See the change.

Picking the right **European Studies**Specialisation



A Project Major Booklet By **020 / 2021**

University of Amsterdam

Choosing the right European studies specialisation

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Welcoming message

Choosing a specialisation that suits your interest takes extensive time and effort before coming to the right decision. The opportunities offered by the University of Amsterdam are extremely limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic: accessibility became remarkably confined, creating difficulties for students to gain first-hand information from both professionals and students within the fields of their specialisation. It is out of this lack of opportunities that 020 decided to establish Project Major.

informative Besides events. Project Major entails a series of booklets composed by students who are currently enrolled at the University of Amsterdam in the course they are writing for. Within these booklets, one can find the specific characteristics and interests that would help students flourish in their specialisation. Furthermore, the booklets include the exact courses within the discipline, accompanied by the practicalities, such as registration dates and additional study-related specifications. Finally, we provide insights from current students and professionals within the field of the specialisations.

By creating this project, 020 hopes to bridge the gap emphasised by the pandemic to help students make a decision that suits them the most. If there are any inquiries or feedback concerning Project Major, we would love to hear from you. Get in touch with us through contact@020together.nl or visit our website, www.0-2-0.nl.

Sincerely,

The 020 team

East-European studies

Academic and Personal Interest

Most people choosing the East European Studies major have, unsurprisingly, a relatively distinct interest in East European affairs. While being one of the least picked majors, the specialisation mainly attracts students who really enjoyed the "Other Europe" course, which is offered as an introduction in the first year. Equally important is the fact that students are not only interested in political developments within the region today, but also have an interest in the history and culture of Eastern Europe. In the same vein, you will have a lot of students who chose Russian as their lanquage specialisation in their first year. Nevertheless, choosing the Russian lanquage in the first year is not a requirement to excel in this major.

Students choosing this major can expect to concern themselves with the historical, cultural, and political developments of the region and gain different disciplinary insights into the relationship between Eastern Europe, the West, and the European Union.

The Course Itself

While the major is one of the five distinct majors within the European Studies programme, attention should be paid to the fact that especially the first introductory courses are very historical. Prepare to receive an abundance of information about Russia and the Soviet Union since 1900 in 20th century Russian and Soviet History. You will be expected to rigidly do the readings and comprehend lecture material to comply with the requirement of writing a biweekly essay, which will make up around half of your total grade. The other components of your grade are the final essay and class participation, which is also easier to manage once you do the readings.

The second mandatory course is called Trials of Communism, which deals with famous political trials of the twentieth century in Eastern Europe. Here, you will learn about the nature of state-building in post-World War II Europe and how the Communist government consolidated their power in society. It is one of the only courses offered in East European Studies in which you take an exam. However, another part of the grade is determined by group presentations and projects.

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The electives in the majors are more diverse than the mandatory courses in the sense that they range from cultural subjects, such analysing the interdependence between state and media under Putin (Russian Pop Culture), to conflict resolution and transitional justice, which is tackled in the course Post-Yugoslav States and Transitional Justice. You can really tailor your electives to your disciplinary interests, while still concerning yourself with the complexities and diversity of Eastern Europe.

Most Popular Future Options

Common master's degrees after finishing your bachelor with the Eastern Europe major are the complementary master's programmes in fields such as East European/ Eurasian/Russian Studies, European Policy or European Identity and Integration.

After pursuing a master in a field like this, there are several future options for you. Through the multidisciplinary outlook, which you will acquire as a student of East European Studies, you will gain an in-depth understanding of the region. This knowledge can prepare the grounds for a career at a European institution, such as the OSCE and European Council for Foreign Affairs. Moreover, you can pursue a career in a national ministry of foreign affairs. If you have a great interest in writing, choosing the East Europe Major can provide you with knowledge to start pursuing a career in the media, such as being a correspondent. Lastly, you can continue researching and remain in academia.

Practical Information on the Specialisation

East European Studies is one of the more ambiguous majors, which is why a lot of students do not end up choosing it, as they prefer the straight-forwardness and practicality of the Law and Economics major. Nevertheless, rest assured that if you do have strong affinity with Eastern Europe and are interested in the contemporary developments of the region, this major will be beneficial to you in acquiring the skills necessary for a job in your field of interest.

