

**European Comparisons in Regional  
Cohesion, Dynamics and Expressions  
(EuroCORECODE)**

## Call for Outline Proposals

### What is EUROCORES?

The ESF European Collaborative Research (EUROCORES) Programmes offer a flexible framework for researchers from Europe to work on questions which are best addressed in larger scale collaborative research programmes. The EUROCORES Programmes allow excellent researchers from different participating countries to collaborate in research projects 'at the bench'. They also allow, when appropriate, colleagues from non-European countries, for example the US, to participate. The Programmes encourage and foresee networking and collaboration of researchers to achieve synthesis of scientific results across the programme, to link to related programmes, and to disseminate results.

EUROCORES Programmes allow national research funding organisations in Europe and beyond to support top class research in and across all scientific areas, by matching the needs articulated by the scientific community with their strategic priorities.

Funding decisions on the projects and the research funding remain with the national research funding organisations, based on international peer review operated by ESF. ESF also provides support for networking the researchers and for the scientific synthesis of research results and their dissemination<sup>(1)</sup>. This way, the EUROCORES Scheme complements the EC Framework Programme and other collaborative funding schemes at European level.

For further information see:  
<http://www.esf.org/eurocores>

<sup>(1)</sup> Until December 2008 this is supported through a contract with the European Commission under the Sixth Framework Programme (EC Contract no. ERAS-CT-2003-980409). From January 2009 onwards this support will be provided by the national Funding Organisations participating in the Programmes.

## European Comparisons in Regional Cohesion, Dynamics and Expressions (EuroCORECODE)

Following agreement with funding organisations in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia, the European Science Foundation is launching a Call for Outline Proposals for Collaborative Research Projects (CRPs) to be undertaken within the EUROCORES Programme *European Comparisons in Regional Cohesion, Dynamics and Expressions* (EuroCORECODE). EuroCORECODE will run for 4 years and it includes national research funding, as well as support for networking and dissemination activities provided through the ESF<sup>1</sup>. The Programme aims to support high quality multidisciplinary research.

Outline Proposals are to be submitted by Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009, 12:00 PM (noon). It is expected that Full Proposals will be invited by Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2009 with Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009, 12:00 PM (noon) as expected deadline for submission.

A Programme-specific website can be consulted for the latest updates at <http://www.esf.org/eurocorecode>

## Abstract

In a changing European world, the political, social and cultural expressions of cohesion at a (relatively) small geographical scale are gaining significance. This development attributes a renewed importance to the concept, the idea, and the reality of regions and regionalism. The nation-states as a historical phase in the dynamics of Europe developed out of an almost countless number of regions through a process of clustering, in which dynastic and political motives had the upper hand. During this process, elements of regional identity and cohesion were suppressed, sometimes even destroyed. Yet, many regions preserved a strong – mainly social and cultural – cohesion, often supported by a cherishing of regional history and tradition.

Understanding regional dynamics in Europe calls for a comparative and inter-disciplinary approach to historical developments (from their very origins throughout historical times) and to the constituent elements of regional cohesion (dialect and language, religion, historical geography, ethnogenesis, invented tradition, material culture etc.) **Starting from a historical basis, this programme offers a challenge to a wide range of disciplines in the humanities to start exploring the functional dynamics of different aspects of regional development and its modern perspectives.**

## Background

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Through the ages, the regions that formed the building blocks out of which the nation-states in Europe have been constructed, have been the sources of the essential developments of cultural, social, economic and political cohesion. It was more to regions than to nations that people felt personally attached; hence it was within regions that social and political networks mainly developed.

Over the years, as political, social, economic and cultural conditions changed, regions gained different functions, and the forces that determined their cohesion underwent changes as well. In the long run, the main development has been the shift from the medieval region, through the nation-state to a 'post-national' Europe. The original medieval regions were produced by the great migrations of the first millennium, and its ethnic and cultural mobility and diversity. During the high middle ages, dynastic practice started to mould regions into political territories, by making use of existing traditions, creating new ones, and welding different interests together. Sometimes the persistent regional identity dominated the creation of a new political reality, sometimes it was the new political conditions and ambitions that renewed or established regional cohesions. Formal and informal education as tools to establish social ethics and cultural awareness, even ideology, became increasingly important. As ideology and education chose to emphasize national supremacy, dialects of the dominant regions tended to develop into the official language of the new supra-regional states, whereas others were declared rude and uncivilized.

