

# Internationalisation of European Higher Education

## **Research on Internationalisation in Higher Education**

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## **Promoting Joint European/International Doctorates in a global scenario**

Opening the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication to the world

*Annamaria Silvana de Rosa*

## Promoting Joint European/International Doctorates in a global scenario

### Opening the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication to the World



Annamaria Silvana de Rosa

The European joint doctorate is a strategic tool for enhancing the attractiveness of the European Higher Education and Research Areas. In this article we briefly introduce its distinctive features, defined as a jointly established multilateral degree awarded by at least three universities in three different European countries on the basis of inter-institutional agreements. These agreements establish the criteria for planning, implementing and monitoring an international network-based doctoral programme.

As a case study, anticipating the Bologna Process, we focus on the first European Joint Doctorate, formally recognised in 1993 within the triple framework of universities, ministries and the European Commission (DG Education and Culture and DG Research). In particular, we will describe the recent expansion in the organisation of the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication in 15 countries around the world: 17 universities in 9 European countries (AT, CZ, FR, IT, PT, RO, ES, CH, UK) and 5 universities from North America (Canada), Latin America (Argentina, Brazil) and China (SoReCom European PhD world), in order to show how the partnership between HEIs, enterprises and research institutes has opened the door not only to an increased transfer of knowledge, but also to greater career opportunities for researchers.

This paper will also describe the SoReCom Euro PhD's innovative curriculum, which has taken full advantage of modern communication technologies to build a virtual campus spanning the globe. Its well-tested didactic formula and training structure include: tutoring and co-tutoring triadic system (multiple supervision), annual International Summer School and three annual International Lab Meetings (winter, spring and summer sessions), face-to-face individual and small group mentoring activities integrated with an open learning system where tutors have on-line access for didactic activities and for monitoring trainees' progress; structured individual and collective international mobility of trainees and teaching staff; and learning by doing in academic and non-academic settings.

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## 0. Introduction

The European PhD on Social Representations and Communication (Euro Ph.D. on S.R. & C.)<sup>1</sup> provides advanced research training in key areas of social psychology that focus on the social construction of knowledge and its relation to socially situated practices and to traditional as well as new means of human interaction and communication. The track record of the European PhD on S.R. & C. in terms of networking and cooperation activities dates back to 1993, when the program was established under the Erasmus Inter-Universities Cooperation Programme. The original network of 13 European universities has since grown to 22 universities, research institutes and SMEs in 15 countries around the world: 17 universities in 9 European countries (AT, CZ, FR, IT, PT, RO, ES, CH, UK) and 5 universities from North America (Canada), Latin America (Argentina, Brazil) and China, who have recently adhered via an Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate programme; 1 national research institute (INRETS) in France; 1 social sciences foundation (Maison des Sciences de l'Homme) and 3 SME partners in Ireland, Italy and Sweden.

The SoReCom European PhD on S.R. & C. has been selected by DG Education and Culture as an example of “best practices” for dissemination in higher education and is the core of the EU approved SoReCom THEmatic NETwork<sup>2</sup>. Developed by the European PhD on S.R. & C., it is a worldwide “network of networks” of academic, professional research and commercial institutions interested in this area of social psychology that has opened the door to cooperation between scholars and professionals worldwide.

This paper will also describe the SoReCom European PhD on S.R. & C.'s innovative curriculum, which has taken full advantage of modern communication technologies to build a virtual campus spanning the globe. The well -tested didactic formula and training structure of this three-year doctorate include: tutoring and co-tutoring triadic system (multiple supervision), face-to-face individual and small group mentoring activities integrated with an open learning system where tutors have on-line access for didactic activities and monitoring trainees' progress, structured individual and collective international mobility of trainees and teaching staff (required mobility of at least 12 months for trainees at research centres in two different countries; collective mobility is achieved during International Summer Schools and Lab Meetings), and learning by doing in academic and non-academic settings.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.europhd.eu>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.europhd.eu/SoReComTHEmaticNETwork>

In addition to the partnership's composition and development, the paper describes in detail the didactic and administrative organization of the SoReCom European PhD on S.R. & C. programme. Chapter headings are as follows:

1. The European Joint Doctorate: a strategic tool for enhancing the attractiveness of the European Higher Education and Research Areas
2. The European Joint PhD on Social Representations and Communication: anticipating the Bologna Process.
  - 2.1 Partner composition and development
  - 2.2 Paradigmatic and trans-disciplinary thematic areas
  - 2.3 Integrated complementary training resources within the network
  - 2.4 Curriculum Development: structured and integrated program
  - 2.5 Benefits of the Programme
3. Impact: the added European value of the Joint Doctorate

The SoReCom EuroPhD on S.R.& C World guarantees:

- a) mutual recognition for both the training and the joint degree in addition to institutional recognition since 1993 from the EC, universities, and ministries;
- b) training in research and transferable skills in an international environment;
- c) training process assessment;
- d) integrated physical and virtual international mobility for research trainees and professors;
- e) intensive didactic stages in multicultural and multilingual settings; f) enhanced career prospects thanks to strong partnerships;
- f) greater expansion of networking activities through the unique combination of the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme and the SoReCom THEmatic NETwork.

## 1. The European Joint Doctorate: a strategic tool for enhancing the attractiveness of the European Higher Education and Research Areas

In their recent book entitled *“Toward a Global PhD? Forces and Forms in Doctoral Education worldwide”* (2008), editors Maresi Nerad and Mimi Heggelund, respectively Director and Co-ordinator of the Center for Innovation and Research in Graduate Education (CIRGE) at the University of Washington, explored the consequences of globalization for doctoral education, together with other authors from around the world chosen from among the participants in Seattle Conference (2005). This conference was designed to share information on innovation and best practices and to produce an international research agenda on doctoral education. Sharing the view of doctoral education as the core of a university’s research capacity, productivity and innovation in the global knowledge economy, several authors provided a snapshot of doctoral education in Europe. In particular they examined the cases of Germany, the UK, and Scandinavia and in general, doctoral education within the framework of the Bologna process. They also looked at doctoral programmes in South Africa, South America (Brazil and Mexico), in the Asia Pacific region (in particular, Australia, Japan and India) and in North America (Canada and the US). In its appendix the book also provided an overview of the commonalities, differences and future trends in doctoral education around the world. According to the editors, joint doctorates clearly belong to the future-oriented models for doctoral education, called Mode 2. Mode 1, the traditional model, is centred on individual students who perform research on a topic mostly of his or her own choice or on a topic suggested by an advisor or by a single “master” professor. The future oriented Mode 2 is based on co-operative research training teams, multiple mentors, a learning process that has international graduate students and post-doctoral fellows integrated into the university’s graduate curriculum, collaborative projects with other universities, interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approaches, world citizenship education oriented implying international mobility, multi-languages skills, transferable/professional competencies (teaching, leadership, communication, project and time management, team building and networking capacities, etc. In this new vision of doctoral education “Various forms of international involvement/collaboration regarding education are emerging. They range from joint doctoral degrees to the requirements of spending research time in another country” (Nerad, M. Heggelund, M. eds. 2008 p: 315).

In a previous article (de Rosa, 2008) we presented the *new forms of international co-operation in doctoral training*, distinguishing *internationalisation* and the *International Doctorate* as two distinct models aimed at one goal driven by the impulse given in the past decade by

the Bologna Process (especially after the 2003 Berlin Communiqué) to the internationalisation of doctoral training, in line with the promotion of synergic links between the European Research Area (ERA) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

**Early initiatives towards a “European Doctorate”**

In that article we examined the main steps towards taken towards establishing the European Doctorate since 1959, long before the 1999 Bologna Conference, including the initiatives taken in 1993 by the *Comité de Liason des Conférences de Recteurs et des Présidents des Universités des Pays member de la Communauté Européenne* (CRE) and its successor the *European University Association* (EUA), the launch in 2004 of a Doctoral Project including action 6 that was dedicated to “network of networks” and following actions until the 2008 creation of the *Council for Doctoral Education* (CDE-EUA), which in its 2nd annual meeting in 2009 has focussed its 2010 activities on *joint doctorates*.

Although never legally established under European law because of autonomy issues in EU member states on matters concerning education, the actions funded by the DG-Education and Culture within Erasmus, Socrates and its current successor LifeLongLearning (LLP) have encouraged the development of new advanced joint curricula (CDA) and intensive programs based on inter-institutional cooperation between universities in at least three member states. The multi-year cycles of different EC Framework Programs launched by DG-Research (known by their acronyms: HCM for Human Mobility Capital in the 4th FP; T.M.R. for Training Mobility Researchers in the 5th FP; Marie Curies in the 6th FP; People ITN for Initial Training Networks in the current 7th FP) have certainly contributed to fertilizing not only the idea, but even the practice of the European Joint Doctorate in different forms. These are at least cooperative research training networks that do not necessarily award joint degrees. In some cases, especially those under actions supported by the DG-Research, are based on “scientific” rather than on “institutional” networks committed to joint curricula. By developing a more elaborated vision of the European space of Higher Education and research, in each cycle they progressively eliminated some of the limitations present in previous Framework Programs. This has enhanced the attractiveness of the European Research Area and higher education system in the new globalized scenario, where “education” and “research training” have been progressively inserted into the logic of competing markets among institutions and geopolitical areas of the world. For example, the restrictions in terms of nationality and age which had limited the selection of applicants for the Marie Curie Training sites, (EU nationals who were researchers under 35 years old, with no more than 4 years experience after completing the degree that qualified them to begin a doctorate and a small number of EU post-docs) were eliminated in the People Initial Training Network program under the 7th Framework Program and in the Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate

(EMJD), launched by the DG-Education and Culture, that aimed at promoting inter-institutional co-operation not only among EU universities, but also with academic institutions from the so-called third countries (non EU states) in a global scenario.

Funded by the EC on the basis of highly competitive calls directed at EU universities and their scientific communities, the guiding principals of the above mentioned programs were to create a Europe of knowledge, a stimulating environment for research, teaching and innovation, able to compete internationally with the most renowned academic institutions and to consolidate a tradition of recruiting the best minds from around the world. In this scenario, the European Joint Doctorate is a fundamental strategic tool for enhancing the attractiveness of the European Higher Education and Research Areas and to combat the *brain drain* phenomenon in favour of a model of *brain circulation* and *brain sharing*.

However, we also highlighted (de Rosa, 2008) how the development of the European Joint Doctorate has been accompanied by a continuing resistance to the creation and recognition of joint doctoral programs. This is due to two main factors:

#### Resistance factors

1. the widespread fear that the harmonisation will homogenize the diversity of the doctorates that currently exist in Europe, leading to a misconception that the European Doctorate would be *the only form* of doctorate in Europe, rather than seeing it as a “*joint*” doctorate;
2. misinterpreting international mobility as the goal rather than one of the strategic tools of doctoral training, leading to the notion that merely adding international mobility to a traditional doctorate is sufficient to qualify a programme as a European/International Doctorate.

The European Doctorate is not the same as a traditional doctorate with some experience of international cooperation (co-tutelle, international mobility or whatever...). Although having similar goals, internationalization and an international doctorate are *two distinct models*. A joint doctorate commits institutions to integrate all aspects of the programme, making it something more and different from an additional certificate. Therefore, a doctorate with the label of Doctor Europeus is not the same as a European joint doctorate. What is missing in the widely misused formula of “European Doctorate” is the magic word “joint” that clearly distinguishes it from those forms of doctorate open to some degree of internationalisation. These can include one or more internationalisation elements, such as: recruiting applicants worldwide, allowing research trainees to spend some time abroad, allowing them to take courses or write their dissertation in languages other than that of the country where the doctorate is being pursued, involving

#### Specificities of European Doctorate



foreign supervisors in co-tutelle, creating synergy between doctoral training and international cooperative research teams, promoting international networking, inviting foreign experts to participate in the final jury, etc. Although all essential, no single element or combination of these elements is enough to qualify a doctorate as European or international. What makes a clear distinction between an internationalised doctorate and a jointly established European/International doctorate is that the latter has a well defined joint programme based on a structured integration of all these elements, as well as many others we will present later, which are clearly defined in inter-institutional agreements that include the award of a joint degree. Among the various routes possible for the future of doctorates in Europe, a structured international programme based on networking, multiple joint supervision, common rules for recruitment, training and evaluation and providing physical and virtual mobility can be seen as one of the appropriate responses to doctoral trainees' demands to overcome their isolation and the limitations of the individual "apprenticeship" model.

After the somewhat fragmented experience of international training networks inspired by the policies of the European Commission DG-Research and by the DG-Education and Culture, it seems that the time has finally come to overcome the diverse national laws and norms that regulate doctoral programs and to promote not only the idea, but also the practice of European doctorates, jointly awarded by institutions from different countries.

