

# Workshop on the Future of European Studies in Asia

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## ABSTRACT OF PRESENTATION

### **The Landscape of European Studies Curriculum Development in Europe**

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This presentation will trace the introduction of European (Union) Studies into Europe from the late 1960s. Of course European universities had been studying Europe since their own creation, but it took time for it to dawn that the new institutional and economic experiments on the continent might be worthy of study in their own right. That insight received impetus from three other developments, namely:

- The growth of “area studies” in the United States (especially on Russia and Asia);
- the emergence of new universities in Europe; and,
- the resentment of “traditional” language/literature courses as the sole route to language learning in higher education.

Ironically, these developments found their roots first in the United Kingdom and have spread from there ever since. However, there remains much scepticism towards these developments in academic circles. From the beginning, there was a range of different curricula designs. The main differences were:

- Between broad “European” courses and more narrowly focused courses;
- between loosely constructed courses and tighter controlled courses; and,
- between multi-disciplinary, mono-disciplinary and interdisciplinary programmes (especially at the Masters level).

In the past fifteen years European studies has started to spread across Europe. Various factors have facilitated these developments, namely:

- The twin processes of “widening” and “deepening” the European Union (EU);
- the EU’s Jean Monnet Action programme; and,
- the Bologna process of curricular reform.

The interdisciplinary programme in Leiden belongs to this last phase of development. Its undergraduate program is now eight years old and its international Masters program is now in its fourth year. For more information, please visit <http://www.maeus.leidenuniv.nl/>