lecturers

Saturday and Sunday, 4-5 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
12.00-18.00	Key pick up	<i>You will find the exact key pick up location in the pre-departure information, which becomes available after you have paid the course fee.</i>

Monday, 6 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9.30: -12.00	Welcome Overview program Personal Style Inventory peed dating groups	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>
12.00-13.00	Lunch **	
13:00-17:00	The Need for disruptive innovation & Introduction assignment The Challenge	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>

Tuesday, 7 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9.30-12:00	Brabant Dutch Provence Knowledge Hub	<i>Prof. Dr. J. van den Broek, Director Brabant Knowledge & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>
12:00-13:00	Lunch **	
13:00-17:00	Navigating the evolving	<i>Prof. R. Verschuur & Prof.</i>

	<i>global retail landscape; trends and innovation.</i> <i>Mini-assignment Retail innovation</i>	<i>B.P. Toering</i>
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Wednesday, 8 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9.30-12:00	<i>Innovation in the European Moving Industry</i>	<i>G. Geijtenbeek & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>
12:00	Lunch on the way **	
12:00-18:00	<i>Visit Rietveld House and visit Smart City Utrecht Uithof</i>	<i>Prof. R. Verschuur & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>

Thursday, 9 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9:30-12:00	<i>Trends analysis for innovation</i>	<i>Prof. B. Delmeé & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>
12:00-13:00	Lunch **	
13:00-17:00	<i>Trends and strategy for idea generation and Workshop</i>	<i>Prof. B. Delmeé & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>

Friday, 10 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9:30-12:00	<i>Dutch Clusters and Diamond of Porter and Business models Location Matters</i>	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>

	<i>Study Chapter 5,6,8,10: Doing Business in Europe</i>	
12:00-13:00	Lunch **	
13.00-1700	Innovation supply chain and CSR Rondeel case Agribusiness	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>

Week 2

Saturday and Sunday, 11-12 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
Free time		

Monday, 13 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
10.00-13:00	Business Case Retail Strategy and Culture: International branding from a cultural perspective in business	<i>Prof. R. Verschuur & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>
13:00-14:00	Lunch **	
14:00-17:00	Workshop Customer Value and innovation	<i>Prof. R. Willemsen & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>

Tuesday, 14 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9:30-12:00	Scenario basics	<i>Prof. B. Delmeé & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>
12:00-13:00	Lunch **	
13:00-17:00	Scenario planning Workshop	<i>Prof. B. Delmeé & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>

Wednesday, 15 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9:30-12:00	From Idea to Business Strategy Pre Pitch Hortus Botanicas	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>

12:00	Lunch on the way **	
12:00-18:00	Visit Food Valley Zaanstreek Food Cluster	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>

Thursday, 16 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9:30-12:00	Entry models Europe Preparation Business Proposal and Coaching <i>Study Chapter 5,6,8,10: Doing Business Europe</i>	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>
12:00-13:00	Lunch **	
13:00-17:00	Assessment Proposal Creativity and Business Preparation and Coaching	<i>Prof. B.P. Toering & Prof. R. Verschuur</i>

Friday, 17 July 2026		
Time	Activity	Description
9:00-13:30	Preparation innovation businessmodel	<i>Prof. R. Verschuur & Prof. B.P. Toering</i>
1300	Lunch during preparation**	
13:30-17:30	Pitching Proposal and closing ceremony with jury <i>Drinks</i>	<i>jury</i>

**Please note: Students must bring/cover their own lunch
The lunch times in the programme can vary, these times are just an indication.