



# ERASpaces

*Unpacking Geographical Spaces in Research  
and Innovation in Europe*

Directed by  
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November 2004 – December 2005

## **Project Aims and objective**

To bring together scientific expertise within the PRIME Network of Excellence to develop a joint research agenda in the area of “regions as multi-actor spaces”.

The final aim of ERA-Spaces is to design the general framework of a joint research activity in the field. The main output of the integration activity will be the delivery of a book compiling the main contributions of the team partners made throughout the course of the project.

## **Context & Rationale**

Regions as multi-actor spaces dealing with science and innovation, regions are interesting objects of study for two reasons:

- (i) Regions are increasingly relevant spaces or arenas for framing the scientific trajectories and the policy choices;
- (ii) Science and innovation policies are one of the possible instruments used by Regional Authorities (as actors) to play on different levels and with various partners, to fulfil their own objectives.

## **Key themes**

The project will explore the main area of “regions as multi-actor spaces” within a set of selected key themes.

Specific areas will be fine-tuned during the course of the project through discussion with the team partners. These include conceptual, methodological, regional governance and policy issues, plus a review of interesting case studies under the following preliminary headings:

- ✓ The importance of regional space / key concepts
- ✓ Regions as multi-actor spaces/ Regional governance
- ✓ New challenges for research and innovation policy and key policy components
- ✓ Review of regional experiences

### **Organisation of work**

One objective of the project from an early stage was to produce collaborative, co-authored papers across the partner institutions within each of the themes, rather than limit the work to existing case studies of regions. It was agreed that more conceptual work was needed in the field prior to analysing empirical cases. A collaborative approach would take full advantage of the partners' research expertise and provide greater value added to the area of research. It was also envisaged that the project would benefit from the contribution of external researchers (external to the internal project team and external to PRIME).

### **Key Project milestones**

- January 2005:** Kick-off meeting, Manchester
- March 2005:** Second meeting, Strasbourg  
Discussion of key research areas and preparation of project conference.
- October 2005:** ERASpaces Conference, Bilbao, (with the co-sponsorship of Labein-Tecnalia and the Basque Department of Industry)  
Participation of PRIME and non-PRIME academics, as well as policy-makers and intermediaries.
- October 2005:** Third project meeting, Bilbao  
Discussion of next steps and publication strategy

### **Expected outcomes**

- ✓ Book proposal with contributions from project partners
- ✓ Other academic publications
- ✓ ERASpaces workshop papers and other conference papers
- ✓ Common position paper
- ✓ A common research agenda and future research projects

### **Participating team**

PREST, University of Manchester (coordinator)  
 BETA/University Luis Pasteur  
 CSIC-Consejo Superior De Investigaciones Cientificas  
 Fraunhofer ISI  
 Joanneum Research  
 ISEG, Technical University of Lisbon  
 Laboratoire d'Economie et de Sociologie du Travail (LEST)