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The french touch: A network of interconnected organisations, each with a rhizome-shaped structure

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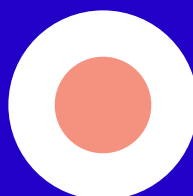
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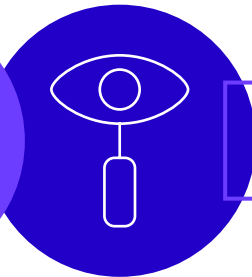
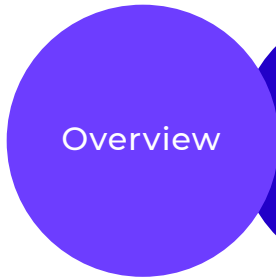


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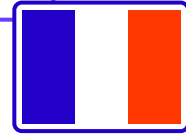
MUTUALISATION + SOLUTIONS



#32



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The french touch: A network of interconnected organisations, each with a rhizome-shaped structure

↳ A DISTINCTIVE ORGANISATION ESTABLISHED 30 YEARS AGO

The distinctive feature of university digital technology in France is its distinct organisational structure compared to national public information systems. Unlike other public digital domains in France, it does not report to a national information systems department of the supervisory ministry. The design, deployment and training of tools have been developed by and for higher education establishments from the outset of the computerisation of this public service, in the 1990s. This structure for designing digital solutions has been further reinforced by the creation of mutualisation and co-construction structures, involving the participation of associations, public interest groups, academic establishments and private companies.

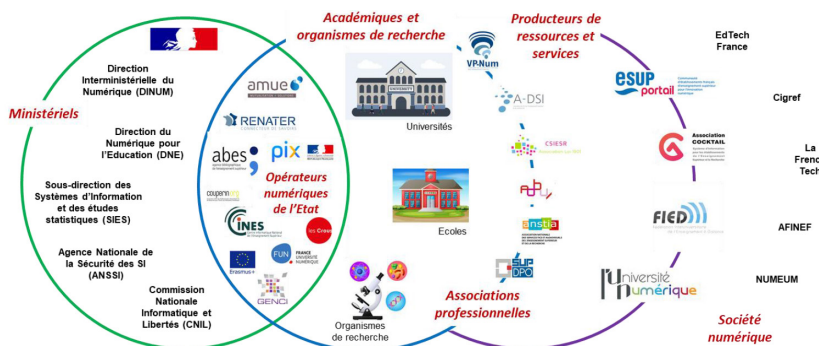
↳ THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AUTONOMOUS ORGANISATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SINGLE PUBLIC POLICY.

Over time, the creation of disjointed, autonomous organisations has resulted from calls for projects or specific grants. Today, these organisations must respond to the same ministerial public policy.

The operating mode is based on a ministerial roadmap with actions carried out by organisation and by scope (university library IT, network infrastructure, management IT, training through MOOCs, ICT, supercomputer). This can sometimes create questions about overall operation during subject convergence or overlap between two perimeters.

Another distinctive feature is that each establishment develops its information system independently, selecting from the range of available options.

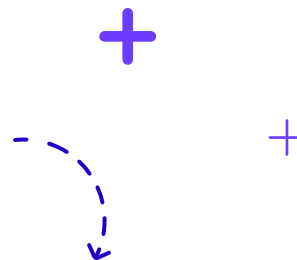
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The key stakeholders in the digital ecosystem of higher education and research in France (Ministry, 2024)

↳ A NETWORKED MODE OF OPERATION, SUPPORTED BY STAKEHOLDERS

The stakeholders involved in the different perimeters/organisations form a dense and interconnected network, sharing characteristics similar to those of the rhizome. This rhizome configures a new form of governance, in which the actions of participants are possible and taken into account, thus reducing the potential impact of injunctions coming from national public policy. In fact, public policy is already deployed within the rhizome defined by the actors. The organic structure of the rhizome offers various regulatory mechanisms that stabilise public service, even in times of crisis. Local initiatives have made it possible to maintain administrative and educational continuity during the pandemic. This rhizomic approach also represents an organisational model which is gaining importance as a value of university digital technology. Furthermore, it represents the concept of a "rhizome" as a political and economic project: the university community in action for university digital technology.



A research paper on the organisation of French Digital Higher Education Ecosystem

This article aims to describe the various organizational forms observed (associations, public interest groups, consortiums, public institutions ...), as well as their interactions, adopting a categorical approach in a bid to make this deeply organic organization intelligible as it develops discretely through the interaction of the actors who make it up.

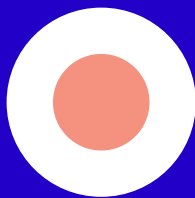
Mocquet, B. (2024). Rhizome of the French Digital Higher Education Ecosystem and New Governance: Mutualization, Governance and Digital Higher education. *Médiations et médiatisations*, TELUQ (16), article 11. <https://revue-mediations.telug.ca/index.php/Distances/article/view/391/374>



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The August 2024 issue will be devoted to "Exploring digital uses in higher education".



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