



UNIVERSITEIT
GENT

Integrated International Project Work Course plan



SUPPORT TEAM

UGent

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1. Concept of the integrated international project work

This course is a general course in the Master of Science in Geography and Geomatics, meaning it is mandatory for all students. The official description can be found in the course catalogue of Ghent University: <https://studiegids.ugent.be/2024/NL/studiefiches/C004173.pdf>

The main goals of the course are:

1. To carry out a research project during a multiday international research trip.
2. To apply various field techniques for data collection, scientific analysis, and interpretations in the studied region.
3. To integrate knowledge, skills and techniques from geography and geomatics.
4. To give a fluent and well-structured (English) oral presentation of the results, using suitable communication techniques.
5. To perform group work focusing on a well-defined research problem.
6. To collaborate in an interdisciplinary and international context.

With the concept of the project work (PW), we aim to (1) include a research approach into the international field trip and to (2) collaborate with international colleagues to introduce the students to the area of the field work and to an international research context.

For 2024-2025, we have the opportunity to organise integrated international project work in collaboration with colleagues of Roskilde University (RUC), mainly with Andreas Aagaard Christensen and colleagues (Department of People and Technology), and of the University of Copenhagen, Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management (Henrik Vejre and others).

During the PW, the students work on a research project that will be executed in groups of 3-5 students. The themes of the PW will be defined together with the students (based on their interest and expertise), with an eye to scientific and societal relevance, and will benefit also from on-going research projects at the collaborating universities. In this edition, it will be executed in the region of the geopark of Odsherred (North-western Sealand).

The course consists of four phases in which different steps lead to generic and research competences of the students:

1. General preparation before the field work – co-designing the content:

- During the first part of the 1st semester three sessions will be organised to introduce the students to the concept of the course as well as the to the region where the project works will be performed.
- Based on the introduction of the region and a first presentation of possible themes, students will indicate their topics of interest. This input will be used to formulate more specific themes.
- The specific themes and topical lectures will be introduced and discussed after which the students — who will then indicate their preferred themes — will define and compose their project groups.

2. Specific preparation before the field work – diving into the research topics:

- During the second part of the 1st semester and the first part of the 2nd semester, several work sessions will be organised during which the students will prepare the project work. The sessions will be guided by the support team, so the students can be provided with necessary data, background literature, contact persons etc.

- Throughout this phase, each group will present their progress during short presentations (pitches) to present their progress and to get feedback how to continue.
- During the different sessions as well as during the research trip, each group will assign and delegate a member that will participate in the captains meeting to discuss specific organisational aspects together with the other groups and teachers. The project groups delegate another captain every time, so all students get the opportunity to take the lead and train their leadership skills.
- Before the field work will take place, each group has to be prepared for the field work and have to make an action plan with concrete steps what to do in Denmark.

3. The international research trip – international and inter-cultural real-life experience:

- For a period of 9 days, we will travel to Denmark. First, the students will be introduced in the region during a one-day field trip so they get acquainted with the areas and problems they will tackle.
- Second, each group will work on the research project. At the end of the week, they will present their results to the whole group as well as the support team and invited guests.
- The research trip will end with a visit to Copenhagen.
- Throughout the trip, students will also learn to live and work together as a group – cooking, sleeping, and organizing themselves during fieldwork, which fosters team spirit and practical collaboration skills.

4. Follow up after the field work – synthesising the research competences:

- After the field work, each group will collect the final results and conclusions in a concise, but complete scientific report that will provide the overview of their work. This will also form the base for future project works that will be executed in the area during the following editions.

The international project work is organised by the following support team:

1. Veerle Van Eetvelde, professor in Landscape Research.
2. Maite Dewinter, post-doctoral researcher in Social Geography and educational support at UGent's Geography Department.
3. Lars De Sloover, PhD fellow and teaching assistant at the GIScience&Technology Research Group, and Project Coordination Officer at UGent's Geography Department.
4. Seppe De Wit, PhD fellow and teaching assistant in Landscape research
5. Sofie De Winter, secretary of UGent's Geography Department, as additional driver and administrative/technical/logistic support.