Another great bonus of the major is that if you show genuine interest and study diligently, you will be rewarded with favorable grading, which will usually inspire you to work even harder. Be prepared to write many essays (and not that many exams) and continuously improve your writing skills. Through that, by the end, writing a final paper will be less of a burden than an exercise to test these academic writing skills. Lastly, by choosing the East European Studies Major, you will access not only the toolbox of academic research in the field of humanities, but also the ability to analyse different developments from various disciplinary fields, which prepares you for the diversity of international institutions in your later career path.

European Law

Academic and Personal Interest

European Law is meant for students who are interested in the law and the political and administrative forces that help determine the character of the EU, so, generally speaking, the legal organisation of the EU. It is a major where your reading skills will be heavily developed through learning how to read judgements, treaties, and about the organisation and structure of legal texts.

The Course Itself

In the European Law major, you will have five mandatory courses and 2 out of 6 restricted choice electives. The mandatory courses are: Institutional and Substantive Law of the EU (ISLEU), the Major Workshop in European Law, Philosophy of Humanities in Area Studies and in European Studies (2), and the European Studies Workshop: European Studies at Work. The restricted choice electives are: EU Migration Law, EU Private International Law, Federalism and the Separation of Powers in the European Union, Unequal Europe: Social, Economic and Spatial Justice Across European Cities and Regions, EU Internal Market Law, and EU International Relations Law. All are worth 6 ECs.

Moreover, you can pursue a career in a national ministry of foreign affairs. If you have a great interest in writing, choosing the East Europe Major can provide you with knowledge to start pursuing a career in the media, such as being a correspondent. Lastly, you can continue researching and remain in academia.

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Institutional and Substantive Law of the EU

In this course you will essentially learn the basics of EU law and its terminology. You will learn about the history of the EU constitution, how votings and decisions are conducted, and how to read a judgement of the Courts of Justice. The assessment consists of two exams (40% each) and a presentation (20%). The course will be worth 12ECs of your major.

Major Workshop in European Law

In this practical class, you will learn to write using legal terminology. The assessment will be based on you writing an advocate's general opinion (as if you were one of the advocates at the EU Courts of Justice) about a fictitious legal case.

Philosophy of Humanities

The two philosophy courses will give you insight into the theories and philosophical work behind European Studies and also in humanities and social sciences. You will learn about European culture, history and language, as well as the most important philosophical movements in Europe such as postmodernism and eurocentrism. This will be delved into deeper in the Philosophy in European Studies, where you will also look into law, politics, and geography and how these influenced shifts in thought and culture in Europe along the years.

European Studies Workshop

European Studies at Work: In this practical workshop, you will learn more about how to apply practical and theoretical knowledge in the field of European Studies to the professional world. You will learn how to apply your knowledge on European Studies into fictitious case studies, especially with legal skills and how the course transmits into the job market. This workshop is made to give you insight into what career and academic paths you can follow with your major in European Law and overall course in European Studies, an area where often many students feel they lack guidance towards the end of their studies

Most Popular Future Options

Most students that take the major of European Law will often go into a career in law by taking a master's track and then often working at a law firm or consulting agency, for example. It is important to know, however, that if you want to follow a master's in law at the UvA, you will need 45ECs of law courses prior, so it would be good to consider this and register for extra law courses during your major so you aren't caught by surprise. You can also go into fields such as diplomacy, working at NGOs, international political organisations and policy analysis and advisory, for example.

Practical Information on the Specialisation

It should come as no surprise that the major in European Law comes with many law courses throughout the year. This means that you will pick up on many skills that you would otherwise have as a law student, but also that the material will be filled with understanding law jargon, terminology, and writing in the field, accompanied by a lot of readings. You will have to learn how to read and interpret a judgement and how to successfully write case summaries. For this, it is advised that you compile your own database with all the cases you go through, their abbreviations, and the terminology as it can be quite confusing and overwhelming in the beginning.