The process of clustering regional entities, through larger principalities into the nation-state of the modern era, emphasized a supra-regional identity; preferred a canonized national language to dialects; created and stressed firm and protected borders; and developed a policy primarily intended to protect the newly established national unity. In doing so the nation-state downplayed the role and function of regions, and made regional cohesion subordinate to national cohesion. Consequently, it lost part of the constructive regional potential and even created a possible (in some cases real) conflict between national and regional identities, most particularly where and when modern national borders split older entities into two (e.g., Catalonia, Savoy or Hainaut) or even three parts (e.g., Silesia/Lausitz), divided between neighbouring states. Periods of a personal dynastic union or a lasting (political) dominance could affect the role and function of regions, both by destroying regional cohesion and by provoking expression of regional togetherness (as in the

Swedish dominion of parts of Finland, for example).

Indeed, developments were far from uniform. In fact, what seems a pattern of unification, integration and increasing uniformity inevitably leading to the modern state, hides many intriguing differences. Questions about how and why some regions managed to retain a strong cohesion, in spite of housing populations with different languages or religions, while others fell apart or lost a sense of cohesion, in spite of sharing one language or dynasty can only be understood if all the creative and disruptive forces are studied and compared at a European level. This comparison might include studying the way in which the dynamics of regional cohesion functioned in neighbouring cultures both within and outside Europe as traditionally understood.

The concept that a better understanding of regional cohesion itself can contribute to European cohesion - through positively valuing diversity and interaction - is a stimulating new idea. Although much research has been done on aspects of individual regions - their history and identity, their geography and structures - so far few efforts have been made to make a comparative analysis of regions in their dynamics and cohesion. The process of state-formation has attracted most attention; what is needed now is interdisciplinary research to make comparisons that allow a better understanding of the cohesive forces that moulded regions.

The EUROCORES programme EuroCORECODE is based on this central concept of regional cohesion. The programme should on the one hand profit from a thorough comparative, historical analysis, but on the other stimulate the inclusion of research in other disciplines, such as linguistics, archaeology, art history, folk studies, etc. It is also envisaged that the programme will benefit from the application of analytical models from other social sciences such as anthropology, ethnography and geography.

## Scientific goals

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The main purpose of the theme is to create a better understanding of the ways in which regional cohesion developed in the *longue durée* within a changing European context, through a programme of comparative projects.

When starting to compare the historical developments of regions all over Europe, and the contributions to these developments made by different fields of human activity, it is striking how many unexpected similarities and differences can be found in the complex ways in which societies in the past were created and behaved.

Mono-disciplinary research during recent decades has grown enormously in depth and quality. This calls for a new approach that aims at comparison and interdisciplinary analysis. This only can be achieved if a composite package of research projects is undertaken, in which research on a joint conceptual basis allows the development of a coordinated research plan in order to come to conclusions that rise above the disciplinary level.

Through interdisciplinary comparison at a European level, regional studies can reach a new and innovative phase of analysis. Comparisons across both time and space, and comparison of results between different disciplines can build a three dimensional analytical framework. Through synergy between different approaches a new understanding can be reached.

These scientific goals of the EUROCORES programme *European Comparisons in Regional Cohesion, Dynamics and Expressions* require comparative analysis of:

- the way in which regional cohesion developed during the pre- and proto-national phase of European society, and was threatened and survived under changing political circumstances during the process of formation of the nation-state;
- the degree to which the environmental conditions and natural borders (and barriers) affected regional developments;
- the way in which minorities were integrated or isolated within a regional context;
- the role played by institutions of different kind during successive processes of centralisation;
- the way in which the discourses of identity and power (such as the use of the historical reference, the creation of regional epic and heroes etc) were constructed;

- The creation of hierarchies of region (as to size, cohesive potential, etc.) and the existence of hierarchies of regional awareness and attachment;
- The ways in which regional cohesion and attachments have been expressed (in signs, symbols, dialect, language, material culture etc.)

**Scholarly objectives of the programme** are the integration of the outcome of these analyses, and the production of a synthesis of the historical dynamics of regional development. The programme will contribute to the development of new standards for the analysis of regional dynamics in different fields of research.

Furthermore, the programme aims to produce the tools to allow the translation of new retrospective understandings of the function and development of regions into a perspective on the future role of regions in Europe. Once completed, the programme's acquired, comparative understanding can be applied to the fields of cultural policy, international cooperation and education.

