

STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

SAARLAND UNIVERSITY'S CLUSTER FOR EUROPEAN RESEARCH (CEUS)

SAARLAND UNIVERSITY'S FOCUS ON EUROPE– TRADITION AND IDENTITY

Thanks to its unique history – it was founded in 1948 as a Franco-Saarland initiative – and its special geographical location close to Germany's borders with France, Luxembourg and Belgium, Saarland University has a strong French and European focus in research and teaching [that has always been a defining feature](#) of the university. In his inaugural speech in 1950, Rector Angeloz affirmed: "Europe! This is the word we choose as our motto and slogan declare our institution to be a European university". The European founding spirit was also reflected in the broad international line-up of the chair holders, which remains unchanged. There are currently four French-speaking sections at Saarland University, two in law at the [Centre Juridique Franco-Allemand](#), where a German-French degree can be obtained, and two in literature at the Faculty of Humanities. In addition, Saarland University offers an extraordinarily wide range of international degree programmes that lead to the award of a bi- or trinational degree and international flagship programmes such as the [European visiting professorship](#), the Master's programme in European and International Law (LL.M.) at the [Europa-Institut](#), a [Jean Monnet Chair](#) and the "[Europaicum](#)" certificate. Numerous Europe-related institutions complement the university's European profile.

Saarland University collaborates closely with its numerous international partners. Networking in the border region has been institutionalized in the association "[University of the Greater Region \(UniGR\)](#)" with the partner universities of Kaiserslautern and Trier, the Université du Luxembourg, the Université de Lorraine and the Université de Liège. In the UniGR key area "Border Studies", the partner universities collaborate closely in research and teaching. Milestones of the key area's development were the foundation of the Interreg-supported [UniGR Center for Border Studies](#) and the introduction of [a trinational Master's programme](#). In addition, the cross-border doctoral network [LOGOS](#) provides a networking scheme for doctoral students.

As the lead institution in the project, Saarland University has been recognized as a "European University" and has secured the corresponding funding for the university alliance "[Transform4Europe – T4E](#)" in the second call of the European Commission. The T4E alliance unites seven partners: alongside Saarland University, these are the University of Alicante (Spain), the Estonian Academy of Arts in Tallinn (Estonia), the Silesian University in Katowice (Poland), the University of St. Kliment Ohridski in Sofia (Bulgaria), the University of Trieste (Italy) and the Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas (Lithuania). By implementing innovative measures at all partner universities, the project will contribute significantly to the further development of the Saarland University's European profile.

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In a far-reaching strategy process (University Development "UdS 2030"), which was initiated by the University Board and is also supported by the Saarland state government, the university's European focus is currently undergoing strong expansion and dynamic development. The extensive package of measures includes the development of new degree programmes and programmes for young

academics, start-up financing for joint projects and sustainable structural measures such as the creation of positions for coordinators and the establishment of professorial positions which are indispensable for sharpening the profile of Saarland University's 'Europe' research and teaching hub (see section 'New Department of Social-Scientific European Studies'). The objective of establishing Saarland University as one of the leading European universities in Germany in the coming years is also emphatically underpinned by the creation of a "Cluster for European Research" as a research platform.