European Culture

Academic and Personal Interest

When choosing the major European Culture, one quickly notices that most of the people who head in this direction have a close connection or big interest in European history. However, though interested in history, this is not the specialisation in which they'd like to end up. This is not weird since it's well known that history and culture are connected to one another. Another reason why ES--students choose the major European Culture is the motivation to look at European politics or conflicts and the European Union from a cultural perspective. Think about for example the Catalonian crisis or the Ireland, Northern-Ireland matter.

European Culture is also the most up todate major. The material for the other majors has changed very little over the past few years. For European Culture, however, being pragmatic and aware of current changes surrounding the political and cultural climate within Europe form the base of the course. For example, when it had just been announced that Brexit was really happening and the EU had given its go to the separation, a new course was immediately set up in the programme for the second year. The last reason that is mostly a big motivation for students to pick this major is an interest in first-year courses that are focused on culture. One very important one in this matter is the course National Thought in Modern Europe, taught by Joep Leerssen. Culture courses from the first year give a very good overview already of what to expect from the major and its courses further on in the programme.

The Course Itself

European Culture students are obliged to collect a total of 120 ECTS in the second and third year of European Studies. Depending on which language you have chosen to follow in your first year to complete, there are two study programmes to choose from.

Second year

The first programme, language group A, consists of 24 ECTS free choice and 36 ECTS mandatory courses. The room for free choice ECTS is filled with your language and two major-bound courses that you can choose yourself.

	Sem. 1	Sem. 2	EC
> Articulating Europe: Cultural Histories of a Political Idea			12
Major Workshop European Culture			6
Restricted-choice electives: Language Proficiency 2			12
> Restricted-choice electives: European Culture			12
> Philosophy of the Humanities (Area Studies)			6
Philosophy of the Humanities 2: European Studies			6
> European Studies Workshop 3: European Studies@Work			6

The second programme, language group B, consists of 36 ECTS free choice and 24 ECTS mandatory courses, of which the language that you have chosen makes up for 24 ECTS.

	Sem. 1	Sem. 2	EC
Articulating Europe: Cultural Histories of a Political Idea			12
Major Workshop European Culture			6
Restricted-choice electives: Language Proficiency			24
> Restricted-choice electives: European Culture			12
European Studies Workshop 3: European Studies@Work			6

For both of the programmes, one of the leading courses in the second year will be Articulating Europe: Cultural Histories of a Political Idea. The main topic in this course are the multiple ways, scenarios, and differentiations in political policy may be created but with a cultural background.

In the first half of the course, you will learn about specific traditions of describing Europe in history-writing, imaginative geographies and maps, anthropology, and travel literature and the roles they have played in constructing images of Europe particularly through narrative. You will study key primary texts from classic thinkers about Europe as well as perspectives from outside and learn to critically analyse key themes in European identity, such as progress, climate, religion, colonialism, and othering. In the second half of the course, you will apply methods from "imagology" to understand national and regional (e.g. East-West, North-South) stereotypes as reflected in fiction and film. You will study major films from European culture, and learn to identify stereotypes through the analysis of text and context. As well as intra-European images, we will examine myths of Europe vs. America and Europe vs. India.

Third year

The third year, in which you will be writing your thesis has a far more different division in free choice and mandatory courses compared to the second year.

The programme for language group A consists of 48 ECTS free choice courses and twelve mandatory courses, which is your bachelor thesis. Twelve ECTS can be collected picking electives that are bound to another major of European Studies. Another twelve ECTS can be collected by passing electives from other studies or by simply picking a minor. Instead of this one can also choose to do an internship at a firm or company that's connected to his or her studies.

	Sem. 1	Sem. 2	EC
» Restricted-choice electives: Second Major Course			12
> Restricted-choice electives: Research Seminar European Culture			6
Bachelor's Thesis European Studies			12
> Free-choice electives: Electives and Minorcourses			30

The third-year programme for the B group however again looks way different. Since students in this language group weren't able to follow the mandatory "Philosophy of the Humanities"courses in the second year because instead they had to do their entire lanquage in one year, they'll be following those courses in this year. Next to this, there will be 36 ECTS free choice courses in which a student can follow minor courses, do an internship and follow a course focused on deciding where you will be focusing your thesis on (just like in programme A). This lands a student in its third year of the studies on a total of 48 ECTS free choice courses and a 12 choice mandatory course, which is your bachelor thesis.