Developed by well-established scientific communities with the assistance and support of individual institutions, joint European/international doctorates can create a mechanism that enhances long-term research interests via exchanges both among different generations of "experienced" researchers and with those in the making.

In the above-mentioned article we described the long series of *musts*<sup>3</sup> for establishing a joint European doctorate. These relate to the entire organisational process – from network build-up until the recognition of the joint degree. After having made the distinction between “scientific” and “institutional” networks, we stressed the importance of establishing joint doctorates by bringing the bottom-up approach to the top – i.e. combining a network based on a well-established community of scientists in at least three European countries to with top institutional recognition, making the award of the joint degree and a commitment for long-term sustainability of the programme part of the mission build-up. When we talk of the *musts* for the build-up a joint European/International doctorate, we are referring to the joint criteria that must be established by “institutionalised scientific networks” for the entire process of planning, implementing and monitoring the programme’s activities. These include global dissemination of the programme’s announcement and the recruitment policy, the selection of candidates, the structure of the research training programme in an international learning and research environment, language policy, monitoring via multiple supervision that involves international physical and virtual mobility, evaluation of the whole training process, the credit accumulation system, requirements for the dissertation defence, award of a formally recognised joint diploma, career prospects in and outside academia, management at the network rather than the individual institution level, a clear division of tasks among the partners, a shared code of conduct for both supervisors and research trainees, IPR policy, quality control for the programme and its infrastructure, etc.

### **“Musts” for a joint European doctorate**

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<sup>3</sup> It is very interesting to compare the “musts” listed in the EC Program Guide (2009) for eligibility for an Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate (EMJD) and the list of the “musts” adopted by the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication and Communication (designed in 1993 and operational in 1996) and see the impact it may have had as an anticipatory experience of the Bologna Process, 13 years before the 2009 launch of Erasmus Mundus for Joint Doctorates. The EC Program Guide (2009) states that Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJDs) “are designed and implemented by consortia of HEIs and socio-economic partners from Europe and any other parts of the world. Enrolled doctoral candidates will receive high-quality training and carry out their research activities in at least two different countries; after the successful completion of the programme, they will be awarded, on behalf of the consortium, a double, multiple or joint doctorate degree” (European Commission, 2009 ERASMUS MUNDUS 2009-2013 Programme Guide, p 36-37). The requirements of the European Ph.D. on S.R.& C. are even more demanding, because the enrolled doctoral candidates receive multiple supervision, structured training activities and carry out their research in at least three countries.

## 2. The European Joint PhD on Social Representations and Communication: anticipating the Bologna Process

### Focus on the first European joint doctorate

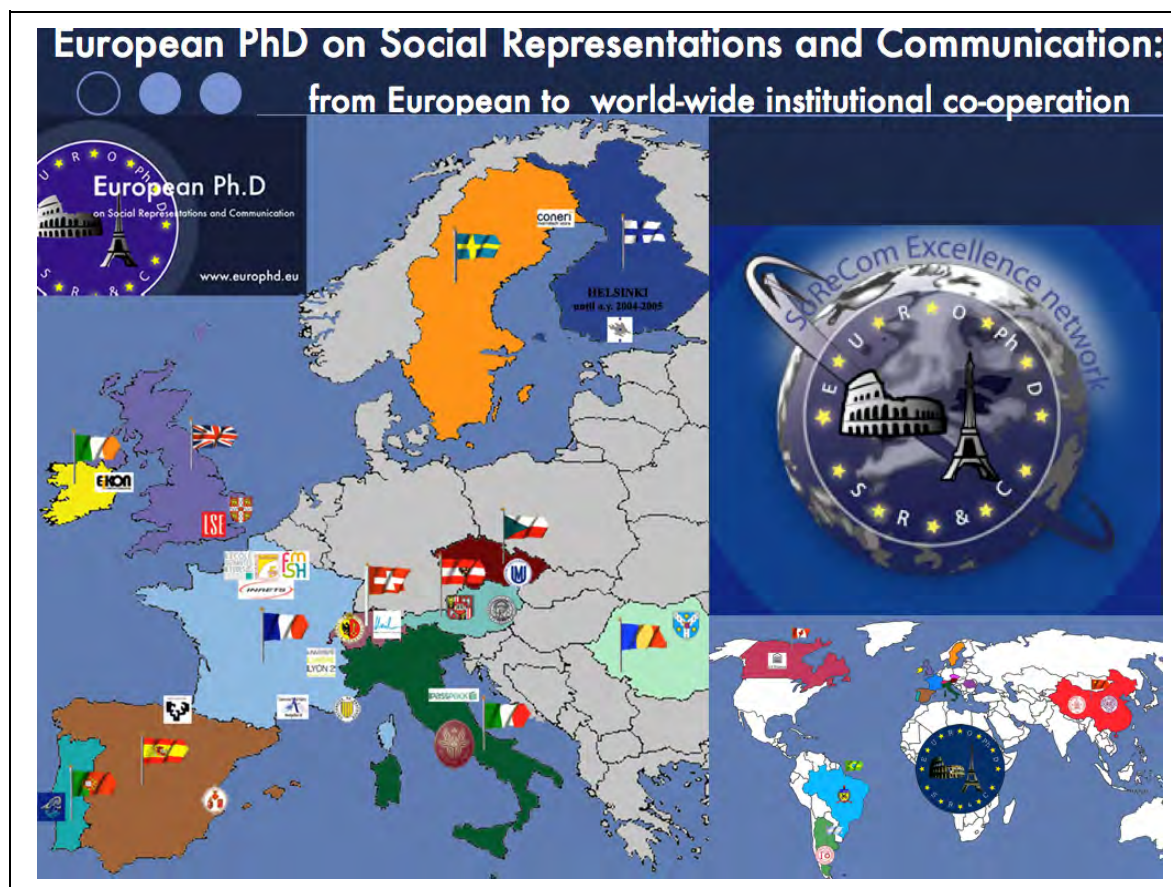
A case study on European PhD on Social Representations and Communication (S.R. & C.), this article focuses on the first European joint doctorate formally recognised within the three scenarios of universities, ministries and the European Commission (DG-Education and Culture and DG-Research) and that has a long history of institutional recognition [<http://www.euophd.eu>]. The track record of the European PhD on S.R. & C. in terms of networking and co-operation activities dates back to 1993, when the program was established under the Erasmus Inter-Universities Cooperation Programme (ICP), confirming the role played in Europe by the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication anticipating the Bologna Process. With its long history of institutional recognition, it combines the weight of the experience gained over many years with the power of innovation that drives its continuing and progressive development via the expansion in network partners and the programme's well-structured and integrated didactic system, supported by innovative and worldwide accessible research e-infrastructure for documentation, networking and training.

### 2.1 Partner composition and development

#### EU consortium

The article describes the recent expansion of the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication both in and out of academia and European borders. It briefly illustrates its organization in terms of how the partnership between HEIs, enterprises and research institutes have opened the door not only to an increased transfer of knowledge, but to expanding career opportunities for researchers. The EU consortium of the European Doctorate on Social Representations and Communication currently includes:

- 17 Universities in 9 European countries (AT, CZ, FR, IT, PT, RO, ES, CH, UK) and
- 5 universities from North America (Canada), Latin America (Argentina, Brazil) and Asia (China), who have recently adhered via the Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate program;
- 1 national research institute in France;
- 1 social science foundation (Maison des Sciences de l'Homme) and
- 3 SME partners in Ireland, Italy and Sweden.



**Fig. C 2.4-1** Map of the European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication: from European to world-wide institutional co-operation

With the involvement of 15 different countries worldwide, the European PhD on S.R. & C. consortium ensures wide diversity in terms of nationality and types of organizations, including universities and enterprises which each have a specific field of competence, as follows:

- Argentina: University of Belgrano;
- Austria: Universities of Linz and Vienna;
- Brazil: Federal University of Santa Catarina;
- Canada: University of Ottawa;
- China: Beijing Normal University, Nankin University;
- Czech Republic: Masaryk University;

- France: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Université Montpellier III, Université Paris V, Université Aix-en-Provence, Université Lumière Lyon 2, INRETS-Institut National de Recherche sur les Transports et leur Sécurité, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme;
- Ireland: Eikon Strategic Consulting Ltd;
- Italy: University of Rome "Sapienza", Passpack Spa;
- Portugal: Instituto Politecnico de Lisboa;
- Romania: University A. I. Cuza;
- Spain: University of Valencia and University of the Basque Country;
- Sweden: Conny Ericsson Försäljning AB;
- Switzerland: Universities of Geneva and Lausanne,
- UK: Cambridge University and the London School of Economics.

The European PhD on S.R. & C. on Social Representations and Communication also collaborates with a number of trans-disciplinary networks including the Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA), the global University-Community partnership for Social Action Research Network (UCP-SARnet) and prestigious research centres in North and South America, including the Groupe d'Étude sur l'Interdisciplinarité et les Représentations Sociales (GEIRSO) in Canada, the Centro Internacional de Estudos em Representações e Subjetividade -Educação (CIERS-ED) and Centre International de Recherche en Représentation e Psychologie Sociale (CIPREPS) in Brazil, and the Centre International d'Etudes en Représentations et Pratiques Sociales (CIEREPS) in Argentina. In Asia and Africa, we work with the Foundation for Social Representations Studies in Indonesia, as well as with research centres in Tunisia and Israel.

We have been able to create this unique form of doctoral education thanks to funding by a series of EU and ministerial programmes since 1993. Following the commitment of the rectors of three universities in Italy, Finland and Portugal among the 13 initial university partners from European countries, it was fully implemented in 1996, the first year that early research trainees were actually enrolled in the programme. Subsequently, other universities, including from Eastern Europe, were admitted as partners in our institutional network. They were very carefully selected on the basis of the excellence of their scientific production in the field of Social Representations, research environment, training facilities, and what their research teams could

offer in terms of supervision to research trainees. In fact, quite a large number of other universities have applied to join the programme over the last thirteen years, but new partnerships were considered only in a limited number of cases consistent with a precise development policy. For network management reasons, the Executive Committee decided not to expand the stable partnership structure of the European PhD on S.R. & C. beyond the limit of sustainable management, instead opting in 2003 to promote a new project for a network of excellence (the EU approved SoReCom THEmatic NETwork) that is geared towards a much wider scientific community. This network provides synergies for scientific co-operation, not only at the institutional level, but also at the level of individuals or research groups located on different continents: <http://www.europhd.eu/SoReComTHEmaticNETwork>.

In 2009 have had two major developments that have improved the opportunities created by our European PhD on S.R. & C. programme:

#### **New developments 2009**

- The first big change is our expansion beyond the boundaries of the European Union through institutional partnerships with the University of Belgrano in Argentina, the Federal University of Santa Catarina in Brazil, the University of Ottawa in Canada and Beijing Normal University and Nankin University in China.
- The second is including SMEs and research institutes directly in the training and supervision of doctoral candidates.

The European PhD on Social Representations and Communication is a joint doctorate recognised by all partner universities on the basis of an institutional agreement signed by their rectors. It is an EU approved programme that has received funding from DG-Research since the 4th Framework Program (under Human Mobility Capital program, Training Mobility Researcher, High Level Scientific Conferences, Marie Curie Actions Series of Scientific Events), by DG-Education and Culture since 1993 (under Erasmus Advanced Curriculum Development, Socrates Advanced Curriculum Development, Intensive Programs, Teaching Staff Mobility, Thematic Network), and the French and Italian ministries responsible for higher education (under Internationalisation of Higher Education System and the Vinci Programme). In other countries, for example in the Czech Republic, before signing the Inter-Institutional Agreement, Masaryk University in Brno had to request and obtained accreditation of this European PhD on S.R. & C. from the Czech Ministry of Higher Education.

#### **Characteristics of SoReCom Euro PhD**

In its role as co-ordinator, diplomas are issued by the University of Rome Sapienza with the signature of the rectors/presidents of the six universities which jointly confer the degree: University of Rome Sapienza (Italy), University of Aix-en-Provence, the University of Montpellier III "Paul Valéry" and University "Lumière" Lyon 2 (France), University Alexandru Ioan Cuza of Iasi (Romania), and Masaryk Uni-

versity, Brno (Czech Republic). The diploma also carries the logos of all partner universities.

**Goal of programme**

The goal of our programme is to prepare researchers for traditional academic careers as well as providing the private and public sectors with the researchers and experts they need in the rapidly growing interdisciplinary field of Social Representations. To this end we directly involve both outstanding scholars and experts from the public and private sectors interested in societal issues and the role of communication systems in the process of knowledge production, diffusion and transformation. There is a very strong demand for interactive networking and innovative research training among researchers at all levels in social representations, social psychology and the social sciences. It is also a field where employment opportunities for researchers are rapidly expanding. Via its innovative didactic programme, the European PhD on S.R. & C. plays an integral part in meeting those demands and in training researchers in the social sciences who are capable of working in different cultural and linguistic settings. It gives young social psychology researchers the wide range of research methodologies and complementary skills they will need to accomplish their present and future research and professional goals, both inside and outside academia.

