



European Ph.D on S.R. & C. Research Centre and Multi-media Lab  
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The goal of the European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication 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 interdisciplinary field of Social Representations (<http://www.europhd.eu>). 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. Via its innovative didactic programme, our international joint doctoral programme plays an integral part in meeting the strong demand for interactive international networking and innovative research training among early stage researchers in the social sciences. 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.

The European PhD on Social Representations and Communication is structured in Research Teams on 13 main thematic areas and a larger number of specific sub-topics (<http://www.europhd.eu/html/onda01/01/08.00.00.00.shtml>). This structure strengthens the scientific cooperation between the partners, and helps orienting the new candidates when presenting their research project proposal. Based on the expertise of our partners and complementarities of their offerings, in terms of both paradigmatic and methodological options and current research areas and sub-themes, we have assembled the following proposed research teams. The synergies created by working within these teams, composed of academic, public and private sector institutions and businesses 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.

The European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication is a well-established training structure approved by the European Commission that awards a joint by 6 Universities in 4 European countries: ITALY: University of Rome Sapienza – IT; FRANCE: Aix-Marseille University, Paul-Valéry University of Montpellier III and University Lumière Lyon 2; CHEZK REPUBLIC: Masaryk University; ROMANIA: University Alexandru Ioan Cuza - in cooperation with a wider institutional network of European Universities located in AUSTRIA (Linz and Wien), FRANCE (EHESS; Paris-Descartes), GREAT BRITAIN (Cambridge and London School of Economics), PORTUGAL (Universidade Lusófona), SPAIN (University of Pais Vasco and of Valencia) and Switzerland (University of Geneva and of Lausanne). They have been Erasmus partners since 1992 and since 1996 in a Socrates CDA selected by DG-Education and Culture as being among the best practices in Europe as CDAD within the IC 2000-2001. The European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication was selected by DG-Research as a Marie Curie Training Site Multipartner Organisation and by the French and Italian Ministries of Scientific Research and Education within the Vinci Programme and Internationalisation of Higher Education System. Co-operation was established at the institutional level on the basis of the shared Regulations of the European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication, signed by Rectors of universities who deliver the joint diploma in accordance with the Regulations on Doctorate approved by the founding university, the University of Rome Sapienza.

Since 2009, 7 extra-EU universities have joined the Network in NORTH AMERICA: in CANADA (University of Ottawa), in U.S.A. (CUNY-City University of New York); in LATINO-AMERICA: in ARGENTINA (Universidad de Belgrano), in BRAZIL (Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina), in



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MEXICO (Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana), in ASIA: in CHINA (Beijing Normal University and Nankai University).

In 2008, to strengthen the collaboration between universities and enterprises, 3 non-academic partners have joined the network: CONERI (SWEDEN), ContattoLavoro Srl (ITALY), IFSTTAR (FRANCE),

Coherently with the recent indications by the MIUR-Italian Ministry for Higher Education (decree n. 94 published on the 8 February 2013), and in particular with art. 10 (Doctorate in convention with foreign institutions), the inter-institutional agreement is finalised to “efficiently realise the coordination of the international high-level research activities with highly-qualified and internationally renowned foreign universities and research bodies, within a principle of reciprocity”, and foresees “an effective sharing of the training and research activities, equal division of responsibilities, modalities and regulation of the financial support, teaching staff and research trainees mobility, award of a joint doctoral title”.

Furthermore, the European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication satisfies all the following criteria set both by MIUR and by the European Commission (*Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training*): a) consolidated research activity in the scientific field, “research excellence” and recognition of the field at international level, b) international dimension in every aspect: from the training structure to the selection process, from thesis supervision to the evaluation of results and the award of the joint diploma; c) appealing institutional environment; d) Inter and Supra-disciplinary research options; e) international networking; f) training in transferable skills; g) dedicated infrastructure; h) enhancement of career perspectives both in the academic and professional sectors through the exposure to industry and other relevant employment sectors; i) quality assurance from the selection process the joint diploma award.

The critical mass of the doctorate is ensured both from the consortium point of view (24 universities, 1 national research centre, and 2 SMEs in 10 European and 6 Extra-European countries), and in terms of researcher attractiveness (1325 research trainees from 53 countries and 304 guest speakers from 24 countries have participated to the 41 international scientific organised until 2013).