	Sem. 1	Sem. 2	EC
Philosophy of the Humanities (Area Studies)			6
Philosophy of the Humanities 2: European Studies			6
> Restricted-choice electives: Research Seminar European Culture			6
Bachelor's Thesis European Studies			12
> Free-choice electives: Electives and Minorcourses			30

Most Popular Future Options

Since the major is focused on culture, it would be very easy to assume that one might become an expert in the European cultural fied. This, however, is not true. After finishing your major European Culture, there are many options, especially if you're going to do an internship, to end up in other fields. A big field one might end up in is politics. Brussels is the focus of the European Union and European policy as a whole. Over 40 nationalities and cultures get together to think about the future and policy within Europe. Politics is being defined by our cultural differences and agreements. Our definition of politics within Europe and the European Union, thus, can literally be redefined by one term-culture.

Another field you can have a big chance of ending up in is the field of media and journalism. During the major, you're trained to formulate, write, and provide solid texts and information about a certain topic which matters today and intrigues your professor and peers. Why not use this to your advantage and apply it to your work life by working in the news, journalism or media branch?

Practical Information on the Specialisation

There is very little practical information that has to be provided surrounding the major. Like with any other thing in the world, however, one has a few matters. First, expect the unexpected. The major European Culture can come across as a major with a lot of freedom. This freedom can especially be found in the fact that a big part of the grading is being made up by the grades of the papers that you'll be writing. Papers count for at least 50% of your final grade. This is a great thing if you're a great writer. However, make sure that before you start with this course your knowledge on either Europe or the Netherlands, depending which track you'll be following, is on point. Good grades don't come easy so make sure what you write is perfect.

Another aspect that you have to take into account before choosing this course is the amount of reading work. Make sure that your time management is on point to be able to read all of the mandatory material. Last of all, make sure that you stay up to date with news and everyday developments in the world on a cultural level, especially the ones surrounding us. The news is your best friend, remember that.

Knowledge is power.

European Economics

Academic and Personal Interest

This major is aimed at students interested in the basics of micro- and macroeconomics, the reason behind the supply-demand graphs, certain economic concepts (ie. price ceiling/floor, inelastic/elastic demand, quotas, tariffs, taxes, different types of goods], the reason for Free Trade Agreements, how banks operate, the reason behind the 2008/2009 Euro Crisis, the concept of comparative advantage, and so on. The European Economics course will have a minimum of maths and the electives are more focused on policy (Macroeconomic Policy, Political Economy], history (A Monetary History of Europe), philosophy (The Future of Capitalism), and a general deepening understanding of globalisation

Considering the thesis—that you start in April and finish by the first of July—different possibilities are given depending on the Research Seminar that you choose as a prior prep course. Either you decide to stay in the subject range of your major, regarding economics this year has research seminars focused on either the Eurocrisis, sustainability or globalisation and public finance. Moreover, there are five interdisciplinary seminars, meaning that your thesis does not necessarily have to relate to your major or one of the three topics mentioned above. This year there were some topics on democracy, culture, law and history. Your thesis should be in the boundaries of the research seminar but you can discuss this with your teacher when the time has come.

The Course Itself

This course is split in micro- and macroeconomics. Microeconomics focuses on the level of households and firms as a wheel of the economy. You will learn how to interpret and draft graphs (supply/demand, cost of production (marginal costs etc.), but also why we engage in trade and the behaviour of consumers. Moreover, you will learn the reasons for and against taxes, price floors/ceilings and how the economy is seen as the allocation mechanism of scarce resources through getting to know concepts such as perfect competition, mono- and oligopoly etc. Macroeconomics focuses on a broader scale at the level of states. You will learn about the banking system, monetary and fiscal policy, exchange rates and the Euro Crisis.

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Electives

Currently, there are five electives in the EU Economics major.

