

# PRIME

Policies for Research  
and Innovation in the Move  
towards the European Research Area



## Scientific leader

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NETWORK OF EXCELLENCE  
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## ABSTRACT

Prime is a network of excellence to develop long-term research and shared infrastructures on policies for research and innovation in the move towards the European Research Area (ERA). PRIME gathers 55 institutions from 19 countries, some 150 researchers are active in its activities and over 200 doctoral students have been mobilised by its training activities.

In order to understand the development of PRIME as a network of excellence, one has to relate the challenges Europe faces with the three main features of our speciality. Science and Innovation Policy Studies (SIPS). Though relatively small in size, it is interdisciplinary, being at the encounter of four main disciplines (Political Science, Economics, Management and Sociology). Second, the vast majority of teams are small (less than 5 academics) and located within wider disciplinary oriented groups. Third, they are strongly linked with their main stakeholders, the national or regional governments, which mostly fund them through contract research.

The structural dispersion explains the lasting difficulty in developing doctoral programmes to renew and enlarge capabilities, and in gathering critical mass to renew and enlarge our quantitative base, indicators for science, technology and innovation. They are at the core of the efforts made in shaping the two 'shared infrastructures' on training and indicators, and represent our first interpretation of 'integration': the two platforms under development - the **European SIPS doctoral path** and the **European network of indicators designers (ENID)** - aim at creating a space that enables the community to access critical resources.

The third feature was central in our assessment of the substantive situation of the field. We considered it too short-term oriented, too dependant on existing paradigms and methods. We thus have promoted two types of activities.

1. Creating a space where lasting challenges and issues are turned into a **strategic research agenda**. We knew from the two-year preparation of PRIME that this requires more than periodic gatherings, and that in numerous cases, this requires states of the art, plus dedicated workshops and repetitive exchanges to turn one issue into a specific research agenda and into research projects and cooperations. Thus the importance given to what we have labelled 'initiation and review actions'.
2. Supporting the emergence of 'heterodox' approaches and methods, nurturing 'frontier science' on lasting selected challenges is the second objective of the NoE. Our choice has been to foster competition and bottom-up assembly of topic-based 'critical size' teams. To achieve it, the NoE fosters two types of research efforts: exploratory research of potentially new breakthrough methods and approaches on the one hand, comparative research enabling to reframe approaches and issues mostly dealt with up to now within national specificities.

Four main themes have focused the efforts: differentiation, strategic orientation and governance of universities (3 projects), Organisations fostering knowledge circulation (4 projects), Institutions and knowledge production regimes (2 main projects), and Evolving governance of research and innovation (7 projects).



[www.prime-noe.org](http://www.prime-noe.org)



SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

CITIZENS AND GOVERNANCE IN A KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY

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