One of the programme's great assets is the SoReCom THEmatic NETwork, a "network of networks". With more than 3,000 members in academic, professional research and commercial institutions interested in this area of social psychology, this network, which grew out of the European PhD on S.R. & C., has opened the door to contact with scholars and professionals around the globe. It generates numerous offers of co-operation from institutions as well as enormous interest on the part of research trainees who want to participate in the programme. In recent years many requests have come from outside Europe and provided the impetus to seek to include institutions and early stage research trainees from outside Europe in our European "pole of excellence". This combination of an international scientific network, a joint European doctoral program and enterprise partners creates a unique integrated physical and virtual "campus" for the highest quality in advanced research training.



Fig. C 2.4-2 Map of the SoReCom THEMatic NETWORK Partners belonging to EU countries

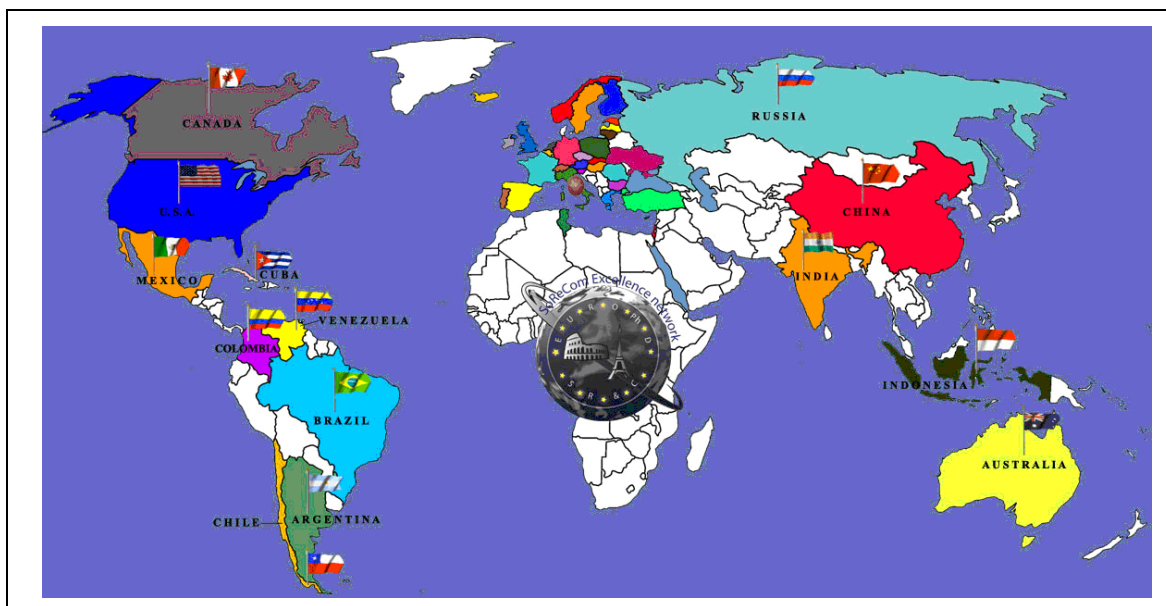


Fig. C 2.4-3 Map of the SoReCom THEMatic NETWORK Partners belonging to extra-EU continents



## 2.2 Paradigmatic and trans-disciplinary thematic areas

### Field of Social Representations

The European PhD on S.R. & C. is focused on the field of Social Representations, which provides a unifying meta-theoretical perspective on the social construction of knowledge and its relation to socially situated practices and to traditional as well as new means of human interaction and communication. The main thematic area of the European PhD on S.R.C. and its related So.Re.Com. network of excellence is a paradigmatic area of Social Psychology inspired by the Social Representations Theory and Communication studies. The Social Representations Theory is one of the 20th century's most important theories of the social construction of knowledge. The study of social representations, originally specifically European, is currently a multilingual, worldwide discipline with a substantial body of literature. It involves leading scholars from both social psychology and the social sciences: sociology, anthropology, education, economics, linguistics, semiotics and communication and media studies<sup>4</sup>.

Social representations have important applications for the public and private sectors, playing the role of a bridge between disciplines and providing a pragmatic approach to communication studies with significant implications for institutional and organizational contexts, culture and health practices, inter-group relations, ideology and politics, economics, the environment, etc.

### Programme open to multidisciplinary and multi-methodological research approaches

The European PhD on S.R. & C. programme is open to multidisciplinary and multi-methodological research approaches (experimental and field work). Studies of "what" people know and "how" it relates to the social groups to which they belong and to the media are concerned with the social construction and representation of a particular object (e.g. health-illness, environment, new technologies, politics, economics, European integration and enlargement, minority groups, immigrants and racism, human rights, etc.) and how its related scientific theories are transformed into everyday knowledge. Of all the disciplines relating to communication studies (semiotics, linguistics, sociology, cognitive psychology, mass communication, symbolic anthropology, etc.) the European PhD on S.R. & C. research training and the multi-year cycle of International Summer Schools focus primarily on social psychology, particularly in relation to social representations.

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<sup>4</sup> See the basic bibliography [http://www.europhd.net/html/doc/basic\\_bibliography.pdf](http://www.europhd.net/html/doc/basic_bibliography.pdf) selected from a comprehensive bibliographical inventory of the literature on Social Representations, currently including more than 6000 references, and a vast and growing collection of bibliographic entries: <http://www.europhd.eu/cgi-bin/WebObjects/euophd.woa/wa/biblio> linked to the So.Re.Com. THEMATIC NETWORK e-Library: <http://www.europhd.net/cgi-bin/WebObjects/euophd.woa/wa/virtualLib>

The European PhD on S.R. & C.'s advanced research training thus involves key areas such as interaction, the media, processes of social influence, languages, emotions and new contexts of virtual and mediated interaction. Within this framework, the European PhD on S.R. & C. training programme is based on the assumption that communication should be studied as a social process. Because of the interdisciplinary training opportunities that intellectually advance new generations of researchers, the scientific community of the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication offers itself as a starting point for interdisciplinary dialogue from optic of social psychology and, as well, an expert forum on the theoretical redefinition of problematic questions and methodological strategies within the specificities of different disciplinary approaches and their applicative value in different organisational and institutional contexts.

The societal relevance of this field of study that crosses the borders of many disciplines also represents an added value. The diversity of the current research topics being studied by transnational research teams in the European PhD on S.R. & C. network is demonstrated graphically below.

The European PhD on Social Representations and Communication is structured in research teams dedicated to specific thematic areas and sub-topics. This newly revamped structure strengthens scientific co-operation between partners and helps in orienting applicants in presenting research project proposals. Based on our partners' expertise and the complementarities of their offerings in terms of both paradigmatic and methodological options and current research areas and sub-themes, we assembled the following research teams. The synergies created by working within these teams, composed of academic, public and private sector institutions and enterprises, provide research trainees with a much wider experience both in terms of methodologies and content. It is also an opportunity to explore employment possibilities outside of academia that they otherwise might not have considered.

#### **Structure of the programme**



Fig. C 2.4-4

The main thematic areas developed by the co-operative network research teams of the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication programme

### 2.3 Integrated complementary training resources within the network

#### Programme highly internationalised

Training in the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme is highly internationalized, as is evidenced by the training modules including complementary training modules in meta-theoretical analysis of the Social Representations research area, methodological skills, thematic areas and transferable skills.

The main research teams are focussed on:

- theoretical and meta-theoretical issues related to the study of social representations.
- multi-methodological contributions to the “theory of method” on social representations. With regard to methodology, highly diversi-

fied and complementary across the various research teams of academic partners, research programs are guided by the goal to advocate a multi-methodological approach to the study of S.R. based on an integrating and differentiating paradigmatic option inspired by a multi-theoretical perspective, underscoring the widespread inconsistency in the literature between the complexity of the S.R. construct and its methodological operationalization;

- *Training “for” and “by” Research in Thematic Areas of societal relevance:*

In addition to research programs aimed at contributing to the theoretical, meta-theoretical and Methodological development of the Social Representations Theory, the research teams that include academic institutions and private companies cooperate in training early-stage researchers and early post-docs on the main thematic areas, illustrated in the fig. C 2.4-4 above and described more in details in the web-site

- *Training in Complementary and Technical skills offered by SMEs and Research Institutes.*

(For more details on continually updated and improved research topics and sub-topics, please consult the following webpage: [http://www.europhd.eu/html/\\_onda01/01/08.00.00.00.shtml](http://www.europhd.eu/html/_onda01/01/08.00.00.00.shtml) )

## 2.4 Curriculum Development: structured and integrated program

### 2.4.1 Didactic System

The European PhD on S.R. & C.'s structure and organisation is completely integrated and has the expertise/human resources and facilities/infrastructure to achieve its declared goals. The European PhD on S.R. & C.'s innovative didactic system is based on tutoring and co-tutoring of each trainee at three European partner institutions. Partners jointly develop programmes that provide unique opportunities for interdisciplinary research training, maximising added value for institutions and trainees alike. The interdisciplinary, multi-methodological and thematic possibilities offered by the training network are enhanced by outside experts invited to participate in intensive training "stages", multi-point videoconferences, tutoring and co-tutoring for individuals and small groups.

The didactic system, a highly innovative system of integrated face-to-face and open distance learning involving research trainees in an interlocking system of virtual and physical mobility, develops trainees' theoretical and meta-theoretical knowledge, methodological expertise

## Research training in an international context

and provides opportunities for extensive field work, applied research, and acquisition of transferable skills.

Multiple supervision is performed by three tutors located in three different countries via the European PhD on S.R. & C. open learning system. The triadic tutoring and co-tutoring system is aimed at monitoring the development of research programmes at both national and foreign training sites from the trainees' entry into the programme through the final dissertation. The restricted number of research trainees per tutor per year insures individualized multiple tutoring and close monitoring of research trainees' progress.

Research trainees are assigned their own research "space" on the website in order to update their project and to allow supervision by national and foreign tutors and monitoring by the Programme Director and the Scientific Co-ordinator.

**Virtual and physical mobility**

The interlocking structured system of *virtual* (open learning system) and *physical mobility* involves both research trainees and teaching staff at the individual and collective levels: International mobility is achieved both at the individual and collective levels by taking into account that international mobility is only a tool, not a goal in itself. It is just one of the requirements for a European doctorate, and in and of itself is not sufficient.

- In the first case, individual research trainees are required to relocate abroad for at least twelve months to work in two different European countries and two different research centres at host institutions with which their tutors are associated and from whom they receive individual tutoring and co-tutoring for their research work.
- In the second case, collective mobility involves all research trainees enrolled in the program and tutors from all the partner universities and is achieved during intensive stages, like the International Summer Schools, or the face-to-face sessions of International Lab meetings. To provide for the improvement of cross-fertilization of ideas and research practices between research trainees with different levels of expertise, leading scientists and experts from outside the network are invited to teach and a limited number of post-doctorate researchers and research trainees from around the world enrolled in other doctoral programmes in related scientific fields are admitted as participants.