## Research topics

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To address the objectives outlined above, the programme invites applications for funding for Collaborative Research Projects that fulfil four basic criteria. Projects are required to:

- address the ways in which regional cohesion has evolved and been expressed in Europe;
- take a comparative approach, comparing and contrasting the experiences of regions in different parts of Europe;
- examine the dynamics of regional cohesion across the *longue durée*;
- take a multi-disciplinary approach.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate how their proposed project will contribute to at least one of the scientific goals of the programme as a whole. Projects should thus address the subject of regional cohesion through one of more of the following themes:

- *Expressions* of regional cohesion and identity, including language and dialect, material culture, customs, myths.
- *Discourses of identity and power*. The different tools and instruments used to exercise authority and to create attachment to their 'region': ideology (history, myth, ancestors), symbols (heraldry, architecture, images of the ruler, symbolic discourse), rituals (entrees, veneration of patron saints), the invention of tradition both in historical and in modern times etc.
- *Institutions*. Dynasties, political, juridical, political, economic and social institutions. The Church and educational institutions.
- *Hierarchies*. The concept of region is in a sense fluid, in size, in degrees of attachment to the region and depending on whether viewed from 'inside' or 'outside'. Borders of regions may have changed over time. Regions that functioned in a historical period as strong entities may have been cut through by modern national (post-/supra-regional) borders.
- *Majorities/minorities*. The relationship between majorities and minorities is a recurrent theme in the study of regional cohesion. Ethnicity and language often marked social difference and social hierarchy; religion (notably the impact of conversion and of the Reformation) could generate or reinforce minority identities.
- *Environment*. The relationship between physical geography and regional identity; the structuring of space in terms

of cores and peripheries; the role of distance from centres of power.

Questions that may be addressed include – but are not limited to:

- Why did larger regions grow out of smaller entities?
- What were the decisive factors in the process of clustering?
- How did regions obtain and express identity?
- How did some prevent renewed fragmentation, and why did some get fragmented again?
- How did cultural diversity determine regional diversity in one place, while other regions preserved a high cohesion in spite of cultural differences?
- And most of all: how did the creation of the nation-state, with its strong emphasis on national borders, and its frequent neglect of prior situations, affect regional cohesion?

## Project design

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The research groups will concentrate on a comparative, synchronized approach to the theme, through the study of a carefully selected range of regions and topics, offering a paradigmatic set of cultural, historical and social tools that may contribute to understanding the regional dynamics.

Each Collaborative Research Project (CRP) will be composed of scholars comparing at least 3 different regions.

The research groups are encouraged to involve other researchers working on the region and topics under investigation in their work. The goal here is to increase the capacity of these researchers to carry out similar work in the future and to participate in general discussions on the outcome of the programme. This will stimulate participation and strengthen the collaborative potential

EuroCORECODE projects are expected to be output-oriented and proposals should include details about publication plans. Publications should be targeted at mainstream audiences and disseminated through widely accessible channels. The applicants should indicate clearly a set of deliverables at a scholarly level, which may include short publications, edited collections, monographs, PhD-theses or the organization of workshops and conferences.

Halfway every project an expert-meeting is encouraged, where specialists from outside the core team of a specific CRP, and/or stemming from subject areas that are contributing to the disciplinary kaleidoscope of the project, may comment on provisional results and conceptual and methodological questions.

Applicants are reminded to include the costs of these activities in the budget.

Dissemination into all areas of the humanities is encouraged. This might best be achieved by organizing special sessions at general conferences such as the 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences (Amsterdam, 2010), the International Congress of Social History, the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, the International Congress Of Regional History etc. Dissemination among a wider audience of non-specialists is not a specific requirement, but efforts to enhance communication of the results of the programme – e.g., through documentaries and presentations in the media and museums - are encouraged.

Studying regions where an awareness of a past (yet lost) togetherness, cut through by modern borders is manifest, can cause a certain tension between value-free scholarly research and

political issues and preferences (mainly at a national level). In some cases controversy may arise between politically biased positions and scholarly interests. It is precisely the aim of this programme to come to a better understanding of the positive forces of regional cohesion and dynamics, and in doing so to make a contribution towards abolishing problematic issues. EuroCORECODE project proposals should be specific about how they intend to deal with these issues.

The EuroCORECODE programme might require more travelling than usual. This element should be thoroughly explained and costed with in the proposals.

## Building coherence through networking

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The EuroCORECODE programme aims to become larger than the sum of its parts. This will be achieved in several ways:

- At a kick-off conference all the granted CRPs will present themselves and their aims, and allow constructive contributions.
- At a final conference all CRPs will present the results of their analyses to each other. At this conference both scholars and policy makers from outside the programme may be invited to participate in order to promote the further dissemination.
- Interaction and cross-fertilization between EuroCORECODE projects can be furthered by the development of cross-project common interest working groups.
- The dissemination of EuroCORECODE results at conferences and workshops will be ensured.

