

Admissions

The IMPRS-SPCE admits up to eight students a year. They must have a proven record of academic excellence and hold a master's degree or the equivalent in a discipline relevant to the School's research. The ability to do scholarly work in English is a prerequisite for admission. We welcome students from Germany and abroad.

In consultation with their advisor, students submit their doctoral thesis, in English or German, to the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Cologne, or the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

Applications are accepted from mid-December to late February. Shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview. Notification of acceptance is in May, and the program begins in October. See <http://imprs.mpifg.de> for more information about the program, eligibility, and online application.

Financial and organizational support

To cover living expenses, students working at the MPIfG receive an employment contract for up to 42 months. Students working at one of the universities receive a scholarship. For the doctoral program, no tuition is charged, but students must enroll at the University of Cologne or the University of Duisburg-Essen for a small fee. The School provides advice in practical matters such as visas, housing, and health insurance. IMPRS-SPCE students have fully equipped office space and enjoy full access to the libraries and research facilities of the MPIfG and the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences of the University of Cologne as well as the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Additional funds for fieldwork trips, stays at partner universities, and conference travel are available.

Faculty

The faculty is made up of professors from the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Cologne, and the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

- Lucio Baccaro (Political Economy)
- Jens Beckert (Sociology)
- Achim Görres (Political Science)
- Martin Höpner (Political Science)
- André Kaiser (Political Science)
- Clemens Kroneberg (Sociology)
- Sigrid Quack (Sociology)
- Karen Shire (Sociology)
- Christine Trampusch (Political Science)
- Till van Treeck (Socioeconomics)

Affiliate members:

- Olivier Godechot (Sociology)
- Isabell Stamm (Sociology)
- Leon Wansleben (Sociology)
- Cornelia Woll (Political Science)

People



Being part of the IMPRS-SPCE has given me the chance to interact with researchers from different cultural as well as disciplinary backgrounds and to expand my theoretical and methodological skill set; it has also provided me with ample resources and invaluable administrative support to conduct my own research. Dissertation projects in economic sociology or in political economy can very much flourish in this open and supportive research environment.
Laura Einhorn, Germany



The Cotutelle between the IMPRS-SPCE and MaxPo, situated at Sciences Po in Paris, gave me the opportunity to be part of two highly renowned research centers in the social sciences. The program enriched my dissertation project and personal development in many ways. It provided me with valuable insights from the distinct French and German research traditions and helped me to develop an interdisciplinary approach to research.
Andreas Eisl, Austria



The IMPRS-SPCE, situated at the very heart of Europe, is the perfect place to pursue a doctoral project. The small size of the School allows lively interaction between researchers and enables continuous direct exchange with your advisor. A semester abroad at the European University Institute in Florence and multiple international conferences and training schools were key to the development of my academic research and career.
Donato Di Carlo, Italy



The lively research community and regular academic events provided me with plenty of opportunities to share my own work and research interests with top scholars from all over the world and to benefit greatly from their insights and experience. The warmth and friendliness of the people working at the IMPRS-SPCE really made the experience of writing a dissertation a task that, even with its ups and downs, I enjoyed every day!
Guadalupe Moreno, Argentina

Contact

Cologne

Cologne is a major German city on the Rhine and host to 100,000 students from all over the world. Known for its hospitality, Cologne offers a vibrant cultural scene, historic treasures, and a wealth of leisure activities. It is a European rail and airline hub with easy access to Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, London, and Paris. During their first six months, all new IMPRS students work at the MPIfG in Cologne. After this period, students with advisors at the University of Cologne or the University of Duisburg-Essen move to their advisor's institution.



The School

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INTERNATIONAL MAX PLANCK RESEARCH SCHOOL
on the Social and Political Constitution of the Economy

Doctoral Program in Cologne

at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies,
the University of Cologne and the University of Duisburg-Essen



economic sociology

comparative and
international political economy

organization studies

<http://imprs.mpifg.de>

Welcome

Dear prospective student,

Thank you for your interest in the International Max Planck Research School on the Social and Political Constitution of the Economy (IMPRS-SPCE). If you are highly motivated and have an excellent academic record, the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Cologne, and the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Duisburg-Essen invite you to consider this international doctoral program aimed at students from all over the world.

The IMPRS-SPCE provides a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment for research-oriented doctoral students who wish to excel in their academic careers by writing an outstanding dissertation. Established in 2007 as the first program of its kind in the fields of economic sociology and political economy in Germany, it offers an unparalleled curriculum including intensive training in research design and methods of empirical research. An international exchange program enhances the academic experience and gives junior researchers the opportunity to benefit from meeting and working with distinguished scholars in their fields.