The European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication consortium has been approved since 1993 by:

- the DG-Education and Culture (Erasmus Socrates Advanced Curriculum Development, as being among the best practices in Europe as CDAD within the IC 2000-2001 and within the Joiman EC project – Task Force 4 “Development and administration of Joint Programmes at Doctoral Level” 2010, Intensive Programs, Teaching Staff Mobility, So.Re.Com. THEMatic NETwork)
- the DG-Research (selected as a Marie Curie Training Site Multipartner Organisation, T.M.R., High Level Scientific Conferences, International Lab Meetings project within the Marie Curie Actions Series of Scientific Events)
- the Italian Ministry for Universities and Research under the Internationalisation of the Higher Education System programme
- the French and Italian ministries responsible for higher education under the Vinci Programme
- the European University Association, as main co-ordinator of the action “Network of the Networks” (Doctoral Program)



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- the Fulbright Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States of America, Belgium and Luxembourg (the European PhD programme director has been awarded a Fulbright Schuman Grant for the research project on “The Joint International Doctorate: a strategic tool for enhancing EU-US institutional collaboration on research training in a worldwide network-based knowledge society” (Host University: University of California, Irvine; Period: August 2011 – January 2012).
- the Research Executive Agency (REA) – European Commission Host-Driven Action as co-ordinator of the SoReComJoint-Innovative Doctoral Program (FP7 2013 PEOPLE-ITN)

Within the FP7 PEOPLE-ITN programme, the European/International Joint PhD in SR & C has successfully submitted in 2013 the “SoReCom Joint-IDP” project. The project has been selected as being the best among the 1147 submitted proposals, obtaining mark of 98,80/100 (threshold: 70/100).

Following the more than twenty-year of institutional acknowledgements by the European Commission and Ministries for Research and Higher Education of several countries (<http://www.europhd.eu/html/onda01/02/01.00.00.00.shtml>), the approval of the SoReCom Joint-IDP (<http://www.europhd.eu/SoReComJoint-IDP>) represents the higher recognition as an Innovative Doctoral Programs, especially considering that from 2013 PEOPLE-ITN IDP substitutes Erasmus Mundus for joint doctorates. This four-year contract (AOR-1446900-PITN-GA-2013-607279 SoReComJointIDP) ensures the international doctoral programme’s full sustainability from 2013 until 2017.

Indeed, in full compliance with ministerial guidelines (22/05/2013) for the accreditation of doctorates in convention with foreign universities, this contract ensures:

- 13 fellowships (in addition to those directly granted by Sapienza University) as follows: 9 fellowships for the 29° cycle and 4 for the 30° cycle, thus satisfying the criteria requiring a minimum of 4 fellowships. The call for fellowships is published on EURAXESS (<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/jobs/fgDetails/61146>) and on the SoReCom Joint-IDP website ([http://www.europhd.eu/html/onda01/10/docs/sorecomjointipd\\_call\\_for\\_fellowship.pdf](http://www.europhd.eu/html/onda01/10/docs/sorecomjointipd_call_for_fellowship.pdf))
- the high international attractiveness towards Italy of foreign doctoral trainees that will all be registered at Sapienza University, project leader that delivers the joint title and monocontractor of the network of 16 associated partner: 7 universities, 2 SMEs, 1 national research centres in 7 European countries (AT, CH,CZ, ES, FR, RO, SE) and 6 Universities in USA, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and China;
- sustainability from 2013 until 2017 of 3 training events per year: Winter, Spring and Summer International Lab Meetings and Summer Schools;
- further development of the physical and digital dedicated infrastructure, among which the SoReCom ‘A.S. de Rosa’ physical and @-library, the web portal <http://www.europhd.eu>, a distance training, documentation and information tool, the SoReCom THEmatic NETWORK Virtual Community, etc

One of the programme's great assets is the [SoReCom THEmatic NETWORK](#), a “network of networks” approved by the EC with more than 3000 scholars and professionals around the globe. 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.



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The European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication is also sponsored by the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (Paris) and is formally linked with other universities worldwide via the SoReComTHEmatic NETwork. It also collaborates with other trans-disciplinary European networks, like and with companies that actively participate in European projects or specialized in O.D.L.