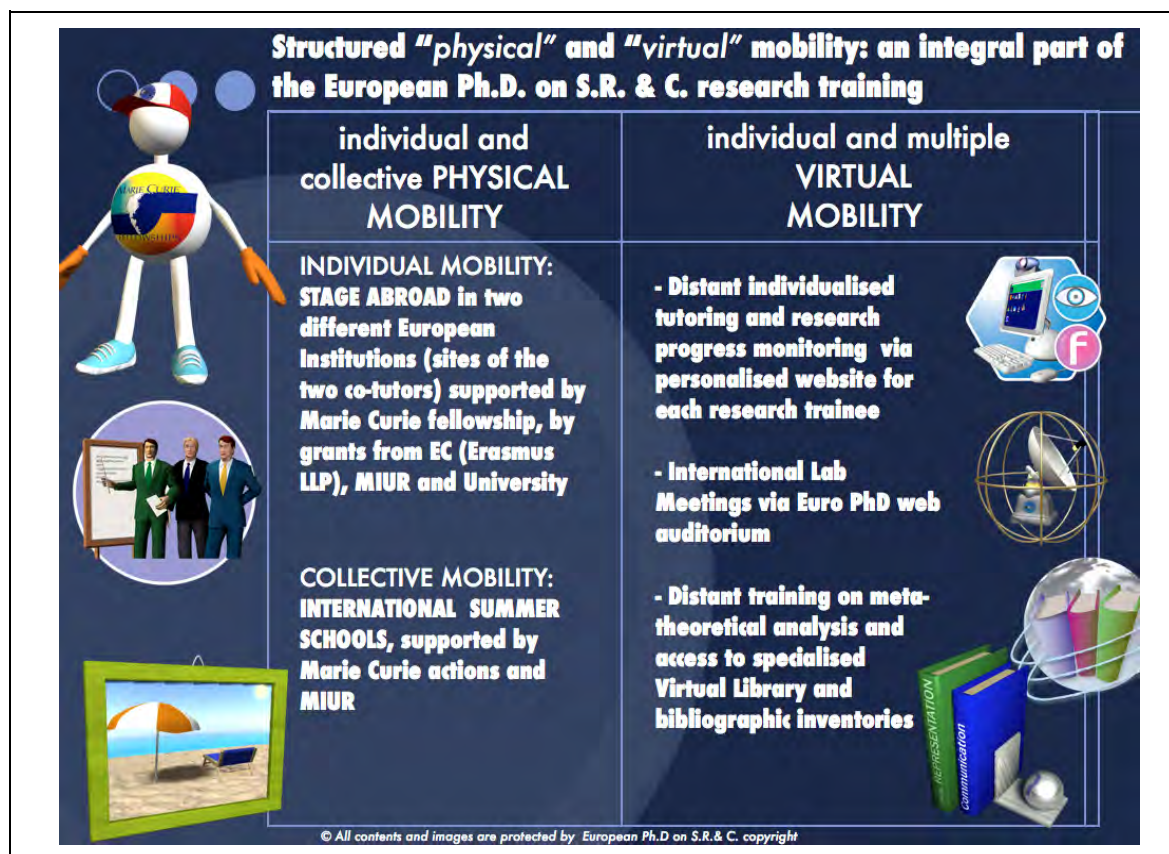


Fig. C 2.4-5

**Structured "physical" and "virtual" individual and collective mobility: an integral part of the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. research training**

The interdisciplinary, multi-methodological and thematic possibilities offered by the European PhD on S.R. & C. network are enhanced by the wide range of outside experts invited to participate in the programme's intensive training "stages", multi-point videoconferences, tutoring and co-tutoring for individuals and small groups, and various on-line training tools (web-auditorium, forum discussion, virtual library, video-courses, etc.).<sup>5</sup>

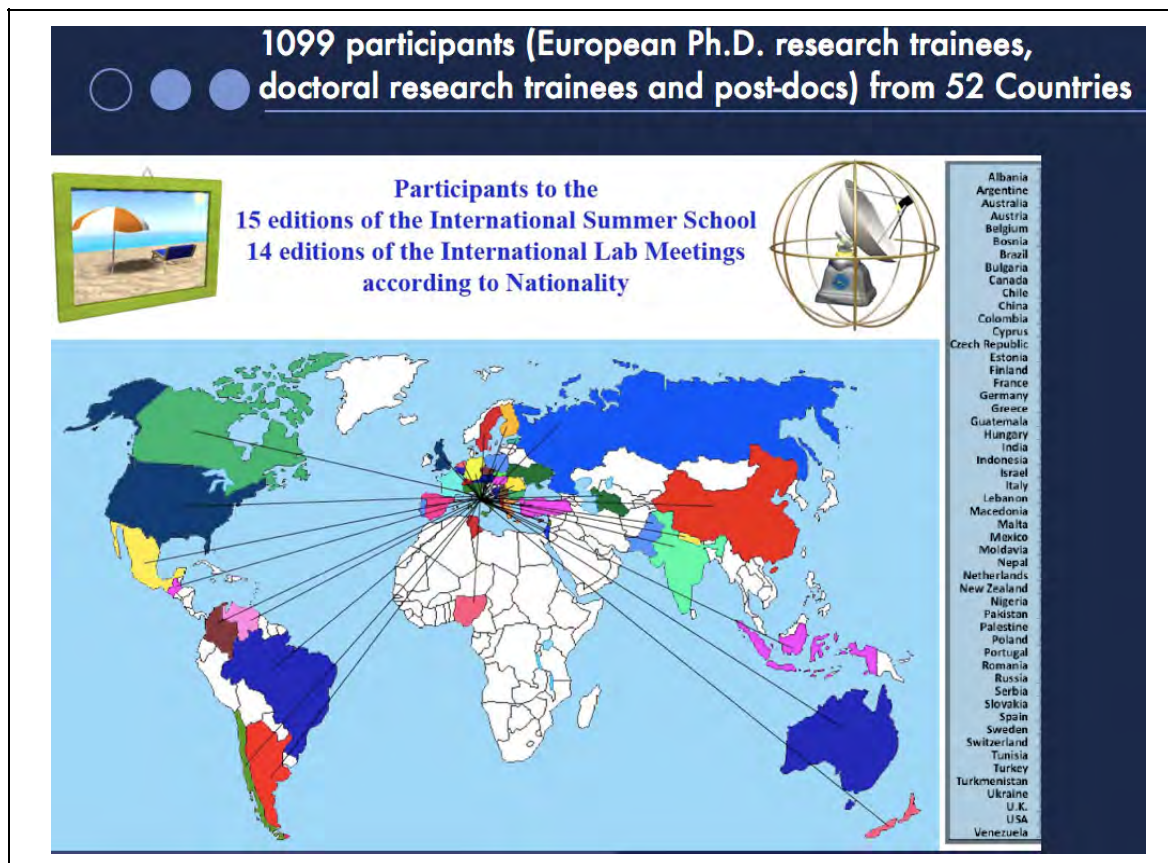
The annual International Summer Schools and three annual Lab Meetings, which are required components of the European PhD on S.R. & C. curriculum, are also highly internationalized events. To date (2009), the 15 International Summer Schools and the 14 International Lab Meetings have involved 1099 research trainees from 52 different

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.europhd.eu/InternationalSummerSchools>; <http://www.europhd.eu/IntLabMeetings>



## Research training in an international context

countries and 246 invited professors and guest speakers from 22 countries. These scientific events are extremely important not only from a training point of view, but also because they enhance cooperation between the more advanced scientific communities working in Europe, the United States and Canada and research groups working in under-developed regions such as Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia.



**Fig. C 2.4-6** Integrated virtual and physical collective mobility of research trainees and post-docs participant in the annual International Summer Schools and three annual Lab Meetings



**Fig. C 2.4-7** Invited professors participant in the annual European Ph.D. Summer Schools and three annual International Lab Meetings

Research training at network sites employs a wide range of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including experimental, observational and non-verbal work, survey research and interviews, focus groups, image-based and textual tools, and specific techniques to obtain data from the various asynchronous and interactive Internet and web environments.

The transmission of transferable general skills (such as modern presentation techniques, conference presentation, workshop organization, design and organization of academic work, research team management, and management of statistical software, large bibliographies and international databases, etc.) is focused on *learning by doing*. Therefore we involve research trainees in scientific activities either individually or in small and medium teams and in different contexts (such as presenting their research progress during International Lab Meetings and International Summer Schools, use of the web-auditorium, organizing small seminars, participating in international conferences,

**Transferable  
general skills**



## Research training in an international context

advanced training courses for different statistical software packages, writing joint papers, participating in European projects and international networking, cooperating in meta-theoretical analysis of the specialized literature on Social Representations and Communication, managing a large bibliographic inventory, contributing to the construction of a specialized virtual library, etc.). Our enterprise partners have special responsibility for training in other transferable career skills, including: effective use of e-learning technologies, research software, web design, software programming, marketing, sales, management and entrepreneurship, etc.

In addition, the full-time multi-lingual staff at the European PhD on S.R. & C. Research Centre and Multimedia Lab in Rome also reflects the international character of the programme, including citizens of France, Poland, Italy and Lebanon. Contractors who provide support for technical, administrative and linguistic aspects of the programme come from all over Europe and the United States.

At the network level as well as at the level of individual universities, enterprises, and research centres, the European PhD on S.R. & C. guarantees:

1. world-wide access to information about the programme and how to apply via the common web platform;
2. an on-line application process via a web registration system;
3. selection of internationally recruited applicants by the European PhD on S.R. & C. Recruitment board;
4. structured research training in an international environment (including training in transferable skills);
5. intensive didactic stages in multicultural settings;
6. multiple supervision via tutoring and co-tutoring by at least three tutors in three different
7. countries;
8. integration of structured individual and collective international physical and virtual mobility;
9. personalised web-space for each research trainee with access restricted to the three tutors for evaluation including the thesis (full report and final article);
10. a language policy and format for PhD dissertation;
11. high tech infrastructure and Lab facilities;
12. training process assessment and quality evaluation system;
13. officialisation of the degree;
14. active integration in the world-wide SoReCom THEmatic NETwork;
15. enhancement of career prospects both in and outside academia thanks to strong partnerships with private enterprises and public research centres.

Continuous contact among partners and with research trainees is maintained through the previously mentioned common web platform, which supports our innovative open learning system that includes e-learning and distance learning tools, an e-library, and for tutors and scientific staff, on-line access to trainees' work. As mentioned above, research trainees are supervised by multiple tutors at universities, enterprises or both, located in three different countries. The three annual Lab Meetings and the annual International Summer School are another opportunity for mobility and interaction, combining face-to-face interaction with mediated virtual interaction (internet forum discussion, web-videoconferencing, streaming videos on the web, etc.).

Our training programmes are developed jointly with commercial partners to maximize added value for both trainees and the host institutions and include "stages" that can be incorporated into the degree programme for ECTS credits. This kind of co-operation has an innovative effect on the institutions involved and opens a window on a wealth of expanded human and technical resources that one organization could not possibly have. It creates a two-way flow of knowledge that is beneficial for all involved. For graduates of the programme, both core and wider employment related skills are developed, making research training in social psychology of greater relevance for a wider variety of careers both in and outside academia than in the past, and internationally and globally more attractive.

We are aware that the use of the European Credit Transfer System ECTS, as policy recommended by EC DG-Education and Culture, is a very controversial issue in the domain of doctoral education and there is not consensus about its adoption also among the EUA-CDE members. Indeed we have introduced it, as a tool for framing the general structures of the different training activities, in 1993 ten years before the doctorate has been officially recognised as the third cycle of the Bologna architecture. Due to the integrated and joint nature of the programme, we adapted the ECTS to provide a system for credit accumulation, rather than a comparison of distributed teaching offers and transfer of learning outcomes. It might therefore be more appropriate to call it an ECS. ECTS without the T means that the concept of "transfer" is not necessary in a jointly structured programme. By conceptualising the academic year in terms of earned credits rather than exclusively in terms of time, the system allows for flexibility in meeting the needs of both full-time and part-time research trainees. Research trainees are awarded up to 60 credits per year (20 for courses and didactic activities and 40 for research quality and related bibliographic knowledge). In any cases the 2009 ECTS User's Guide for lifelong learning states that the use of ECTS "enhances the transparency of learning programmes and achievements not only when it comes to the main higher education degrees (bachelor, master or doctorate) but for all types of learning activities provided or learning outcomes recognised by higher education institutions. The fact that all

#### Use of ECTS

learning achievements are documented and awarded a corresponding number of ECTS credits makes it possible for learners to have this learning recognised with a view of achieving a qualification, when these learning outcomes satisfy the requirements of the qualification. (...) The recognition of credits in the framework of joint programmes is stipulated in the regulations of the programme. There may be no need for Learning Agreements for mobility in the case of joint programmes as the credits achieved in the partner institution are automatically recognised if the rules of the joint programme are followed and the conditions are satisfied.” (DG-Education and Culture, 2009) ECTS User’s Guide 2009, p. 23, 22)

