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Identity & Culture

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Europe as a continent and political entity is home to multiple identities and cultures with distinct expressions and histories. Academic as well as political and societal discourses about culture and identity are therefore closely interlinked with questions of migration, cultural and religious diversity, and societal cohesion.

ICES promotes research into how the project of EU integration and the ever increasing mobility impact on formations of national and individual identity. Europe and the European Union define a space in which people's former national identities transcend through various forms of interaction, be it social or economic, to become more transnational. People that migrate for work and study, international marriage, or business activities create new definitions of 'us and them' minted in a particular European way. Beyond the conditions for a pro-European attitude and identity, we are also interested in the trend of increasing EU scepticism, the reasons that drive people away from a European idea of society which may in the future substitute for national understandings of community. The challenge of the state and society to find a way in dealing with migrant induced religious and cultural diversity, has become a key issue for many European countries. ICES therefore promotes research into the dynamics of open societies and the political struggles over the rules that define the common good in contemporary Europe. Approaches to these topics consider various venues for debate such as political, public and social media but also the arts and religious life.

Research within this axis takes an open-minded outlook and avoids normative bias towards set understandings of 'what' communities define as their common good. ICES gives space for critical debate and interdisciplinary research on issues pertaining to conflicts and solutions regarding identity and culture in diverse European society.

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