A Monetary History of Europe is fairly self-explanatory as it is covering the (short) history of the Euro but also questions such as where money derives its value from and the important role of the dollar.

The course Unequal Europe is an interdisciplinary course because it also implies angles of European Law and includes a political and social component through looking at the divides in Europe.

Macroeconomic Policy in the EU focuses on the relation between the Euro and the economy of the member states. It looks at reasons for and against the adoption of the Euro and the policies that were adopted with its introduction. However, in the future the content of this course seems to be subject to change, for more see: https://studiegids.uva.nl/xmlpages/page/2020-2021-en/search--course/course/76650 The course on the Political Economy of the Eurocrisis focuses on the reason behind monetary policy and the Euro Crisis. Moreover, it shows the future implication of the Euro Crisis and the reaction of states. It goes more in-depth on the role of the banks and the behaviour of the European Member States.

The Future of Capitalism is a course in which famous economists and current economists are studied through reading many sources and a book. It evaluates the debates and ideas of the past through acknowledging and applying critical thinking. By gaining a sense of the past discussions on capitalism, the course tries to equip you with important opinions and models of economic thinking.

Keep in mind that the major workshops, which only last for one month, are quite intense. Sometimes you might be asked to write assignments and compile data in diagrams every week. However, they build up upon the previous courses and are more real-life based in the sense that you have to apply your knowledge to actual situations such as youth unemployment, for instance. Grading is based on three-hours-long exams as well as mid-term assignments or exams. Some electives include takehome exams or essays and presentations or literature reviews. The major can be challenging, however, if you tend to be able to quickly understand (economics) abstract models, despite not always being 1:1 applicable to the real world and if you enjoy to critically question and learn more about the reason behind the economy and its financial system, this major will suit your interests.

Popular Future Options

The UvA offers two main master's for this specialisation, namely Identity & Integration and European Policy. As an undergraduate of European Studies, you can also apply for the East European Studies master's, irrespective of the major you took.

Generally, the choice of a master's depends much on your minor and elective courses that you take. For instance, you can do an International Relations master if you have taken some courses at the Faculty of Social Sciences. You will have to check some general requirements on the respective website of the degree, however, I recommend doing this at the beginning of your third year, otherwise there can be an unexpected surprise when you realise that you do not have taken the adequate courses for a master's that you were eager to pursue.

Nonetheless, usually, the European Studies programme is sufficient for most master of arts.

Practical information on the specialisation.

Language course.

Considering the mandatory language, there are two groups of language camps. Group A considers students who want to learn Dutch, French (beginner or intermediate), German (beginner, intermediate or advanced), Spanish, Italian or Russian. There is also one course for students who do not wish to learn a language (the World in Fragment and European Public Spheres: Debating Europe).

Group B consists of Arabic, Catalan, Czech, Scandinavian, Hebrew, Polish, French (advanced), Greek, Serbo/Croatian. The difference between the two groups is that it changes your study schedule for the 2nd and 3rd year. While language group A will have Philosophy of Humanities after their language courses (the language courses are in the first year semester 2 block 1&2 and continue into the 2nd year semester 1 block 1&2, culminating in 24ECTS], group B will take Philosophy of Humanities in year 3 in the second semester (one block will overlap with the beginning of your thesis!). Students from group A will have to take a "second major course" which means 12ECTS from one of the European Studies majors (thus one or two courses from the first semester of the other majors). Group B will have some electives to choose from during the time in which group A will start their language. Group B students start their language in their 2nd year. For both language groups there is the possibility to take a minor in the 3rd year.

It is important to note here that students from language group B have two Philosophy of Humanities courses (in total 12 ECTS) in their second semester of the 3rd year. Therefore, the minor should either be entirely in the first semester of year 3 or it will overlap with the second bloc of the first an second semester in year 3, in which they will have: Philosophy of Humanities 1, the Research Seminar and thus the minor course and in the next bloc Philosophy of Humanities 2, the thesis and their minor course. It is crucial, to consider the schedule of the preferred minor or, otherwise, instead of a 30ECTS minor take equivalent electives. However, some electives have entry requirements and limited capacity.