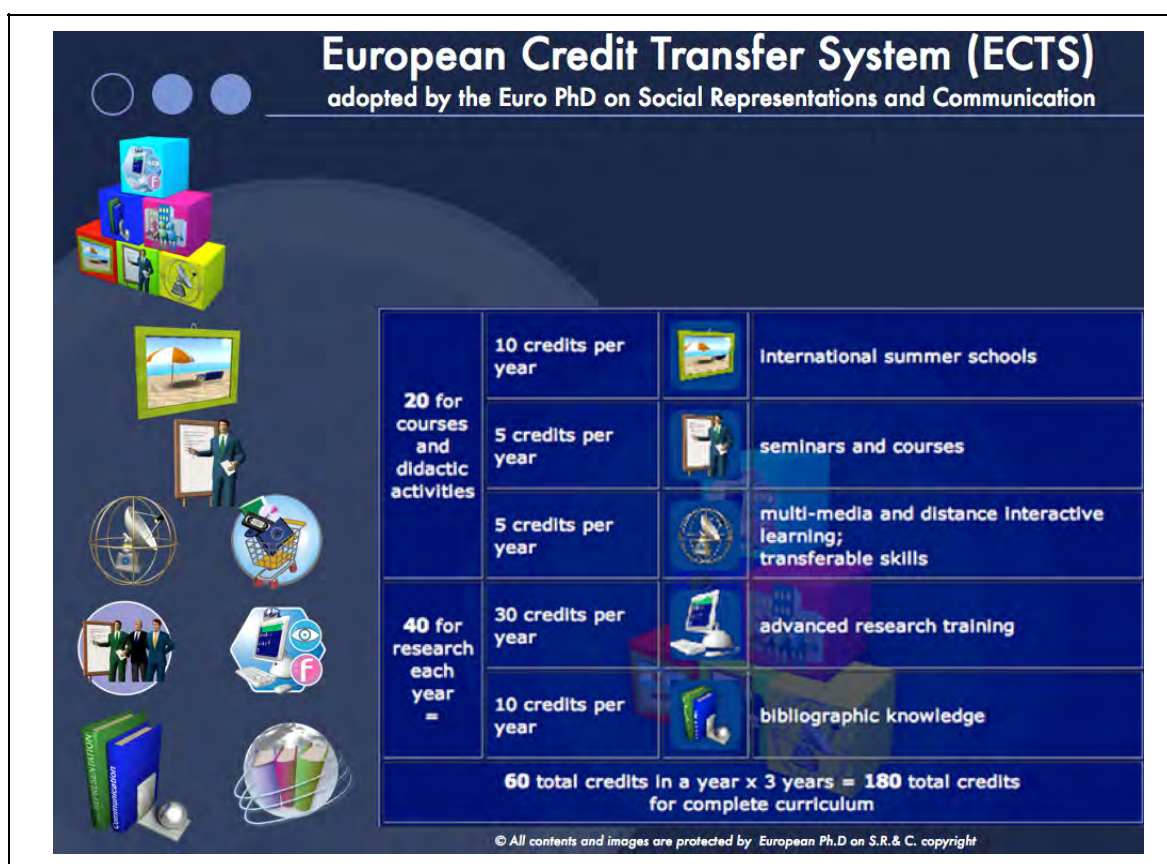


Fig. C 2.4-8

The E.C.T.S. adopted as a system for credit accumulation, rather than for credit transfer

#### 2.4.2 State of the art infrastructure and dedicated facilities

State of the art infrastructure and dedicated facilities at the coordinating university, the University of Rome Sapienza, and all network universities, including a common web site, enable us to link physical and virtual mobility and employ innovative teaching, tutoring

and management practices. Located at the University of Rome Sapienza, the state-of-the-art Research Centre and Multimedia Lab is a fully equipped high-tech facility that is the nerve centre of the PhD programme. It guarantees technical support for training and management activities, including real-time interactive exchanges with all participants and partner institutions and a vast network of other similarly equipped research centres both in and outside Europe.

The European PhD on S.R. & C. Research Centre and Multimedia Lab is dedicated to research and training needs for both doctoral candidates and highly experienced researchers, individually or in cross-national research teams. Full-time staff is available during the work-week to provide assistance to users. It integrates three main research pillars:

- **DOCUMENTATION:** the Intelligent Virtual Library on Social Representations and Communication, an invaluable research tool available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from anywhere in the world. The SoReCom eLibrary contains:
  - a comprehensive bibliographical inventory of the literature on Social Representations, currently including more than 6000 references, and a vast and growing collection of bibliographic entries
  - a meta-analysed inventory of the literature on SR, currently including almost 3000 meta-analysed articles or book chapters;
  - an advanced search engine hyper-linked with both above-mentioned inventories;
  - an Intelligent Virtual Library specialising in S.R. & C.) that currently holds more than 1000 texts available for online consultation and full text search, as well as hundreds of videos, courses and recorded interviews.



Fig. C 2.4-9

The SoRe.Com. THEmatic NETWORK bibliographical inventory and @-Library

- **NETWORKING:** Its advanced communication and research capabilities not only connect participants with the laboratory but also with the 3000 member world-wide SoReCom Thematic Network and other similarly equipped social science research centres both in and outside Europe. Its web-based system is highly flexible and easily adapted to provide support for long and short term training needs. The SoReCom THEmatic NETwork on-line virtual community includes:
  - members’ personal and institutional contact information, “individual scientific profiles”, and web-services like:
  - “news and calendar of scientific events”,
  - multi-point interactive co-operative research tools,
  - on-line conference management system for participant registration, submission of abstracts, papers, power point presentations as well as symposia, thematic sessions, round tables, posters, abstract reviews, information for participants, editing and publishing,
  - on-line journals;
  - newly designed service for “Virtual meetings with authors or book presentations”.
- **RESEARCH TRAINING:** The European PhD on S.R. & C. and the SoReCom integrated “Physical and Virtual Campus” includes:
  - European PhD on S.R. & C. Web-Auditorium multi-point web videoconference interactive system,
  - guidelines for developing research trainees’ skills in meta theoretical analysis of Social Representations literature and the use of bibliographic inventories,
  - distance tutoring and co-tutoring based on: personalised access to European PhD on S.R. & C. research reports and on-line evaluation of trainees’ research reports at the initial, intermediate and final stages,
  - on-line video-lectures in streaming,
  - interactive web-video-interviews with the protagonists in the scientific field
  - European PhD on S.R. & C. research trainees’ inventory
  - On-line tools allowing research trainees to provide “ratings”, i.e. feedback on the virtual training activities and those involving physical mobility, etc.



Fig. C 2.4-10

@-learning Kit at disposal of the So.Re.Com.  
European Ph.D. research trainees





Fig. C 2.4-11

Distance tutoring and co-tutoring tools based on: personalised access to European PhD on S.R. & C. research reports and on-line evaluation of trainees' research reports at the initial, intermediate and final stages

Briefly stated, the tools available at the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication Research Centre and Multimedia Lab give us the possibility to have real time interactive exchanges with all our participants, our academic partner institutions, and experts around the globe providing a rich and ever-growing research and learning environment that is advantageous to research team members, trainees and experts alike.

The unique combination of a scientific network and a doctoral programme is, in fact, a multilingual and multicultural virtual campus where European research trainees and experts from academia and the public and private sectors come together to learn, share and create knowledge. The link between the SoReCom THEmatic NETwork Virtual Community and Virtual Campus insures that the development of the integrated multimedia infrastructure is appropriate to content users' and producers' needs. Integrated with traditional face-to-face settings, the Virtual Campus exploits the web's potential as a co-operative learning space to train new generations of European PhD on S.R. & C. research trainees.

**Multilingual and  
multicultural**

This integrated face-to-face and open virtual space, accessible from anywhere in Europe or the world, not only meet the needs of its users by providing easy access to publications and metadata and many other kinds of digital multi-format documentation (printed, pictures, audio-videos), but also enables them to quickly become content providers and co-producers. The multigenerational nature of this interactive knowledge community guarantees cross-fertilisation of ideas between senior scientists and early research trainees, as well as between experts from within and outside of academic circles, including policy makers interested in research on societal issues and their relevance in social contexts. Therefore, open access to the integrated physical and virtual SoReCom THEmatic NETwork infrastructure will allow the members of this knowledge community to continue to grow. The newly designed web-service for enlarging interactive facilities of the SoReCom THEmatic NETwork e-library not only gives research trainees access to documentation, but in the physical and virtual space of this infrastructure also they can also meet authors and each other to discuss new publications and critical research areas.

All partners of the consortium offer laboratories specialised in different methodological approaches, for example: experimental approaches in Aix-En-Provence, Geneva, Vienna, Valencia and San Sebastian; field studies in Paris, Iasi, Brno, Lyon2; applied research in Lisbon, Montpellier, Vienna, and so on. This is in addition to the integrated multi-method approach offered by the laboratory infrastructure at the coordinating University of Rome Sapienza.



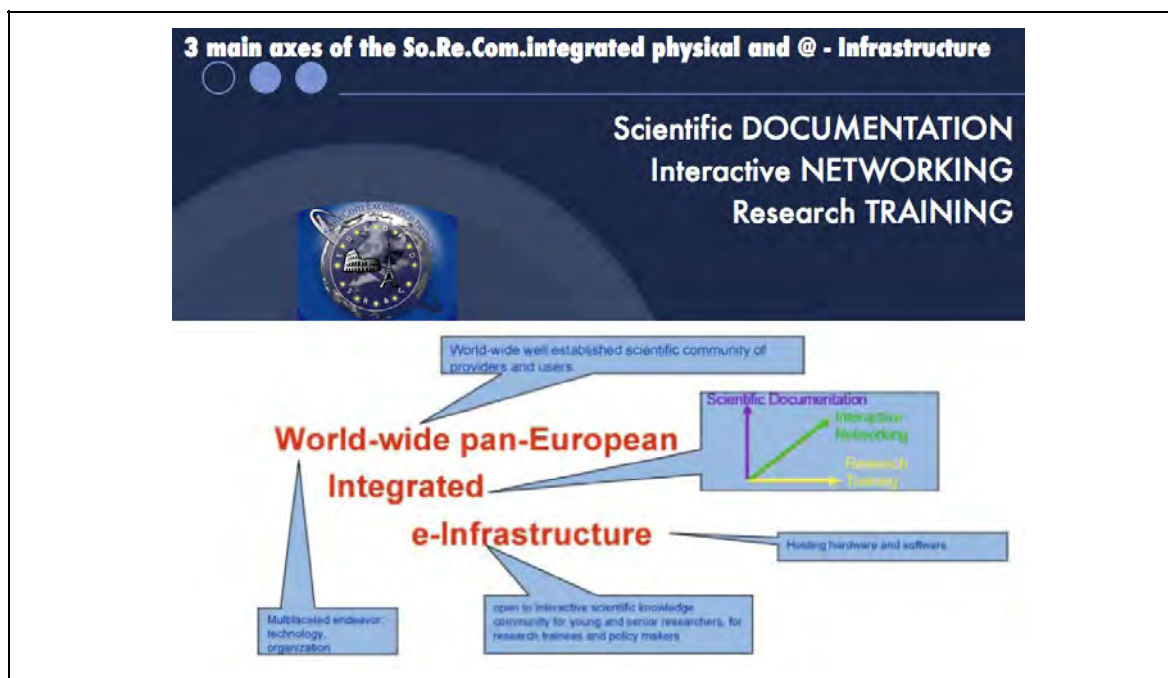


Fig. C 2.4-12

**The European PhD on Social Representations and Communication @-Infrastructure**

### 2.4.3 Admission and Degree Requirements

**Open to applicants from both EU and non-EU countries**

The European PhD on Social Representations and Communication is open to applicants from both EU and non-EU countries, without any limitations in terms of age or nationality. All applicants are treated equally and selected exclusively on the basis of excellence. In accordance with EU policy, the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication and its related programmes (International Summer Schools and Lab Meetings) fully support and promote equal opportunity for women and men. In addition, the European PhD on S.R. & C. “Virtual Campus”, with its innovative and flexible combination of face-to-face and ICT opportunities for research and training, enables us to offer our highly successful and quality programme to research trainees from newer EU member states and beyond, including those who are in some way disadvantaged or have special needs.

Applicants from universities that do not belong to the European PhD on S.R. & C. network also are welcome to apply. To ensure that applicants will be drawn from as wide a base as possible, each project partner is expected to promote applications not only from their own institution or country, but also from the largest possible pool of potential candidates.

We adopted a common web portal for the recruitment process to centralise and unify admissions information and stimulate applications from potential candidates by promoting transparency and consistency in the information provided. Candidates apply directly to the Scientific Co-ordinator using the submission guidelines ([http://www.europhd.net/html/\\_onda01/04/02.01.00.00.shtml](http://www.europhd.net/html/_onda01/04/02.01.00.00.shtml)) and application forms available on the web site of the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication: <http://www.europhd.eu/Registration>.

### Web portal for the recruitment process



**Fig. C 2.4-13** The SoReCom EuroPhD common web portal for the centralised recruitment process

The centralised model for administrative procedures avoids creating a situation where in different institutions or countries, guidelines and even admission criteria might be not accessible to all on equal terms. Centralised selection of applicants is also an opportunity to share responsibility from the outset of the applicants' relationship with the program. It is also an opportunity for partners to reflect on the program and its development. Adopting this centralised model has the added advantage of enrolling trainees at the network level – rather than the local university level – from the outset.