The European/International Joint PhD in Social Representations and Communication Research Centre and Multimedia Lab (located in Piazza Cavalieri di Malta, 2 - Rome) 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 workweek to provide assistance to users. It integrates three main research pillars:

- documentation (specializzata eLibrary, bibliographic repository, meta-theoretical analysis repository)
- networking (interactive web-videoconferences, on-line virtual community)
- research training (European/International Joint Ph.D. "Virtual Campus": videocourses in streaming, European/International Joint Ph.D. Web-Auditorium, distance tutoring and cotutoring, on-line evaluation of trainees directly on their personal web space, etc.).

The European/International Joint PhD focuses on advanced training in the field of social representations and communication by developing:

- pluri-paradigmatic theoretical and meta-theoretical knowledge
- multi-methodological expertise
- fieldwork and applied value of the research
- international networking and comparative research
- transferable skills

By stressing the importance of improving the process of European cultural integration within a scientific context that is being increasingly oriented towards internationalisation of training and research standards, the European/International Joint Ph.D. in Social Representations and Communication created under the above mentioned Erasmus-Socrates programme co-ordinated by the founding University of Rome Sapienza has been a pioneer program contributing since 1992 to the overcoming of differences in national organisations of doctoral studies, both in terms of their regulations and financing, and in terms of curriculum quality.

Joint criteria have been developed, characterizing all planning, curricular, organisational, policy and procedural aspects essential for the design and implementation of the European/International Doctorate including:

- candidate selection
- training structure of participants from different nationalities
- research activity and training in an international environment
- intensive didactic "stages" in multilingual and multicultural settings
- adoption of the European Credit System, according to a specifically designed schema of structured training
- language policy and format for Ph.D. dissertation
- evaluation of the entire training process and quality system
- formal recognition of the degree and award of joint diploma



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The specific objectives of the European/International Joint Doctorate in Social Representations and Communication are to:

- Provide doctoral training in the field of Social Representations by structured training-through-research in an internationally recognised networked research environment. From the optic of social psychology, it offers a starting point for interdisciplinary dialog as well as an expert forum on the theoretical redefinition of problematic issues and methodological strategies within the specificities of different disciplinary approaches and their applicative value in different organizational and institutional contexts;
- Involve internationally recruited, trained, and monitored early-stage researchers in cooperative trans-national research led by a multigenerational community of scientists, to be catalysts for expertise both in and outside Europe;
- Promote European excellence beyond the boundaries of the European Union. The enlargement to partners from six extra-European countries (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Mexico and USA) represents an effort to disseminate European excellence worldwide, beyond the EU's borders, in synergy with well-reputed scientists and research centres in some non-EU countries of great strategic value for the expansion of the scientific field led by European scientists. The goal is to attract the best early-stage researchers from abroad, encouraging them to undertake their research training in Europe, also in view of closer integration of the European employment market, thus rendering our private sector much stronger in this period of globalization and high competition with extra-European companies.
- Offer integrated activities supporting international physical and virtual mobility for early-stage research fellows, International Summer Schools, International Lab Meetings, and international mobility for teaching staff.
- Directly and systematically incorporate a select number of small/medium private enterprises from different countries (France, Italy, Sweden, Ireland) into the training activities.
- Make research careers more attractive via cooperation between academia, public research centres, and small and medium sized companies that have common research interests and complementary training activities;

The specific benefits of the training structure for European PhD research trainees and the key didactic formula adopted consist of:

- 1) Officialisation of the degree and mutual recognition of the jointly awarded diploma;
- 2) Greater access to expertise: Access to leading experts on various continents (including the founder of the Social Representations Theory, who is also the Honorary Program Director) and collaboration with internationally recognised research teams and centres of excellence working on issues with strong societal relevance, where key factors for success include that the knowledge produced can be applied in organisational contexts in private companies and public research centres;
- 3) Guaranteeing shared standards both in terms of selection of successful candidates and the training they will receive in the programme.
- 4) Structured research training in an international environment that enables trainees to expand their horizons;
- 5) Intensive didactic stages in multicultural settings;
- 6) Multidisciplinary 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 exposes trainees not only to a wide





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range of methodologies, but also to the leading experts in those methodologies. Trainees also benefit from the cultural/linguistic advantages of living and studying alongside trainees from other countries.