2. Program edition 2024-2025

Phase 1 – general preparation before the excursion

Semester 1		
Week 7 Tuesday 5 November 2024 16:00 – 18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General introduction with aim and concept of the excursion - Practical arrangements - Lecture: First introduction to the area - First exchange of ideas and topics of interest 	S8 - lecture room 2.4
Week 8 Tuesday 19 November 2024 16:00 – 18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecture: Possible themes of the projects and overall research context - Second exchange of topics of interest 	S8 - lecture room 2.4
Week 12 Tuesday 10 December 2024 14:30 – 18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction with focussed research topics - Composition of the student groups, selection of themes - Further practical arrangement 	S8 - lecture room 2.4

Deadlines - deliverables

- Creating of the groups and defining research topics

Phase 2 – Specific preparation before the excursion

Semester 2		
Week 2 Tuesday 18 February 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 1	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 3 Tuesday 25 February 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 2 - Flash presentation of project work	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 4 Tuesday 4 March 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 3 - Tour of the groups for feedback	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 5 Tuesday 11 March 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 4 - Flash presentation of project work	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 6 Tuesday 18 March 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 5 - Tour of the groups for feedback	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 7 Tuesday 25 March 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 6 - Tour of the groups for feedback	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 8 Tuesday 1 April 2025 – 10:00	- Lecture by Andreas Aagaard Christensen (RUC) - Flash presentation of project work	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Easter holiday		
Week 9 Tuesday 22 April 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 8 - Tour of the groups for feedback	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 10 Tuesday 29 April 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 10 - Tour of the groups for feedback	S8 – lecture room 2.1
Week 11 Tuesday 6 May 2025 – 10:00	- Work session 11 - Final presentation of project proposals and feedback	S8 – lecture room 2.1

Deadlines - deliverables

- Research plan: what will you do, how, ...
- Division of tasks

Students are asked to make sure that they have made the necessary arrangements in the group in preparation of the field work. They have to make a good overview of the tasks they still have to finalise and also a good and fair division of the labour. The better they are prepared, the more efficient they will work during the field work week.

Phase 3 – The international research trip

The field work during the international research trip is planned in week 12, with departure in Belgium on Saturday 10 May 2025 and returning on Sunday 18 May 2025. See below for the details of the program.

Deadlines - deliverables

- Field work, data acquisition, interviews, ...
- Final presentation

From Saturday 10 to Sunday 18 May, the field work will be organised in Denmark as well as the formulation of the final results that will be presented for final feedback. Based on this feedback, the final report can be finished.

Students will be asked to give an overview of the state of the art of their project on Sunday the 11th of May in the form of a pitch presentation, which we see as a way to get into the material again. On Monday the 12th of May, we will first organise a field trip during which we will visit the different places, and they will have the opportunity to ask questions to the Danish colleagues. After the excursion they can continue working on the project as well as all the other days (Tuesday to Thursday). Specific arrangements about this will be made. Mentor sessions will be organised for each group and intermediate flash presentations will be held. A detailed planning of the week can be found in the table below.

Students are expected to reflect on how they will integrate these results in the final report. There will be a final presentation of the work at the end of the field trip.

At the end of the week, students should have collected all the field data and have analysed them as far as possible. This will be presented on Friday 16th May in the University of Roskilde, the presentations will be attended by colleagues of RUC as well as other stakeholders that might have participated during the week. A link to the event is shared with the colleagues, friends and family at home in Belgium. The presentations as well as the Q&A are recorded and afterwards sent to the students together with the feedback on the presentations. See further instructions in appendix 1.

Phase 4 – Follow up after field work

The students will need to finish the report of the project work after the field work. Arrangements will be made after the presentations of the group work. The report will be a part of the total assignment of the course. See further instructions in appendix 2.

Deadlines - deliverables

- Final report

Students will need to finish the report of the project work after the field work. The report will be a part of the total assignment of the course. It will be important to start on the report prior to the field work week, since there is not a lot of time after the field trip.

The support team will discuss with each group what will be feasible to deliver on **Sunday 22 June 2025**, extensive appendices with for example GIS-data or surveys can be submitted after the deadline.

3. Draft of detailed program of field work

Note:

-> this is a proposal of the program of the field work that has to be discussed with the Danish colleagues, students and teachers.

-> this schedule is an example in case the field work will take place in week 12

General concept of the field work:

1/ Visit to Roskilde as an introduction to the general Danish geography and history (including a visit to the Viking ship museum and town centre), led by Veerle Van Eetvelde.