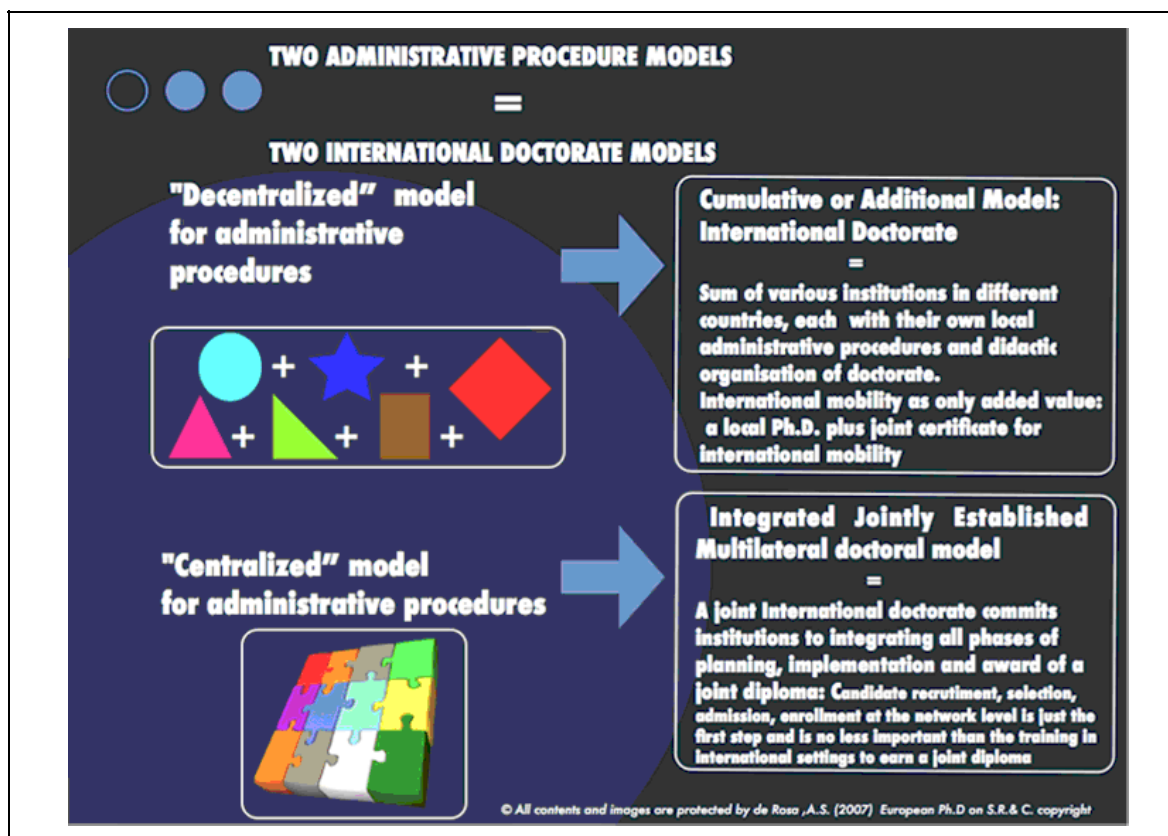


Fig. C 2.4-14 "De-centralised" vs. "Centralised" models for administrative procedures

Selection is made on a competitive basis using criteria jointly established by all partners, taking into consideration the compatibility of individual projects with the programme's research themes and a comparative analysis of qualifications.

All applicants for the European PhD on S.R. & C. must satisfy the entrance requirements for admission to a doctoral programme, considered the 3rd cycle within the European Higher Education and Research Area (This is the 3 + 2 + 3 model, considered the equivalent of the American pattern BA/MA/ PhD). Depending on the country in which they obtained their degrees, they must have completed level +2 in the European Higher Education System, an MA in the American system, or have an equivalent academic degree recognised by the European PhD on S.R. & C. Scientific Board.

Doctoral research trainees who are already enrolled in a doctoral programme at another university can apply on the condition that the country where they are pursuing that doctorate permits simultaneous enrolment in two doctorates and, in addition to satisfying all the requirements

of the European PhD on S.R. & C., that the research conducted within the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme is original and must not be the same thesis being worked on for the other doctorate.

Applicants must demonstrate a solid background in the Social Sciences by submitting transcripts of academic records and any other documentation available on other training completed. Emphasis especially is placed on candidates who have done previous work in Social Psychology and who have interests in Communication Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, History, etc. In addition to completing the on-line application form, all applicants must include a research project proposal, a curriculum vitae (with transcript of academic records) and at least one letter of recommendation. Candidates must be able to demonstrate advanced knowledge of at least two European languages, one of which should be English, the working language of the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication. Knowledge of another European language widely used in the specialised literature on Social representations (French, Portuguese, Spanish or Italian) will have added value in the evaluation process for recruitment, taking into account that in the course of the obligatory mobility period, participants in the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme are exposed to life and work in two other European cultural/linguistic environments.

#### **Research project proposal**

It is technically possible to apply for admission any time of the year. However, due to the fact that the finalists for admission usually are interviewed during the International Summer School on Social Representations and Communication at the European PhD on S.R. & C. Research Centre and Multimedia Lab in Rome, we advise applicants to complete their applications by the deadline indicated in the announcement (usually May 10) published in December for the following academic year. Late applications can be considered if there are places still available.

The selection of successful applicants is a multistep process. A preliminary assessment of applications is conducted by the Core Executive Committee, which consists of the Programme Director, Scientific Co-ordinator and representatives of the European PhD on S.R. & C. Scientific Board who represent the universities that formally recognise the degree. Final admission is determined by the European PhD on S.R. & C. Recruitment Board, which is composed of experts who may or may not be from European PhD on S.R. & C. partner universities, but who are designated by the representatives of the institutions participating in the Core Executive Committee and approved consistently with the co-ordinating Sapienza University's regulation. Admission to the program is based on a comparative evaluation of the scientific quality of applications and compatibility in doctoral studies in accordance with principles of selectivity and transparency. The European PhD on S.R. & C. Recruitment Board, along with the Scientific co-ordinator and, if needed, other members of the Core Executive Com-

mittee, conduct personal interviews of all eligible candidates. Arrangements are made for non-Italian or other candidates who cannot be physically present for the interview to be interviewed via web-auditorium.

As part of European PhD on S.R. & C. inter-institutional agreements on policies for fundraising and financial resource management, a common fee structure and centralised administration were established in order to overcome differences among countries and institutions in terms of financial policy and economic conditions. Responsibility for the operating funds (related to the income from fees) is the special responsibility of the Co-ordinator. These funds are used exclusively for activities to insure the smooth operation of the doctoral programme.

#### **2.4.4 Guidelines on conduct and responsibilities: doctoral candidate agreement.**

A clear definition of performance expectations for both research trainees and staff alike is an important aspect of transparency. Written before, and revised in accordance with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Good Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, the European PhD on S.R. & C.'s jointly defined guidelines on conduct and responsibilities are included in the partnership agreements approved by the academic senates or other equivalent bodies of our partner institutions. They are also provided in writing to research trainees and training faculty at the beginning of their association with the programme. We believe that research trainees need to be made aware of their the rights and responsibilities at the very beginning of their relationship with the programme. Therefore, one of the first actions after notifying candidates of their admission to the programme is to have each new (or readmitted) trainee sign a formal doctoral candidate agreement that clearly outlines the commitments they must make to meet the requirements of the programme. These include attendance and participation, required reports, work schedules, contacts with tutors, leaves of absence, a clear statement about IPR issues, etc. The consequences of not fulfilling the obligations of the programme are also made clear. Likewise, supervisors and tutors are also informed of their rights and responsibilities from the outset. They must agree to use whatever tutoring and co-tutoring training formula has been adopted by the programme and must diligently fulfil their supervisory responsibilities for each of the research trainees they have been assigned.

In conjunction with the European PhD on S.R. & C. Scientific Board (i.e. representatives of each partner university), the Core Executive Committee designates the tutors appropriate to the preferences indicated by the admitted candidates, taking into account the equitable distribution of tutorial assignments among the members of the European Scientific Teaching Staff and/or other institutions and research

centres from outside the European PhD on S.R. & C. network. After selection, the national and two foreign tutors are responsible for the supervision of each PhD candidate for all aspects of his/her training.

In addition, upon entry into the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme, a career development plan for each research trainee is established, which continues to be monitored after the trainee has completed his/her degree via the active European PhD on S.R. & C. Alumni Organisation. For this reason we encourage research trainees to develop a sense of belonging to the European PhD on S.R. & C. scientific community, both via the Alumni Organisation and the 3000 member worldwide SoReComTHEmatic Network. This is not only important for the individual and his/her networking activities, but for the programme's development as well. Maintaining contact allows us to follow graduates' professional progress and obtain input on what skills are the most important for the development of the next levies of research trainees, as well as what new skills need to be added to the programme to make our graduates competitive. It is also an opportunity to take stock of the kind of job opportunities becoming available both in and outside academia so that we can provide up-to-date career counselling for our trainees and graduates.

#### Career development plan

The length of the training programme is three years from the day of enrolment (November 1, each academic year). It was redefined – in accordance to the implementation of Bologna Higher Education architecture – from a “minimum of three years” to “in three years”, making the importance of time management clear from the beginning. Some flexibility concerning length and sites of training is allowed, consistent with the number, scientific profiles and research programme status of successful applicants. That said, research trainees can apply to the Executive Committee for an extension only in very exceptional circumstances. For example, at the candidate's request, the date of the final exam can be extended beyond the normal duration of the doctoral cycle (three years). The request must have the support of the three tutors and the permission of the Executive Committee, be based on criteria agreed to by the European PhD on S.R. & C. Scientific Board and consistent with the doctoral regulations of the co-ordinating university, the University of Rome “Sapienza”. The Executive Committee may accept a request for an extension of the duration of the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme when the primary supervisor and the other two tutors determine that further research and writing is necessary, but only if a revised work-plan and timetable demonstrate that there exists a significant prospect for completion of the dissertation. Any candidate who wishes to seek an extension must file a request with the Co-ordinator at least thirty days before the deadline for submitting his/her dissertation. Rejection of an extension request must be justified. For example, a request for an extension can be rejected if a research trainee has taken an excessive amount of time in writing his/her dissertation or has shown lack of progress or quality in re-

#### Length of programme

search conducted, a judgement based on the quality monitoring system adopted by the programme and the evaluations of the three tutors regarding the initial, intermediate and final version of research reports. The duration of extensions is strictly limited to completion of the programme within 4 years, according to the Salzburg Principles which define as guiding rule 3-4 years.

Leaves of absence can be approved by the Executive Committee in order to participate in “stages” or for employment reasons (a maximum of 18 months), maternity/paternity leave (up to 12 months per child), compulsory military service or a prolonged illness certified by a recognised medical practitioner. These are not included in the calculation of the three-year period of study. In accordance with the ECTS, during the entire duration of an approved leave of absence, the research trainee no longer enjoys the programme’s benefits (seminars, International Summer School and supervision, access to the reserved parts of the European PhD on S.R. & C. website, etc.) nor is the trainee subject to the obligations of the programme. If the submission of a new work-plan and timetable by the trainee on leave of absence show that a significant prospect for completion of the dissertation exists, following a positive decision of the Executive Committee and with the support of his/her tutors, enrolment may be resumed at the research trainee’s request.

#### **2.4.5 Training requirements, Monitoring, assessment tools and procedures**

##### **Submitting progress reports**

Trainees must write an initial short version, an intermediate extended version and finally, the completed dissertation, presented with a short version that must be in English. All candidates enrolled in the programme must write an annual detailed report on the status of his/her research, which is uploaded into his personalised web-space and then accessible for the approval of the national supervisor and the two foreign co-tutors. This report must be presented during International Summer Schools and/or multi-point videoconferences in a public event that includes a forum discussion with foreign supervisors and other international experts. To provide necessary feedback for tutors and faculty, research trainees complete evaluation sheets for scientific events such as the intensive training “stages” held during the International Summer Schools.

In their contracts, research trainees commit to maintain frequent contact with their tutors, who in turn must evaluate whether the trainees are making progress in their programme, including their dissertation research.

##### **Monitoring process**

From the outset, tutors conduct on-going face-to-face and on-line evaluations of the trainee’s progress, and review the various versions

of the research trainee's project (initial short version, intermediate extended version, final full and short versions) to insure that their work meets the programme's quality standards. The necessary evaluation tools are installed on the web site for every registered participant in the programme. On-line assessment tools, which are an integral component of the European PhD on S.R. & C.'s open distance learning system, are of fundamental importance in monitoring the quality of training and research trainees' performance. Tutors continuously monitor training using the tools found on the European Doctorate's dedicated web site. To ensure privacy, the assessment tools are accessible for consultation only by those who have a password. These include the 3 tutors (1 national + 2 foreign), the Scientific Co-ordinator, the Programme Director and the research trainee him or herself.