A series of training sessions may be organized where junior members from all EuroCORECODE CRPs can come together to take part in international discourse on the used multi-disciplinary methods and techniques

# Guidelines for applications

## (Outline and Full Proposals)

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Collaborative Research Project (CRP) proposals from individual scientists or research groups eligible for funding by the organisations participating in the Programme will be accepted for consideration in the EUROCORES Programme EuroCORECODE.

Scientists or groups not applying for or not eligible to apply for funding from these organisations (including applicants from industry), can be associated with a proposal where their added scientific value is demonstrated. Their participation as Associate Partners in a project must be fully self-supporting and will not be financially supported by the participating funding organisations.

Proposals are only eligible, if they fulfil the following **criteria**:

- Proposals must involve, as a minimum, three eligible Principle Investigators (PIs) from **three different countries**.
- A maximum of 50 % of the Individual Projects (IPs) in a Collaborative Research Project (CRP) can come from one country.
- Proposals must involve more PIs than Associated Partners

**Applications should normally be for three years although applications for shorter or longer time periods may be considered depending on the rules of the participating funding organisations.** Taking into account the selection and approval processes, the successful projects are expected to begin their activities in **March 2010**.

## Online submission of applications

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Outline and Full Proposals will be submitted online. Applicants should follow the proposal structure as indicated in the application template for outline proposals available on the Programme website at: <http://www.esf.org/eurocorecode>.

On this Programme website, links to information on national funding eligibility and requirements as well as to a EUROCORES Glossary and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are available.

**Prior to submitting Outline Proposals, all applicants have to contact their national**

**funding organisations in order to verify eligibility and to ensure compliance with their relevant organisations' granting rules and regulations (see contact persons listed on page 10).**

At the time of online submission of the Outline Proposals, the Project Leader is asked to confirm this on behalf of all the participants in the CRP.

## Outline Proposals

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**Outline Proposals are invited by Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009, 12:00 PM (noon).**

Outline Proposals will be examined by the participating funding organisations for formal eligibility. Therefore, it is crucial that all applicants contact their national funding organisation prior to submitting their proposals.

In compliance with the rules and regulations of the participating national funding organisations, the requested funds under the EUROCORES Programme EuroCORECODE can include salaries for scientific and technical staff, equipment as well as travel costs and consumables within the project, specifying the amount requested from each Funding Organisation. National policies may also require the proposal to contain specific additional information. Applicants should be aware that the participating funding organisations can make significant adjustments to the requested funds in order to bring these in line with their rules and regulations.

Applications will be assessed according to a set of criteria in a two-stage procedure, to ensure a thorough selection of scientifically excellent proposals. At the outline stage, the Review Panel will select proposals with potential for scientific excellence, by applying the following criteria:

- Relevance to the Call for Proposals
- Novelty and originality
- European added value (scientific)
- Qualification of the applicants

An Outline Proposal submitted must comprise:

- A short description of the CRP (max. 1200 words, including objectives, milestones, methodologies (for example experiments and fieldwork);
  - o Short description of how (and why) the partners contributing to the CRP will work together;

- Short CVs of Project Leader (PL), all PIs and Associate Partners (max. one page each, including five most relevant publications);
- Estimated budget (consistent with the rules of relevant national funding organisation) tabulated according to a provided template.

Associated Partners (APs) are also considered part of a CRP and will be assessed as such at both the Outline and Full Proposal stage.

It will be assumed that arrangements for the handling of IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) will be in place within projects, following the applicable national legislation and national funding organisation's rules. Applicants are strongly urged to have such arrangements in place, covering all research groups (including any associated groups) before the start of the projects. It is expected that the results obtained by the projects supported under this EUROCORES Programme will be placed in the public domain.

It is also expected that all relevant clearance of other national or international committees (for example ethics) has been obtained before funding is granted. It is the responsibility of applicants to clarify any such matters (if applicable) with their national contact points.

## Full Proposals

**Full Proposals will be invited following the recommendations of the Review Panel. The deadline for full proposals will be announced later, but is expected to be around Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009, 12:00 PM (noon).**

Please note that only applicants who submitted an Outline Proposal can submit a Full Proposal.

For the Full Collaborative Research Project (CRP) proposals, the most important selection criterion is "Scientific quality". Other criteria include interdisciplinarity (according to the scope of the call), qualification of applicants, level of integration and collaboration, feasibility and appropriateness of methodologies, European added value, relation to other projects (risk of double-funding) and suitability of budget requirements.

The Full Proposals will be assessed by at least three independent external expert referees who are selected by the ESF from a pool of scientists

suggested by the participating funding organisations, the Review Panel and the ESF office. A list of all referee names used for the international peer review will be published once the selection process has been completed.