We highly suggest you to check out the European Studies course catalogue properly regarding these issues: https://studiegids.uva.nl/xmlpages/page/2020-- 2 0 2 1 - e n / s e a r c h --programme/programme/6023/237722

European History

Academic and Personal Interest

The European History specialisation major primarily focuses on modern European History. Thus, students who did not enjoy the Turning Points module which served as an introduction to European History in the first year might enjoy the focus on Europe's economic, political, and social development in the 20th and 21st century. A particular focus is also placed on Europe's positioning in the global system. This theme is explored through the lens of postcolonial studies in particular. How did Europe perceive itself and how was it perceived by others? Was European integration a neoliberal product or a conservative approach to ensure the preservation of the nation state. How were mass atrocities caused by European nations justified and how did they affect the image Europe had of itself? If these questions are of interest you, the European History major might be a worthy addition to your curriculum.

The Course Itself

Each European Studies major requires the completion of 30 ECTS. For European History 18 ECTS are attributed to mandatory courses and 12 ECTS may be acquired through electives. Ordering of Europe in the 20th and 21st Century is the annual core module. During the first block, the course explores Europe's positioning in the world. Where did Europe draw its boundaries and how did this change over time? When did 'Central Europe' vanish just to be replaced with the contrast between Western Europe and Eastern Europe? The primary focus of the first block is placed on Europe's economic and political development. Think of the terms communism vs capitalism, neoliberalism vs welfare state, and so forth. The second block takes a closer look to Europe's internal conflict between different ideologies, beginning with a conflict between fascism and communism to Europe's crumbling self-image with the onset of decolonisation and the rise of the extreme left in the 1960s and 1970s. Grading of the course is completely essay-based.

The Major Workshop European History is the second mandatory course module for the major and aims at introducing students to the historical research methodology. Students will discuss what good history writing entails, different approaches taken towards history writing and how to develop a research proposal. There is the chance to visit an archive in order to learn how historians seek out and consult primary sources. Guided by the seminar teacher students will independently work on a final research project in line with the methodological tools developed throughout the course.

Students will then have the opportunity to choose two of eight electives offered within the history major. It is worth having an in-depths look at each of them in the course catalogue here: https://coursecatalogue.uva.nl/xmlpages / p a g e / 2 0 2 0 - 2 0 2 1 - e n / s e arch-programme/programme/6023/237 758

Some electives overlap with other majors. For instance, "Gender in Modern Europe" is also available for students of the Culture Major while "European Memory and Heritage" is exclusive to European History students.

Most Popular Future Options

The European History major does not fix you into a specific path the way the law major enables you to advance towards a law master. What is most important to keep in mind is that you will be most likely to write your thesis in the specialisation that you have chosen.

History is further useful as it touches upon many different academic areas. You do not solely memorise timelines and chronologies. The study of European History requires a thorough understanding of economic, political, and cultural developments within Europe, resulting in a well-rounded academic profile. Notable history majors include Winston Churchill, President Biden, and Martha Stewart.

Practical Information on the Specialisation

It is good to keep in mind that a lot of the grading is essay-based. History requires you to understand the existing academic debate on a given topic through a thorough analysis of existing secondary literature before you write your papers. Thus, the specialisation involves a lot of reading and a lot of writing. Assignments will most likely range from 2,000 to 2,500 words. An unexpected bonus is that you will learn how to analyse primary sources and how to consult archives. While it is interesting to read the theory of other historians it is much more exciting to seek out your own materials—be it propaganda posters from WWII, diary entries of a colonial officer or speeches held by famous politicians—and piece together a historical narrative. In that, history writing is a bit like detective work!

Concluding Remarks

We hope that this booklet has helped you get a better idea of the different options given to you by European Studies, how to organise your study plan, and what your future options within the field offered by the UvA are.

It is advised to double-check any information on ECs and entry requirements mentioned on the official UvA European Studies course catalogue in case of any updates and modifications concerning these.

For any comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact us via contact@020together.nl or visit our website www.0-2-0.nl. Furthermore, if you'd like to get involved in our party, reach out to us on any of our platforms!

Hope you enjoyed this booklet as much as we did compiling it!

Yours truly,

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