Trainees must be readmitted to the programme after completion of the each year. This decision to readmit is based on evaluations by the European PhD on S.R. & C. Scientific Board, tutors' reports and the results of the Quality Control and Monitoring System. By October 31 of each year, the Coordinator must notify the Doctoral Section of the University of Rome Sapienza of the Executive Committee's decisions concerning permission for doctoral candidates who have successfully met the requirements to continue in the programme, for those on leave of absence to re-enter, as well as about any fee waivers granted to doctoral candidates who are not receiving scholarships.

Both research trainees and teaching staff participate in required structured international mobility. International mobility is a required part of the curriculum both at the individual and collective levels. The philosophy of the European PhD on S.R. & C. is that international mobility is a tool, and not in and of itself a goal. It is a hard and fast requirement for the degree. To obtain their degrees, individual research trainees are required to relocate abroad for a total of at least twelve months and work in two different European countries and two different research centres at host institutions with which their tutors are associated and from whom they receive individual tutoring and co-tutoring for their research work (individual international mobility). Depending on research needs, the stay abroad in the two host Institutions can be flexible and be adapted with the agreement of the three tutors and the scientific co-ordinator. International mobility for individuals is an important aspect of the doctoral programme, as it allows tutors and early-stage researchers to build constructive and positive relationships, creating the conditions for an efficient transfer of knowledge and for further successful development of the researcher's careers.

#### **Structured international mobility**

Collective mobility (virtual and physical) for trainees and tutors is achieved via intensive stages (International Summer Schools, Lab Meetings, etc.) that are an integral part of the doctoral curriculum.



**Awarding requirements**

The requirements for awarding a European PhD on Social Representations and Communication were established in accordance with the guidelines agreed to in 1993 by the “Comité de Liason des Conférences de Recteurs et des Présidents des Universités des Pays Membres de la Communauté Européenne” (see de Rosa, 2008) for doctorates awarded with the label ‘European doctorate’ and with the doctoral regulations of the co-ordinating institution, the University of Rome Sapienza. Authorization to proceed to a dissertation defence is granted when the trainee has satisfactorily completed all other degree requirements (including the twelve-month mobility period) and after a careful evaluation of reports on the dissertation written by the three tutors located in three institutions of higher education in three different countries.

**Evaluation of PhD dissertation**

The International Evaluation Board (final jury) is responsible for evaluating the research trainees’ PhD dissertations and is composed of a minimum of three members chosen from a list of six academics designated by participant universities, but who come from other universities either from the same or different countries. Consistent with regulations of the co-ordinating University of Rome Sapienza, among these three, at least two should be internationally recognized experts from outside the European PhD on S.R. & C. network. According to the regulations of the University of Rome Sapienza (October 2006), the doctoral candidate’s three tutors can participate in the discussion, but not in the evaluation. No one can serve on the board more than once in a three-year period.

Assessment criteria include the relevance of the chosen subject and its originality, the clarity of the research hypothesis, pertinence and breadth of literature to which reference is made, the appropriateness of the methodology and the interpretative tools employed, adequacy of the analysis and clarity in interpreting the data according to the proposed synthesis, the pioneering aspect of the study and its potential for future development, and finally, the autonomy demonstrated by the doctoral candidate in the management of the complexities of the thesis and the time needed to complete it.

In carrying out examinations, the International Evaluation Board guarantees an appropriate and comprehensive evaluation of candidates and transparency in the proceedings. Dissertation defences are held in public. The Board elects its own President, who then decides the speaking order for the members. The defence lasts between 2 and 3 hours. It begins with the candidate’s presentation of his/her thesis (20-30 min.), focusing not only on empirical data but also commenting on the theoretical issues and questions addressed in the thesis. Following this presentation, the Board members provide their comments, moderated by the President, who speaks last. The doctoral candidate is then invited to answer questions and to respond to comments made by the Board members. The members then withdraw to decide whether the doctoral candidate’s work is acceptable, whether or not to award the degree and

then announce their decision to the candidate. If successful, the President writes a short final evaluation report on the final dissertation (1 or 2 pages), taking into account the assessments of the two external examiners and the candidate's thesis defence. The report is approved and signed by all members of the Board, and is then attached to the certificate. This final examination can only be repeated once. Those failing to pass on the first try are given an automatic extension, the length of which is determined by the Executive Committee.

The final version of the PhD dissertation must be written in a national language of the European country where the doctorate is being pursued or in English (French is also possible, with authorisation from the Executive Committee). The shorter version written in English (or French, upon authorisation of the Executive Committee) must be in a format that will allow it to be submitted by the Board to authoritative international journals. A printed and electronic format copy of the doctoral dissertation (full and short versions) is preserved at the University of Rome "Sapienza" and filed in its on-line database. In addition, copies of the full and short version of the final dissertation are forwarded to the Italian National Libraries located in Florence and Rome. The diploma, along with a copy of the doctoral dissertation (full and short version) is registered also at the *European PhD on Social Representations and Communication Research Centre and Multimedia lab* on behalf of the six universities that jointly confer the degree.

#### Language of dissertation

In addition to the diploma, a Final Jury certificate is issued. It contains the composition (name and institutions) of the International Evaluation Board (Final Jury) and their signatures. It also names the national tutors and foreign supervisors and their institutions, the title and language of the full and short version of the dissertation defended by the doctoral candidate as well as his/her name, country of residence and the academic years of enrolment.

#### 2.4.6 Partners responsibilities

All the partners in this program, including the five new universities from outside Europe, are active participants in the European PhD on S.R. & C.'s well-established formal network that unites a community of renowned scientists and leaders in the field of social psychology. Many have been involved with the European PhD on S.R. & C. since the planning phase in the early 1990s and shared in the strong commitment that was necessary to get this joint programme off the ground. They are engaged as partners at the institutional as well as the scientific level, and have consistently demonstrated their long-term scientific and financial commitment to the programme and its sustainability, including seeking national resources. The coordinating institution, the University of Rome Sapienza, along with continuing financial and administrative assistance, provides the European PhD on S.R. & C. with a permanent home, the

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state of the art European PhD on Social Representations and Communications Research Centre and Multimedia Lab, located in the heart of historic Rome. Each network university or partner has special expertise in a particular methodology for research in social representations, ensuring that research trainees are exposed to a variety of complementary methodological approaches. All partner universities are members of the European PhD on S.R. & C. Scientific Board, which is responsible for decisions concerning programme content and quality. All are also endowed with the necessary infrastructure, dedicated facilities and human resources necessary to insure that the didactic and management programmes function efficiently interface with the facilities at both the coordinating and network universities.

**Socio-economic  
relevance**

The field of Social Representations has significant socio-economic relevance in the areas of communication and new media. Therefore, the inclusion of partners from the world of business was a natural development. Our enterprise and research institute partners began their relationship with the European PhD on S.R. & C. by participating in joint research and dissemination activities. They are now directly and systematically included in the training of early-stage researchers. Formal adherence to the programme for enterprises or research institutes requires a letter of commitment signed by the responsible authority within that organisation. Universities adhere via an institutional agreement signed by the rectors of those universities.

Our enterprise partners have special responsibility for training in the transferable career skills that researchers need at all stages in their careers to be competitive in today's world, both inside and outside academia. These include effective use of e-learning technologies, research software, web design, software programming, marketing, sales, management and entrepreneurship. Like the universities, enterprises and research institutes can also be sources for tutors and co-tutors for research trainees.

All participants, whether educational institutions or enterprises, contribute to the development and have full access to the wide range of learning resources available on the European PhD on S.R. & C. website. In consultation with the Scientific Supervisory Board which has representatives from all partners, including research public institutes and enterprises, the Core Executive Committee sets the guidelines for training strategies, establishing procedures and programme admission criteria, reviews research topics, assigns supervisors and, subject to evaluation of research trainees' work by their tutors, approves readmission to the program after the first year. In terms of quality assurance, jointly with the Scientific Supervisory Board it plans, implements, and continuously monitors and evaluates programme activities and research trainees' progress and needs. All partners who adhere to the programme must fully commit to upholding jointly established European standards for all curricular, organisational, policy and pro-

cedural aspects, use of the ECTS accreditation system and the protection intellectual property rights.

Given the wide utility and range of the academic and professional activities involved in our training, Intellectual Property Rights are very important to us. IPR issues are handled in accordance with European Commission recommendations on the management of intellectual property in knowledge transfer activities and the Code of Practice for Universities and other public research organisations [Brussels, 10.4.2008 C (2008)1329]. The Research Trainee Agreement includes a clear statement about IPR issues that must be signed by each research trainee who accepts admission to the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme. In addition, we provide training to European PhD on S.R. & C. research trainees, research staff and administrative personnel on the correct implementation of intellectual property and knowledge transfer regulations.

#### Intellectual property rights

#### 2.4.7 Management structure and program quality control internal and external system

Upon joining the consortium, each partner institution signed a partnership inter-institutional agreement that describes in detail all aspects of the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme: didactic, financial and management and partners' obligations to the programme. In place since 1993, the management structure of the European PhD on S.R. & C. has been tried and tested over the years. It actively involves partners in all aspects of the programme. Below is a brief description of the management structure:

Programme Director	Monitors scientific quality and ensures high standards are maintained. Presides at meetings of the Core Executive Committee and the Scientific Supervisory Board.
Scientific Co-ordinator	responsible for programme's scientific and administrative management. With the Honorary Programme Director, presides at meetings of the Core Executive Committee and the Scientific Board, implements decisions, administers the operating funds, defines details for all training activities and events. Bi-monthly meetings are regularly held between the Scientific Coordinator and the Programme Director.
Core Executive Committee	Composed of the Programme Director, the Scientific Co-ordinator, and representatives from the universities that confer the joint degree and other member institutions. In consultation with the Scientific Supervisory Board, the Core Executive Committee sets the guidelines for training strategies, establishing procedures and programme admission criteria, reviews research topics, assigns supervisors and, subject to evaluation of research trainees' work by their tutors, approves readmission to the program at the end of each academic year. In cooperation with the Scientific Supervisory Board, it plans, implements, monitors and evaluates programme activities and research trainees' progress and needs. It meets quarterly.

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Scientific Supervisory Board	Composed of representatives of each of the partners. Chaired by the honorary programme director and the scientific co-ordinator, it discusses the guiding strategies identified by the Core Executive Committee and contributes to the development of programme quality. In particular, members are responsible for promoting the development of the programme in their own institutions, countries and internationally.
Training Staff	Composed of all professors, researchers, and tutors belonging to partner institutions involved in training. To ensure the highest quality in research training, tutors must guarantee their full co-operation to achieve the goals of the programme. In particular, they must make concerted and intensive use of the carefully designed tutoring and co-tutoring training formulas as well as systematic use of the jointly designed tools for evaluating initial, intermediate and advanced research reports. They must also provide regular updates to the coordinator on research trainees' needs and progress and ensure appropriate involvement of the recruited fellows.
SoReCom European PhD Recruitment Board	Is responsible for the final admission of applicants to the programme. It is composed of experts who may or may not be from partner institutions. Representatives of the institutions participating in the Executive Committee designate the members of this board, which also has to be approved in accordance with the co-ordinating University's regulations.
International Evaluation Board	Responsible for evaluating research trainees' final research results. It is composed of a minimum of three members (chosen from a list of six academics designated by participant universities, but who come from other universities either from the same or different countries).
Research Centre and Multimedia Lab	Includes four full-time staff members dedicated to management issues: a Deputy Director and webmaster, a secretarial assistant responsible for correspondence and logistical arrangements, an assistant responsible for the virtual and physical libraries, databases and co-ordination of intern activities, an assistant responsible for accounting and contracts, and one part-time assistant for facility maintenance. Two full-time and one independent research assistant (all graduates of the programme) provide didactic support to trainees. In addition, there are always a variable number of interns, scholarship holders and graduate students assigned to specific temporary tasks in the Lab.

Table C 2.4-1 Brief description of the management structure

**Feedback and evaluation mechanisms**

In addition to the management activities described above, including the specific responsibilities for *internal quality control*, the research trainees themselves play a fundamental role in evaluating the programme via their feedback. They complete evaluation sheets for each scientific event, such as the intensive training “stages” held during the International Summer Schools, and training activities, both from the scientific and logistic points of view.

Apart from its internal quality control system, in accordance with the standards established by the university's *Strategic Evaluation Committee* and in line with the quality criteria established at National and

international level by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication (like any other doctorate operating at the University of Rome Sapienza) is also subject to a yearly evaluation by both the *Doctoral Committee* (Commissione di Ateneo per i dottorati) and by the *Evaluation Committee* (Nucleo di Valutazione Ateneo: NVA). These evaluations include many elements, for example: the scientific productivity of the professors belonging to the programme, the attractiveness of the programme in terms of the number of applicants and their geographical provenience, the progress of enrolled participants, how many successfully completed their degrees, how long they took to complete their degrees, trainees' scientific productivity, career achievements, etc.