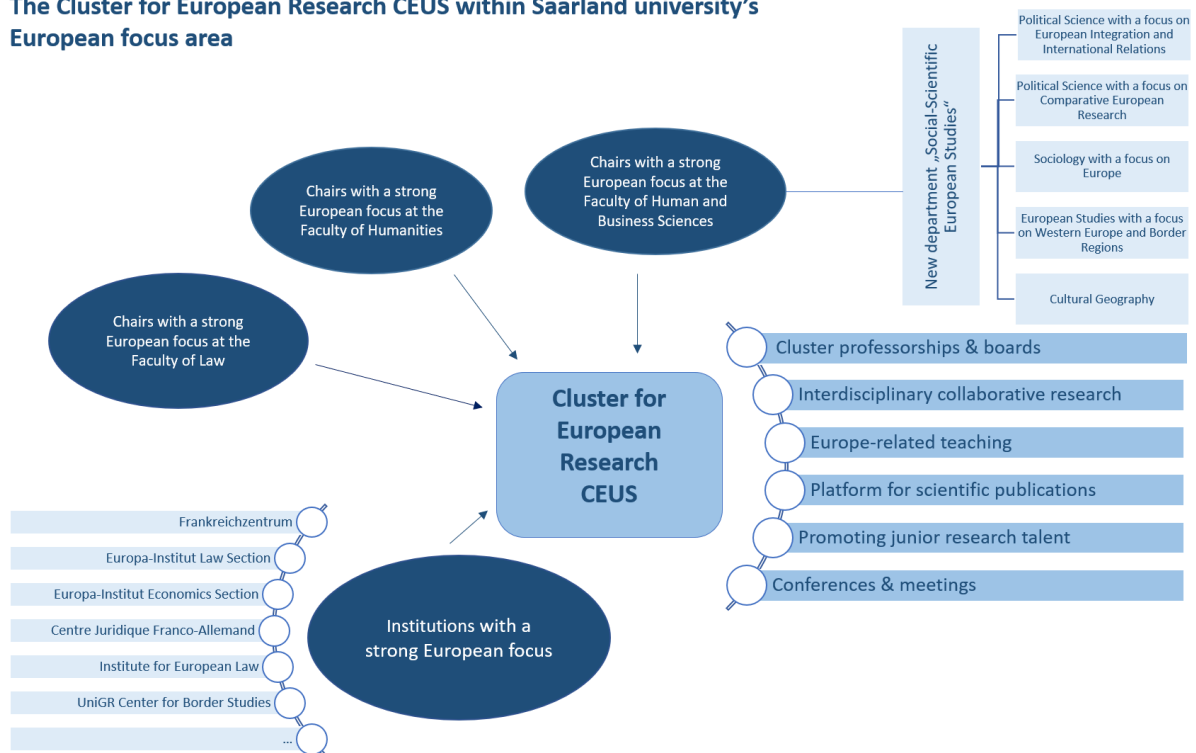
Saarland University's Cluster for European Research (CEUS) is currently (2020) emerging from the [Europa-Kolleg CEUS](#), which, since 2012, has been combining and initiating interdisciplinary and cross-faculty European-related activities in research and teaching at Saarland University in the [Faculty of Human and Business Sciences \(HW\)](#), the [Faculty of Humanities \(P\)](#) and the [Faculty of Law \(R\)](#).

As the university's central European research and competence centre, the CEUS will intensify intra-university networking in the interdisciplinary 'Europe' research hub with the aim of establishing **excellent joint research projects**. The cluster is also responsible for the coordination of Europe-related teaching (including the [Bachelor's programme 'European Studies'](#) and the [Europaicum](#) certificate), the coordination of programmes for the promotion of young researchers with scholarships and co-working space, the organization of meetings and lectures with a strong European focus, scientific editing and proofreading, and the coordination of publications in the field of research on European issues.

New Department of Social-Scientific European Studies

In terms of both content and location, the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences' new **Department of Social-Scientific European Studies** will be closely linked to the CEUS. The new department will analyze and accompany Europe-related development processes with a focus on social science. The existing human geography and spatial science professorships of the current Department of Geography – the Chair of [Cultural Geography](#) (Prof. Dr. Peter Dörrenbächer) and the Tenure Track Junior Professorship for [European Studies with a focus on Western Europe and Border Regions](#) (Jun. Prof. Dr. habil. Florian Weber) – are already working on core European research issues with the theoretical and methodological approach used in spatial science and will therefore be integrated into the new department. In addition, the new professorships for Political Science – the Professorship in Political Science with a focus on European Integration and International Relations and the Professorship in Political Science with a focus on Comparative European Research – and the Professorship in Sociology with a focus on Europe will shape the new discipline and, as cluster professorships (along with professorships from other fields), contribute to the strategic and content-related work in the cluster.

The Cluster for European Research CEUS within Saarland university's European focus area



Research topic 'Europe' in an interdisciplinary context

The aim is for the new professorships to network intensively within the newly founded Department of Social-Scientific European Studies – this will be made easier by the future creation of a common workspace for the appointed professors – and also with the other departments in the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences.

To ensure the excellence of the cluster's future research orientation, the professors are also expected to have **close interdisciplinary links** with the existing European expertise of the three faculties involved in the 'Europe' research hub – the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences, the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Law. This research hub includes, for example, the research team working on a [collaborative research initiative](#) highlighting the issue of "Flucht" ("Flight", contact: Prof. Dr. Romana Weiershausen, Francophone German Studies), the PI of the [ERC "Minor Universality: Narrative World Productions After Western Universalism"](#) (Prof. Dr. Markus Messling, Romance Cultural Studies & Intercultural Communication), the participants in the [Research Training Group "European Dream Cultures"](#) (spokesperson: Prof. Dr. Christiane Solte-Gresser, General and Comparative Literature) and the [Research Group "Transnational Popular Culture – Europe in the Long 1960s"](#) (spokesperson: Prof. Dr. Dietmar Hüser, European Contemporary History).