- 7) Tutoring and co-tutoring triadic system (multiple supervision): Our unique tutoring system where research trainees are continually in contact with their tutors. Via the open distance learning system (ODL), tutors have on-line access to research trainees' work and monitor their 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. Under the ODL, the Programme Director, Co-ordinator and the 3 tutors and co-tutors have access to trainees' research, advantageous because it enables the scientific committee to easily co-ordinate and supervise the training.
- 8) Interlocking structured system of virtual (open learning system) and physical international mobility of both research trainees and teaching staff. 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/International Joint doctorate, and in and of itself is not sufficient.
  - a) In the first case, individual research trainees are required to relocate abroad for at least six 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.
  - b) 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 improve cross-fertilization of ideas and research practices, 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.
- 9) Adequate infrastructure and dedicated facilities at the founding university and network universities, including a common web site platform that enables linkage between international physical and virtual mobility (access to a dedicated Portal and web-auditorium interactive system) and innovative practices adopted for teaching, tutoring and co-tutoring, network management, etc. that allow flexibility in face-to-face and open distance interactive learning contexts. The system of open distance learning guarantees meeting trainees' needs, enabling them to organise their research in the way they wish within the confines of the didactic structure. Open distance learning as well as structured international mobility can also be adapted to provide temporary or more specific training where necessary.
- 10) Transmission of transferable general skills (such as modern presentation techniques, conference presentation, workshop organisation, design and organization of academic work, research team management, and management of statistical software, large bibliographies and international databases, etc.) via learning by doing. This involves research trainees in scientific activities either individually or in small to medium teams and in different contexts (presenting their research progress during International Lab Meetings and Summer Schools, use of the web-auditorium, organising small seminars, participating in international conferences, 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 specialised literature on Social Representations and Communication, managing a large bibliographic inventory, contributing to the construction of a specialised virtual library, etc.). Within the framework of



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this fruitful inter-sectorial collaboration between academic and entrepreneurial network members, 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.

- 11) Participants in the programme will also benefit from the already consolidated international experience of European PhD graduates who are members of the SoReCom Alumni Network and who have found employment not only at many European universities (Bucharest, Cambridge, Eötvös University, Helsinki, University "A.I. Cuza", I.S.C.T.E. Lisbon, Liège, Lyon2, London School of Economics, L.U.M.S.A., the Universities of Rome, Milan, Oslo, Pecs, Salerno, Tallin, Vienna, etc.) but also in prestigious extra-European universities (Sarah Lawrence College, New York, UQUAM, University of Montreal, University of Ottawa, Jakarta University, and the University of Tunis), and in private foundations and companies (ADECCO, Danone, the Soros Foundation, Peugeot, and public or governmental institutions (Finnish Cultural Foundation; IFSTTAR – Institut français des sciences et technologies des transports, de l'aménagement et des réseaux – France; Sardinian Region Juvenile Court; Florence Employment Office; Center for Assistance Against Violence to Women « Differenza Donna »), etc.
- 12) Financial support, often a major factor in research trainees' ability to participate in training that involves mobility and "stages", allowing us to select the best applicants irrespective of their nationality and personal financial situation.

Compared to other doctorates – in Italy and abroad – the European/International PhD is unique:

- a) From a scientific point of view it is the only doctorate dedicated to the supra-disciplinary field of Social Representations. There are at national and international level excellent doctorates in the field of social psychology and in other social sciences that also deal with social representations among other issues. However, each of them emphasizes a specific theoretical and methodological approach to this scientific field among the variety of paradigms (from structural to socio-dynamic; from narrative and dialogical to anthropological and ethnographic; from experimental to modelling and multi-method approach, etc.). The aim of our unique and distinctive networked programme is to ensure both complementarity and synergies among the traditions of different research centres and schools, as well as the integrative specificity of the pluri-paradigmatic and multi-methodological modelling approach developed at the coordinating institution.
- b) From the institutional point of view, it is "unique" because it is the first "European Joint Doctorate" to be formally approved in EC programs by the DG-Education and Culture and DG-Research (1993), as well as by ministries for higher education of several countries. It is therefore not a doctorate in co-tutela, nor an internationalised doctorate, nor the sum of collaborative doctorates, but it is a real joint programme integrating all the administrative, logistic and scientific aspects to award a joint doctoral title.