**Fig. C 2.4-15** Management structure and program quality control internal and external system

Given that the sustainability of the European PhD on S.R. & C. programme is dependent on approval of projects submitted to the European Commission and Ministries of Higher Education and Research and co-funding by network universities, there is a continuous process of evaluation both in terms of scientific outcomes and the management of financial resources, including on-site audits.

A brief Institutional History and Recognition of the European PhD on S.R. & C. – including the listing of EC funding received and multiyear contracts obtained by the EU DG-Education and Culture since 1993, EU- DG-Research since 1994, by Ministries for Scientific Research for Internationalisation of the Higher Education System in Europe since 1988 and by the European University Association in 2004-2005 – is available on the webpage: [http://www.euophd.net/html/\\_onda01/02/00.00.00.00.shtml](http://www.euophd.net/html/_onda01/02/00.00.00.00.shtml)

## 2.5 Benefits of the Programme

### 2.5.1 Research trainee benefits of the European PhD on SR & C

The European PhD on SRC provides many benefits for research trainees including:

- Access to leading experts on various continents and collaboration with internationally recognised research teams and centres of excellence in 11 European and 4 non-European countries.
- Guaranteeing European standards both in terms of selection of successful candidates and the training they will receive in the programme.
- Multi and trans-disciplinary approaches and the wealth of facilities at partner institutions to which trainees have access gives them far wider options for research than would be possible nationally. A variety of methodological approaches expose trainees not only to a wide range of methodologies, but also to the leading experts in those methodologies. Research trainees also clearly benefit from the cultural/linguistic advantages of living and studying alongside doctoral students from other countries.
- The unique tutoring and co-tutoring triadic system (multiple supervision), where research trainees are continually in contact with their tutors. Via the open learning system, tutors have on-line access to students' work and monitor students' progress speedily and directly. The programme guarantees a maximum of 2-3 trainees per tutor per year, ensuring constant individual and team tutoring and close monitoring of trainees' progress.
- Financial support, which is often a major factor in research trainees' ability to participate in training that involves mobility and stages, allowing the best applicants to be selected irrespective of their personal financial situation.
- Access to dedicated high tech lab infrastructures and the system of open distance learning guarantees flexibility in meeting trainees' needs. Open distance learning –interlocked with structured international mobility of both research trainees and teaching staff at the individual and collective levels –can also be adapted to provide temporary or more specific training where necessary.
- Finally, research trainees acquire core and wider employment related skills, designed to expand their career opportunities inside as well as outside academia.

#### Handout C 2.4-2      Research trainee benefits of the European PhD on SRC



### 2.5.2 Institutional benefits of the European PhD on SR&C

- *An innovative effect on the institutions involved* both from the *scientific and administrative* point of view. It effectively opens windows on a wealth of expanded human and technical resources to which they might not otherwise have had easy access.
- Integrated virtual and physical mobility enable them to reflect on and refine their own training methods as well as having a beneficial effect on their own research.
- A greater expansion of networking activities is guaranteed by:
  - attending "*International Physical and Virtual Campus*" scientific events. In the past, more than 10,000 participants have been included in the nine biannual International Conferences on Social Representations, the series of JIRS annual conferences organised in Brazil, and other conferences on social representations all over the world. From 1995 to 2009, 1099 research trainees from 52 countries attended fifteen sessions of the Summer School and fourteen International Lab Meetings, together with 246 instructors and guest speakers from 22 countries.
  - The SoReCom THEmatic Network currently includes more than 100 partner institutions worldwide and more than 3000 registered individual members.
  - Participation of industries: involving private companies with previous successful experience of collaboration within the SoReCom Thematic Network at the highest level of cooperation and introducing new partners from among public research centres with a strong interest in applied research foreshadows long term collaboration between academics and knowledge producers/users in various organisational contexts.
- The tutors directly involved in the programme also profit from the *cultural/linguistic benefits of mobility* and from access to multi-lingual and multi-format scientific documentation on social representations and social psychology and research materials usually confined to local research teams.
- *Multigenerational research teams* benefit from the *cross-fertilisation of ideas* generated by the active involvement of the new generation of early research trainees in their international cooperative research projects.
- The advantage of the mutual recognition of both the training and of the joint degree is supported by a long history of institutional recognition (since 1993). An added value of the new SoR.Com European PhD World is to remove legislative obstacles, as many associate partners from third countries sign the European PhD Inter-Institutional Agreement for the joint award of the diploma.

#### Handout C 2.4-3 Institutional benefits of the European PhD on SR & C

### 2.5.3 Mutual benefits of co-operation with SMEs

Based on the two pillars of the projected knowledge based society, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA), this joint European educational venture goes hand in hand with the recent efforts the European scientific community has dedicated to establishing a stronger link between the academic and entrepreneurial world.

Private sector/university collaboration for training PhDs is relatively rare in the social sciences in Europe and represents a path forward. Innovative training programmes for core and wider employment related skills makes European research training more relevant to a wider variety of careers and globally more attractive, producing researchers who have the skills necessary to analyse and resolve social policy problems in a trans-national perspective, as well as providing European industry with the experts it needs as new media and means of communication continue to expand.

Below are listed just a few examples of how research expertise acquired in the field of Social Representations and Communication can be used in new employment opportunities outside academia in:

- the *media industry*, dealing with popularisation of new scientific discoveries among non-experts, the effect of knowledge dissemination and transformation due to the convergence of traditional and new media, the redefinition of security/privacy in the new communicative scenario;
- *health organisations*, working on the introduction of medical innovation and confronting patients' resistance to new therapeutic practices, prevention of illness thanks to dissemination of non-expert representations anchored to expert knowledge rather than to a persistent magic dimension of collective thinking, the role of the social representations of body and beauty in the diffusion of pathologies like bulimia and anorexia;
- *education*, working on the impact of new normative dispositions on learning community practices, the impact of the new media in self-learners' knowledge building and sharing compared to traditional scholastic settings, the change in family relations and generational conflict, group dynamics, competition and cooperation and learning contexts;
- *financial institutions*, dealing with the social representations of risk among investors or the process of familiarisation with the Euro when a EU country replaces its old currency, or resistance to new money systems;
- the *political arena*, dealing with hot social issues related to social integration/exclusion of minority groups, immigration and multiculturalism, the links between regional, national and supranational identities, globalisation and new practices in the interactions and organisation of social movements via the digital world, the personalisation of politicians' perception and voting behaviour in the wake of the crisis of traditional ideological systems, complex cultural objects in a global-local perspective;

- *commercial enterprises*, dealing with brand images and marketing strategies, customers' social representations of products and companies, and the communicative strategies needed to detect and respond to new customers' needs; in particular in the automotive and transportation industries, dealing with social representations of driving, speed, and risk taking.
- all institutional and organisational contexts dealing with the influence of *gender and sexual stereotypes*;
- all trans-sectoral and transversal areas dealing with the influence of the *new media system* (internet, web2, interactive *video*-conferences, integrated traditional and new media, etc.) in the regulation of social interactions.

**Handout C 2.4-4      New employment opportunities**

### 3. Impact: the added European value of the Joint Doctorate

Over fifteen years have passed since the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication was established. The programme started out as an academic consortium of thirteen universities and has grown to include full partnerships with research institutes and small and medium sized enterprises in Europe and around the globe. The influence of the European PhD on S.R. & C. has been felt in many sectors of Social Psychology and we believe that this influence will continue to grow as it and the SoReCom THEMatic NETwork grow worldwide. Using advances in communication technologies to their full advantage, we provide both face-to-face and ICT opportunities for research and training and will be extending this highly successful and quality programme to more academic and professional partners in Europe and beyond. Its international and multilingual character benefits not only its doctoral students and the institutions that participate in the programme, but also “life-long learners” in Social Psychology wherever they are in the world.

The European PhD on S.R. & C. has already expanded career opportunities for our graduates also outside of academia, for example, in media, financial and public institutions, as well as having encouraged the development of new enterprises. We have incorporated flexibility in our programme to cater to trainees' research needs and have designed the curriculum in a way that gives them both the core and wider application skills that will open a greater variety of career doors both within and outside academia.

The financial support we offer ensures that the best applicants can be selected irrespective of their personal financial situation, allowing talented individuals who come from disadvantaged areas of Europe or elsewhere in the world to obtain the training they need to develop their own careers and ultimately, the economies of their homelands.

The European PhD on S.R. & C. is doing its part to modernize European higher education and overcome the barriers that inhibit efficient knowledge transfer between academia and enterprises, enhancing career prospects for European researchers in social psychology and in the social sciences in general. It helps disseminate European standards for the curricular, organisational, policy and procedural aspects of higher education. Anticipating the Bologna Process, it was born in 1993 and fully implemented in 1996. Its long-term experience has also served as a prototype for similar programmes in the other social, human and natural sciences.

Following the approval of both the Doctoral Committee (on March 11th 2009) and the International Relations Committee (April 1st 2009), on May 19th 2009 the Academic Senate of the University of Rome Sapienza approved the establishment of a Co-ordination Programme for Joint European/International Doctorates. In addition to 156 doctorates and 17 Doctoral Schools, including 102 doctoral programmes and 1 National Doctoral School in collaboration with other Italian universities, the University of Rome Sapienza currently has 4 active international PhDs in various disciplines:

- the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication (since 1996)
- the European PhD in Socio-Economic and Statistical Studies (since 2001)
- the International PhD in Astrophysics (since 2003)
- the European PhD in cognitive Neuro-Plasticity and Rehabilitation (since 2005).

While the organisation of doctoral schools in single disciplines was a response to the fragmentation those disciplines into numerous specialised courses, the Coordination Programme for Joint European/International Doctorates aims at achieving the following objectives:

1. to identify an organisational structure which will allow a comparison between specific institutional experiences of international joint doctorates from a training, didactic, management and administrative point of view;

2. discuss the strengths and weaknesses of joint doctorates on the basis of concrete experience obtained via collaboration with institutional networks in different countries, such as regulations established by the University of Rome Sapienza and regulations and procedures in other countries and partner institutions;
3. identify operational solutions, share good practices and adopt the best solutions to problems, in order to remove obstacles that can emerge during the different phases of project conception, implementation, development and for the sustainability of international joint programmes. In particular, the following procedures will be compared and optimised:
  - candidate selection;
  - training structure and strategies to restrict the number of admissions;
  - research activity and training in an international environment;
  - intensive didactic “stages” (international summer schools) in multilingual and multicultural settings;
  - adoption of the European Credit System schema of structured training, as a tool for shaping structured doctoral programs and not for transfer credits (ECS without T);
  - language policy and format for PhD dissertations;
  - evaluation of the entire training process and quality system;
  - formal recognition of degrees and awarding of joint diplomas;
  - enhancement of the career prospects of graduates of International/European doctoral programmes both in and outside academia thanks to strong partnerships with private enterprises and public research centres;
4. in agreement with the recommendations of the Bologna Process, promote the harmonisation of the most advanced cycles of education in Europe within the objectives established by the Lisbon Process for 2010 regarding the development of the European Research Area, and with the debate on doctoral training which has preceded and followed the 2003 Berlin Communiqué of the inter-governmental conference and the formation of the European Doctoral Council (EUA-CDE) in 2008 and its ongoing activities;
5. experiment with training solutions commonly used by different international joint doctorates. This can be done by organising integrated seminars for research trainees currently attending courses in several disciplines, from social sciences, neuroscience and physical-natural sciences, thus optimizing the infra-structural and scientific resources of the various networks;

6. identify interdisciplinary thematic areas of interest (for example, between the social and neuroscience areas of psychology, or between socio-economic and socio-psychological components, and quantitative and qualitative statistical and multi-methodological approaches in different disciplines) and organise intensive joint training to further develop doctoral training between scientific areas still closed to a multidisciplinary approach;
7. experiment with and promote new forms of collaboration between the teachers and doctoral trainees belonging to different international programmes with the goal to not only reproduce knowledge in specific areas of academic research, but also to provide training that is open to innovation and is capable of coping with the complex problems that challenge the new frontiers of knowledge, even outside academia.



**Fig. C 2.4-16**      **The European Ph.D. Research Centre and Multimedia Lab site of the Sapienza Coordination Program for European/International Doctorates**

In conclusion, we firmly believe that this type of co-operation between the natural, human and social sciences represents the future for doctoral studies and hope that the road we have taken can provide a useful example for others interested in developing joint degree programmes and in opening to non-academic components.

This innovative model of institutional network-based research training represents an opportunity for improving the attractiveness of European

institutions and enhancing scientific co-operation not only within Europe, but as competition in education and research and the economic marketplace are inevitably interlocked, also around the world.

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