2/ Field trip in the area of the geopark in Odsherred to introduce the specific aspects of the landscapes, aspects of biophysical and social-economic characteristics related to land use dynamics and sustainability, led by Andreas Aagaard Christensen.

3/ Time for field work related to the project topics: students are organising the field work themselves in order to collect the empirical data in the field related to their main research questions.

4/ Data analysis and synthesis.

5/ Oral presentation for the colleagues of RUC and other stakeholders that participated in the project topics.

Date	Activities	Accommodation
Day 1	Saturday 10 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting in Ghent in the morning at 7:30 - Start of journey 8:00 - Students and four colleagues of the geography department are traveling with minibuses that will be used for the field work in Denmark - Arrival in Denmark in the evening and welcome 	- Udsigten
Day 2	Sunday 11 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit to Roskilde - Picking up the projects and first group work 	- Udsigten
Day 3	Monday 12 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excursion in the region of Odsherred - Field and group work 	- Udsigten
Day 4	Tuesday 13 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field and group work 	- Udsigten
Day 5	Wednesday 14 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field and group work - Closing dinner in Udsigten 	- Udsigten
Day 6	Thursday 15 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transfer to Roskilde University (RUC) - Group work at RUC - Finalising the presentation 	- Udsigten
Day 7	Friday 16 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentations of the group works in Roskilde University (colleagues of Denmark and stakeholders will join/are invited) - Transfer to Copenhagen - Free evening 	- Danhostel Copenhagen
Day 8	Saturday 17 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking excursion Copenhagen - Joint dinner in Copenhagen 	- Danhostel Copenhagen
Day 9	Sunday 18 May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaving in Copenhagen in the morning - Start of journey with minibuses back to Ghent - Arrival in Ghent in the evening 	

4. Topics that will be followed up by the support team

- Budget: the total price will include the following expenses (based on the costs of previous editions):
 - o minibuses and costs for the transportation (ferry, road taxes, fuel, ...) – 36%
 - o accommodation in Roskilde, Odsherred and Copenhagen (including breakfast) – 46%
 - o meals in Odsherred and last evening in Copenhagen – 15%
 - o others (tickets, bank transfers, ...) – 3%

The total price will depend on the accommodations; the budget will be confirmed as soon as we have received all the information.

The excursion will be partly covered by the Department of Geography, the other share has to be paid by the students. The total cost will be between 600€ and 700€ (to be announced when we received all the reservations and taking into account the current energy prices).

- Materials and sources: students will need specific materials and sources (papers, maps, images, ...) that will be necessary for their research project. We will collect them (also the websites where you can download information).
 - o >> The data and other information will be put on the MS Teams that is set up for this course.
- Traveling by van: the travel to and from Denmark will take place in vans that will be hired in Ghent. This will also allow students to do the field work completely independent, since there will be a van for each group. Every van will have two drivers, a colleague from the department and a student.
 - o >> Once the groups are composed, we will also ask (at least) one responsible driver for each van.

5. Evaluation

- Non-periodic evaluation: participation in preparation and during the integrated international project work, the research plan in which the different steps are presented, oral presentation in preparation of the research trip abroad, peer evaluation regarding collaboration and input in the group work, final presentation (English) on the field trip.
- Periodic evaluation: portfolio in which the various data, analyses, results and conclusions are collected (can be in the form of a digital portfolio)
- Calculation of the examination mark
 - o In order to pass for this course (at first or second examination chance), one should participate in the study trip.
 - o Non-periodical evaluation (70%) + periodical evaluation (30%).