Graduates from the program have won prestigious awards such as the German Thesis Award and the Otto Hahn Medal. The IMPRS-SPCE prepares its graduates for careers in academia. While many alumni successfully pursue careers at universities, some also go on to work in the private sector, government, associations, and international organizations. To find out more about this opportunity to begin your career in a vibrant international research environment, please visit <http://imprs.mpifg.de>.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Jens Beckert

Chair of the International Max Planck Research School on the Social and Political Constitution of the Economy (IMPRS-SPCE)

Director at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, Cologne

Focus of Research

The International Max Planck Research School on the Social and Political Constitution of the Economy (IMPRS-SPCE) is an international doctoral program offered jointly by the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies (MPIfG), the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Cologne, and the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

Aiming to combine and develop the approaches of economic sociology, comparative and international political economy, and organization studies, the School's research investigates the complex linkages between economic and social action. Just as politics and social life are affected by pressures for economic efficiency and by economic power, economic action is embedded in an infrastructure of social institutions, cultural frames, historical trajectories, and political decisions. The economy as a system of action is both politically and socially constituted.

In sociology, the study of the social embeddedness of economic action is the domain of New Economic Sociology, which focuses on the analysis of markets and highlights the contribution of informal social structures to the facilitation and direction of economic action. In political science, the sub-discipline of political economy analyzes economic phenomena through the lenses of formal institutions, power relations, and decision-making rules. Its focus is on group interaction as opposed to individual utility maximization. Since both the economy and the polity are populated by organizations, it is warranted to study their behavior in its own right as well as its implications for the social and political constitution of the economy.

Interdisciplinary cooperation enables the program to combine insights from economic sociology, comparative and international political economy, and organization studies. Work at the School pursues an empirical-analytical approach rather than an efficiency-theoretical, prescriptive one. It explores how institutions and organizations evolve in the real economy, rather than determining how they should evolve, or how they would evolve in ideal conditions.

Doctoral Program

The program offers doctoral degrees in sociology and political science. It begins with a 15-month period devoted to expanding students' methodological skills and firming up their theoretical background in economic sociology, comparative and international political economy, and organization studies. Students undergo intensive training in research design and methods and participate in a biweekly doctoral colloquium. During this period, they also develop and defend their research proposal. The second part of the program comprises 27 months during which students concentrate on researching and writing their thesis. They are encouraged to spend four months at one of the partner universities in France, Italy, or the United States. IMPRS-SPCE contracts or scholarships are awarded to enable doctoral students to complete first-rate doctoral theses during their time at the IMPRS-SPCE. If the presentation of interim results at an academic conference helps to achieve this aim, the IMPRS-SPCE will support it. The Max Planck Summer Conference on Economy and Society, at which many students present their work in progress to peers and leading scholars in their fields, offers such an opportunity.

The IMPRS-SPCE offers ...

- a research-oriented curriculum for exceptionally qualified graduate students
- excellent research facilities
- close collaboration with advisors
- a fixed-term contract or scholarship (up to 42 months)
- English as a working language
- a stimulating intellectual environment within an international research community
- further funds for stays abroad, fieldwork, conference trips, or transcription costs
- a six-month wrap-up postdoc period upon successful completion of the program allowing additional time for publishing or teaching
- an international learning and working experience in a major city in the heart of Western Europe

Special features

- Exchange stay at a partner institution
- Participation in Summer Conference

Courses

Core courses

- Economy and Society I
- Economy and Society II
- Logic of Research: either Logic of Social Inquiry or Research Design in Comparative Social Research

Research methods

- Topics depending on individual needs, for example: Qualitative Interviews; Case Study Methods; Grounded Theory; Growth Models; Regression Analysis; Quantitative Text Analysis; Time-Series-Cross-Section Analysis

Elective courses

For example:

- Case Study Methods in Comparative Political Economy
- Comparative Political Economy
- Comparative Political Institutions
- Institutional Analysis of Organizations
- Political Economy of European Integration
- Sociology of Markets
- Transnational Governance

Curriculum

Semester	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Doctoral thesis	Exposé		Empirical work		Writing up		
Courses	3 core courses		2 methods courses		2 elective courses		
Special features	Doctoral colloquium				Semester abroad		
					Summer Conference		

International Exchange Program

International cooperation is crucial given the transnational character of research in economic sociology, comparative and international political economy, and organization studies. Our doctoral program gives students the opportunity to spend four months at a North American, French, or Italian partner institution or another academic institution abroad in order to gain international experience and develop their work in an international context. The IMPRS-SPCE also hosts doctoral students from abroad, which expands its own students' intercultural skills and professional networks. Public lectures by internationally renowned scholars enhance the program.

Cotutelle

The Cotutelle in the Social and Political Constitution of the Economy is a Franco-German doctoral program offered jointly by Sciences Po Paris and the IMPRS-SPCE which enables students from Sciences Po and the IMPRS-SPCE to pursue a German and a French doctoral degree simultaneously (*cotutelle de thèse*). Degrees are granted in sociology or political science. Doctoral research projects are limited to the research fields of economic sociology, political economy, and organization studies.

Partner institutions

United States

Columbia University
Department of Sociology

Northwestern University

Department of Political Science
Department of Sociology

University of California, San Diego

Department of Sociology

France

Sciences Po, Paris
Centre d'études européennes
Centre de sociologie des organisations

Italy

European University Institute
Department of Political and Social Sciences

