

EU-prosjektet "KNOWandPOL" starter opp høsten 2006 og varer i 4 år. Rokkansenteret ved Haldor Byrkjeflot er partner i prosjektet der Norsk institutt for by- og regionforskning ( NIBR) og Høgskolen i Østfold er øvrige norske partnere. Norge er ett av de åtte land i Europa hvor kunnskapsgrunnlaget for beslutningene i skole- og helsepolitikken skal utforskes og sammenlignes. Helge Ramsdal fra Høgskolen i Østfold leder det norske forskerteamet, der Haldor Byrkjeflot, Birte Folgerø Johannesen, Marit Helgesen, Marte Feiring , Eva Skærbæk og Gunnar Vold Hansen er øvrige deltakere.

Prosjektbeskrivelse: [http://www.lest.cnrs.fr/IMG/doc/Know Pol.doc](http://www.lest.cnrs.fr/IMG/doc/Know_Pol.doc) (se nedenfor)

Powerpoint-presentasjon: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/group\\_1/knowandpol\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/group_1/knowandpol_en.pdf)

## The role of knowledge in the construction and regulation of health and education policy in Europe : convergences and specificities among nations and sectors

### **KNOWandPOL**

Priority 7

Citizens and governance  
in a knowledge based society

### **Integrated project**

Co-ordinator

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### **SUMMARY**

As societies develop, social identities become more varied, social processes more differentiated and occupational roles more specific. Each assumes a particular way of knowing about the world: what we think of as 'the knowledge society' is in fact a society of knowledges. In Europe, information and expertise are now more widely available and more widely distributed than ever before. At the same time, expectations of transparency and public accountability have increased. In turn, the legitimacy and authority of social and political processes depends on the legitimacy and authority of the knowledge on which they draw. Knowledge is both contested and a means of contestation: it has become both vehicle and substance of politics. Both social cohesion and effective government depend on integrating knowledge as well as interests. Yet we understand relatively little about the process by which this takes place. What does a society as a whole know about the problems it faces? How are its

different sources of information and ways of knowing mobilized in making decisions? To what extent does government consist in mobilizing knowledge? Twelve research teams specialized in the analysis of sector-based policies addresses these issues directly in respect of two fields, education and health. Both are pressing concerns of both governments and citizens across Europe, and each raises questions about the combination of scientific, practical and managerial understanding in different ways. The project is both multinational and multilevel, in that it looks at knowledge and governance problems across eight different countries and in local, national and international domains.

The research is organized around three complementary orientations, which apply to both sectors and across countries and levels. Orientation 1 seeks to map the knowledge potentially available to decision makers in different countries and contexts, and trace the relationships between those who hold or produce such knowledge and those who take policy decisions. Orientation 2 analyses decision-making processes as such, paying special attention to the way information and understanding are deployed and learning takes place at different stages. Orientation 3 is focused on the growing use of regulatory instruments which entail the production and dissemination of information, studying their conception, reception and reappropriation by the decision-makers for whom they are intended.

We seek to develop an original line of research that synthesises several theoretical and conceptual universes. In drawing on cognitive approaches to public policy, we are determined to avoid both radical academicism and managerial positivism, assuming neither that the use of knowledge and the use of power are identical, nor that they can ever be entirely separate. Our key objectives are those of scientific relevance (theoretical and methodological innovation, empirical understanding and professional training of junior researchers) and social and political relevance (increasing and improving contact and communication between policy-makers, researchers, consultants and other experts, including professional leaders and client groups). The creation of an end user advisory board specifically reflects the intention to develop an integrated project not limited to scientific considerations. Our intentions are reflected in an ambitious dissemination plan consisting of scientific publications, seminars, symposiums, media presentations, an electronic periodical and a dedicated website.