Appendix 1 - Instructions presentation

- 1/ Each group gives a presentation of 15 minutes. Select the main things you want to address and don't spend time on details. You can extend on details in the report.
- 2/ Every presentation will be followed by a discussion of 10 minutes. Pay attention when the other groups are presenting.
- 3/ Use own, creative style for presentation (not the standard UGent layout). Think of a nice and appealing opening slide and a good opening of the presentation. Use the logos and reference to the GIP (see template slide). Limit the amount of text on your slides.
- 4/ Formulate an appealing title that covers the research you have been doing.
- 5/ Make a good structure of the presentation:
 - Introduction
 - Situate the topic in a wider context
 - Stating the research questions and objectives of the project (= what)
 - Explain the importance of the research (= why)
 - Methodological approach:
 - Study area: Situate your case area(s)
 - How did you work?
 - What data did you use and collect?
 - How did you do the data analysis?
 - Don't lose yourself or the others in technical details and use layman and simple terms
 - Main results >> use visualisations, pictures, good maps and graphs, ... and avoid too much text
 - End with a conclusion:
 - What were the strengths and flaws of your working method?
 - What are the main conclusions of the research?
- 6/ Realise that once you are on the stage, you are visible to everyone. So also think about who will stand where, your body language, ticks, ... So be professional in your presentation and spoken language.
- 7/ Each group member needs to talk -> active participation of everyone
- 8/ Rehearse the presentation together so you can keep an eye on the 15 minutes. You can use this to give each other feedback on the content and way of presenting. Make sure that you know what to say and what the others will say. Also, rehearse the use of videos, website, ... This takes time, so consider if this is an added value to the presentation.
- 9/ Put the presentation in the Teams folder "07_Project presentations 2025" in the final version before Friday 7:00.
- 10/ Try to enjoy it! This is the final "Kirsebær på kagen" of a long process. So be proud of what you did.

Appendix 2 - Instructions report

1. General

One outcome of the project work is the written report that each group must compile. The aim of this document is to report in an efficient, concise, and precise manner. So you have to think carefully and decide within the group how you can present your project clearly and convincingly.

Also, pay attention to the language. The report has to be written in English. Use a similar language throughout the whole document (UK English).

The readers of your report will be the Belgian and Danish course organisers, the different stakeholders you have been working with during the project, future students, ... So, they should be able to understand and reproduce what you have been doing and what the main research outputs are.

This document is giving some directions for the report but does not have to be considered as a law. So, handle this in a flexible way but work within the presented framework.

2. Structure and length

The main body text of the report can contain 7.500 to 10.000 words. If you have more material that you would like to present, you can include it in different appendixes.

1. Introduction

Here you describe the context of the project, problem setting and research gaps, research questions and objectives.

2. Theoretical framework

In the theoretical framework, you briefly describe the theoretical concepts that you have been using. This can also contain the policy context of the topic or a methodological framework.

3. Methods and sources

Briefly describe the different steps or modules that have been performed to come to the results. Be as clear and precise as possible (make it reproducible) but avoid too many details (you do not have to write a stepwise guideline or technical handbook on how to work with a specific software package).

Make a clear distinction between (1) work before the fieldwork, namely the desktop analysis and (2) the fieldwork. We assume that most of the desktop analysis can be performed beforehand. Make also a distinction between data collection and data analysis.

Include the different sources (maps, digital datasets, census data, ...) that you have used, for example by including a table. A more extensive description of methods and sources can be included in the appendix.

4. Results

Describe the results also in a structured and clear way. Use figures, maps, tables ... in an efficient manner. They are an essential way to communicate your results. However, be selective and include those that have an added value to the report and that are supporting your results.

5. Discussion

Give a short reflection of the project, which can be linked to or based on other (international) examples. The discussion should answer following questions: You have your results, but what do they mean? What insights do they give you? How can you explain your findings?... So do not only pay attention to the critical reflection of the methodology. Also reflect on possible new/other research questions or hypotheses that have emerged from your research and that could be addressed in next editions of the project work.

6. Conclusion

Formulate – brief and precise – the main outcomes and answers to the questions that you have included in the introduction.

Appendix

Use this to include necessary and additional information supporting the main part of your report (for example the interview guide you have been using). This can also be uploaded in a digital manner, for example GIS data, interviews, raw data of the surveys, software code etc ... You must see this as your “basic results” that can also be used in the next years.

3.Division of labour

For the evaluation of the project, it will also be important that you report on the division of the labour and tasks within your group. So, make an overview of “who did what” in a document that you submit as a separate file (this does not need to be included in the report).

4.Planning & deadline

Deadline for submitting the report and digital appendix is Sunday 22nd of June 2025 (23h59, CET). Submit your documents earlier if possible.

You have to upload the report in Teams (Algemeen/07_Project_reports_2025 and in the project specific folder). Please upload both the word-file and the pdf-file of your written report.