After receiving the referee reports, they will be made available (anonymous) to the applicants for their information and for commenting (optional). The Review Panel will rank all Full Proposals based on the assessment of the Full Proposal, the anonymous referee reports and the applicant's responses to these.

The Review Panel will create a ranked list consisting of the best Full Proposals and will subsequently make recommendations to the Management Committee for the funding of these proposals. The actual granting of the funds to the Individual Projects on the ranked list will depend on the total amount of funds available in each participating Funding Organisations. The use of funds in a project will be subject to the rules and regulations of each participating Funding Organisation as well as to the national laws of those countries.

Full proposals must include a well-argued scientific case (both for the collaboration envisaged and for the individual contributions), a list of participants, a detailed tabulated budget and other supporting information. A single, common scientific case must be made throughout the proposal to demonstrate an aim for scientific synergy and integration of multinational expertise. In addition, the amount requested from each national funding organisation has to be clearly and separately specified. Detailed instructions on requirements and how to complete the application will be made available once Full Proposals are being invited.

The **Project Leader** will be the main CRP proposal contact point for ESF for the duration of the project. He/she will be responsible for representing the Collaborative Research Project, for its participation in programme activities, and for any reporting requirements placed on the project as a whole.

All **Principal Investigators** will be responsible for dealing with the requirements concerning the contributions of their own funding organisation.

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## Programme Structure and Management

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### Programme Structure

The overall responsibility for the governance of the programme lies with a *Management Committee*, whose membership is formed by one representative from each participating funding organisation (usually a senior science manager) together with an ESF representative.

Proposal assessment and selection are the responsibility of an international, independent *Review Panel*. The members of this panel are leading scientists, appointed by ESF following suggestions from participating Funding Organisations. The membership of the Review Panel will be available on the Programme website for information. The Review Panel is also expected to monitor the overall scientific progress of the programme.

The Scientific Committee which is formed by the Project Leaders of all funded CRPs will be responsible for proposing a Programme work-plan including networking activities for scientific synergy in the EUROCORES Programme. They will also advise and support the EUROCORES Programme Coordinator in the coordination of networking activities.

## Programme Networking

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Networking activities are designed to strengthen the science objectives of this EUROCORES Programme by promoting coherence in the activities of the science community involved. This will provide the European added-value which is the central objective of any EUROCORES Programme.

Networking and collaboration within EUROCORES Programmes takes place at two levels:

1. between the various Individual Projects within each Collaborative Research Project (CRP) and
2. between the funded CRPs within the programme as a whole.

The intra-CRP activities are supported through the research grants each participant receives from the participating funding organisations in the given CRP. The cross-CRP activities are funded

through contributions to the EUROCORES Programme.

The intra-CRP collaboration is motivated by the nature of the CRP's research objectives, i.e., by the scope and the complexity of the questions it deals with. In a CRP, the participating groups have the opportunity to gather the required critical mass to successfully address the objectives and challenges of their project.

The cross-CRP networking and collaboration is stirred by the aims and the nature of the EUROCORES Programme. The theme which was the basis of this EUROCORES Programme has been selected for its clear need of collaboration in the proposed field. The funded CRPs will collectively set up and further streamline this new collaboration. To this end, the CRPs will engage the programme participants and, when of clear benefit, colleagues from outside the programme in joint activities such as:

- Programme-wide meetings or conferences
- Working Group meetings for the exchange of information and results across the CRPs;
- Joint scientific meetings or summer schools;
- Short term visits;
- Development and delivery of joint training schemes;
- Seminars, Workshops, symposia, invited sessions either stand-alone or as part of other larger events;
- Common web-facilities and publications.

Through active participation of scientists in the above mentioned activities, not only existing collaborations are enhanced but new and strategic partnership opportunities are also identified.

Furthermore, these activities may provide opportunities to explore aspects of the programme which are not covered by the funded research projects.

The integrative activities between the CRPs will help to strengthen the field by building coherence within the emerging research community and will serve as a platform for the research work which is conducted in the programme.

Project members are expected to participate annually in at least one cross-CRP activity.



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When submitting your proposal, please note that the costs for networking within your CRP should be budgeted for in your proposal. Funds for networking between the CRPs will be centrally managed by the ESF through contributions from the participating funding organisations.

## Programme evaluation

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A “light” Mid-Term evaluation, involving the Review Panel, will evaluate the overall progress of the Programme. Here, the Review Panel may comment on the CRPs’ work plan in relation to the objectives of the overall Programme. A final evaluation at the end of the Programme will evaluate the achievements of the whole EUROCORES Programme.

# Contacts in the participating organisations

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## *Austria:*

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