The strategic links between other university institutions with a European dimension, such as the [Law Section of the Europa-Institut](#), the [Centre Juridique Franco-Allemand](#), the [Economics Section of the Europa-Institut](#) and the [Frankreichzentrum](#), to name but a few, are expanded by the CEUS. The '[Europa-Portal](#)', which has been established by the Europa-Kolleg CEUS, offers more information on current collaborative projects and other departments and subject areas involved in the University's 'Europe' research hub.

The research-oriented cooperation of the professorships from the participating faculties installed as “cluster professorships” at the CEUS will also be supported by the university within the framework of the European strategy by means of joint equipment and – in the future – a common workspace.

Overarching research topic

The framework for future collaborative research and the promotion of young research talent is provided by an overarching **research topic** that builds on the research traditions of Saarland University – the unique selling points of which include expertise on France and border region studies – and was developed as a vision for the future in an interfaculty strategy process. As part of the strategy process thus initiated, the university’s profile regarding research on European issues will be boosted by defining a common framework which, on the one hand, takes into account the diversity of existing projects and initiatives and, on the other, offers the potential to further the development of interdisciplinary Europe-related joint research activities. As an interdisciplinary think tank and with all the necessary flexibility, the cluster creates ideal conditions for updating research questions, taking up new impulses and establishing further research initiatives.

The main focus of this overarching research topic **“Europe-World(s) – Projections, Reflections, Transformations”** is the question of how 'concepts' of Europe are projected, transformed and reflected. Europe's relations with the world have always been characterized by a mutual give and take in many areas: culture, literature, languages, technology, economics, politics, law, philosophy, religion etc. Just as Europe has transformed the world, the world has transformed Europe. At a time when the political and economic focus of the world is shifting away from Europe to the Pacific, these processes of change are taking on a new character. Europe is seeking to perceive its relationship to the world in a new way, to find new 'transitions' to the world. This results in diverse interdisciplinary fields of research, conflict and reflection, which offer particular potential for systematic, historical, transcultural and intermedial questions. This will not only provide a strategic framework for existing and future collaborative projects, but will also decisively raise the research profile at national level and increase the cooperation and coherence of the existing expertise at Saarland University.

Support for young research talents at the Cluster for European Research

In the future, specific support for young scientists will also be anchored structurally at the Cluster for European Research. This will not only do justice to the university's responsibility for its young scientists. But well qualified young scientists will also contribute to the sustainable safeguarding of the research competence and strength of Saarland University’s ‘Europe’ research hub. Thus, as a think tank and nucleus for new projects within the framework of the defined overarching research topic (see above), an internal **Research Training Group ‘Europe’** (*Nachwuchskolleg Europa*) will be established, offering scholarships for doctoral and post-doctoral students. These scholarships will be accompanied by qualification measures within the framework of existing university graduate programmes ([GradUS](#), [PROWIS](#)), start-up financing for promising research ideas and internationalized education measures. In addition, the University's Research Committee offers start-up funding for post-doc projects. Alongside graduate funding, a kind of mentoring programme (*Studentische Europa-Werkstatt*) gives committed students the opportunity to come into contact with excellent research on European issues at an early stage, implement their own initiatives and carry out smaller projects or events. Saarland University in general and the Cluster for European Research in particular will thus offer excellent conditions for the promotion of young researchers.

Studying Europe: Bachelor European Studies

Saarland University offers a wide range of bi- and tri-national degree programmes and Bachelor's or Master's programmes with a European dimension (please check the Europa-Portal for more information). As part of the strategic process, a new Bachelor's programme '[European Studies](#)' has also been developed, which is coordinated at the CEUS and started in the winter semester of 2020/21. In the future, the new department of Social-Scientific European Studies will play an important role in the implementation of this new programme. The Bachelor's degree programme is offered in three variants ('Geographies of Europe', 'Comparative Literature' and 'Modern and Contemporary History'), each of which offers both an interdisciplinary core area and a subject-specific focus. A fourth area of specialization will soon be developed from this new subject area in cooperation with the Faculty of Law focusing on Europe/the European Union in its political (Governance) and legal (European Law) contexts. This new subject area will primarily adopt the theoretical and methodological approaches used in political science, sociology and law. In the future, further interdisciplinary degree programmes are to be created on this basis.

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