
2023

ACTIVITY REPORT



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2023, A YEAR IN MOVEMENT!

2023 has been a particular year for Noria Research, first in terms of renewing our teams, but also of the launch of our new website and activities.

Our research programs have, through innovative projects based on long-term field research, deepened their themes of analyses and largely disseminated their work. Our researchers working on the MENA, Central America and Turkey zones have launched new series of publications, conferences, podcasts and activities in several languages and openly accessible, thus maintaining the unique position held by Noria in the fields of research, advocacy and knowledge-sharing.

We have completely renewed our website to render more visible and accessible our publications and projects, but also our exciting new podcast series "Sous-Terrains". Thanks to the continued support of public and private institutions, we have continued our training activities and scholarships. These led us to write a collective book "La fabrique de la thèse en sciences sociales. Guide collectif d'un exercice personnel" which will be published mid-2024.

The year 2024 will pursue the changes of 2023, with renewed teams and research projects, an ambitious publishing strategy and the development of our training activities, in the continuity of its main objective: to defend independent, free and quality research, accessible to the greatest number. We will also celebrate the launch of our collective book in the Spring.

Alice JUDELL, Executive Director

OUR MISSION

Noria Research is an independent, non-profit research center, closely linked to the academic world.

The primary objective of Noria Research is to translate data collected in the field into original analyses, to bring this research to a wide audience, and to contribute to informing the public debate.

Our work is anchored in a deep conviction: there can be no understanding of political crises without first-hand knowledge of the concrete dynamics of the societies where they occur. This is why Noria's founding principle is an absolute commitment to field research. Aware of the importance of research serving societies, we are also committed to ensuring that our work resonates with civil society organizations, policy makers, and the general public.

The main missions of Noria Research are as follows:

- Conduct and support independent research.
- Defend the know-how of social science research.
- Bring academic standards of research into the public sphere.
- Promote open and inclusive research.

COMPOSITION

The association is managed by a collegial board of directors whose work of coordinating the various activities is linked to the administrative, human, financial and digital management of the association on a daily basis. In addition, a team of 13 volunteers as well as one employee actively support the various activities of Noria Research.

The composition of Noria Research, as of 12/31/2023:

THE COLLEGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Alice JUDELL
Camille ABESCAT
Yohanan BENHAIM
Béatrice GARAPON
Adrian FOUCHER

THE TEAM:

Cécile JEANMOUGIN
Théotime CHABRE
Robin Beaumont
Xavier HOUDOY
Simon MANGON
Barbara GIGI
Pauline CHERBONNIER
Christelle MAZLOUM
Iris LAMBERT
Sixtine DEROURE
Claire LEFORT-RIEU
Romain LE COUR GRANDMAISON
Xavier GUIGNARD
Colin POWERS

PARTNERS

Noria Research works in partnership with different organizations in some of its projects.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS:

- The Euromed France Network
- Open Society Foundations
- Friedrich Ebert Foundation
- Rosa Luxemburg Foundation
- General Directorate of International Relations and Strategy of the Ministry of Defense
- Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs
- Expertise France
- City of Paris
- The National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INALCO)
- CERI-Sciences Po
- Mexico Evalua
- Strategic Research Foundation
- Patrick Chauvel Foundation
- German Institute for International and Security Affairs
- CNRS Scientific Interest Group (GIS)
- Society for Middle East and Muslim World Studies
- French Development Agency
- The Institute "Societies in Change in the Mediterranean" (SoMuM)
- International Federation for Human Rights
- Karthala
- Center for Economic, Legal and Social Studies and Documentation (CEDEJ)
- Population and Development Center (Ceped) - IRD - University of Paris

MEDIA PARTNERS:

- Médiapart
- Political Animal
- Orient XXI
- The Conversation
- Disclose

RESEARCH

The founding principle of Noria Research is an absolute commitment to field research.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Project "Sembrando Vida"

This research project aims to follow up on the work of the Opium Project, focusing on the analysis of a public program intended to reduce violence and illicit cultures in Mexico.

The research and report were produced by Paul Frissard-Martinez:

<https://noria-research.com/mxac-old/sembrando-vida-illicit-crops-rural-violence-in-mexico/>

The report was presented during a Webinar in September 2023:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbbROywaVBA&t=2s>

The report is accompanied by the publication of an op-ed in Nexos:

<https://seguridad.nexos.com.mx/sembrando-vida-en-mexico-la-ilusion-de-la-sustitucion-de-cultivos-ilicitos/>

AUTODEFENSAS project, in partnership with VIST Projects

The project aims to promote our research work on the Self-Defense Forces through support for journalists and photo-reporters, on the occasion of ten years of the Self-Defense Force uprisings in Mexico. It was developed in partnership with VIST, an NGO-foundation which works to promote subjects related to violence in Latin America, using multimedia approaches.

<https://vistprojects.com/autodefensas/>



RESEARCH

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RESEARCH PROJECTS

Counter-Narrative of Authoritarianism in Tunisia and its Regional Environment: Strengthening the Capacity of Noria Research's MENA Program

The demands for democracy and economic justice that brought people to the streets in many countries in North Africa and the Middle East in 2011 remain largely unmet today. On the contrary, millions of people are silenced by their governments and excluded from participation in the political, economic and social affairs of their countries. Popular calls for change continue to be met with assassinations, mass arrests, forced displacement or constant surveillance. Authoritarianism is taking over and levels of poverty and inequality are worsening.

For democracy to survive in Tunisia and the MENA region more generally - and for the populations of these countries to have a chance to live with dignity - it is imperative that those who can challenge authoritarianism do so, and do so now. This project represents the contribution of the Noria MENA program to this fight. By generating knowledge about the political, social and economic dynamics in contemporary Tunisia and mobilizing an advocacy operation to inform stakeholders about the dangers of authoritarianism across the MENA region, we fight for hope what the Arab Spring represented.

<https://noria-research.com/mena/project/tunisia-in-transition/>

PUBLICATIONS

Kais Saïed, What Tomorrow? Tunisia in the Age of Hyperpolitics

(English, French & Arabic)

This report from Noria Research's North Africa & Middle East program offers a reflection on the current political moment in Tunisia. It begins by questioning the nature and possible prospects of the autocracy which has crystallized around the person of Kais Saïed since 2021. From there, he proceeds to evaluate the possibility of a democratic renewal.

<https://noria-research.com/mena/kais-saied-today-what-tomorrow>



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PUBLICATIONS

Hatem Nafti, “The Kais Saïed regime: Populist authoritarianism by default”

<https://noria-research.com/mena/the-regime-of-kais-saied-populist-authoritarianism-by-default/>

On July 25, 2021, President Kais Saïed took full control of the Tunisian state. Since then, he has methodically deconstructed the institutional architecture put in place after the fall of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. His regime is also rolling back the advances in rights and freedoms that the 2010-2011 revolution had made it possible to obtain. Moreover, unlike other authoritarian formations, it does so without offering prosperity in exchange for a limitation of freedoms. Quite the contrary: the daily life of Tunisians has deteriorated considerably under Saïed, marked by repeated shortages of basic necessities and high inflation.

Despite everything, Saïed remains popular and his re-election in 2024, in the event of a presidential election, seems almost certain. On the other hand, Saïed's institutional project does not yet benefit from great popular support, as numerous intermediate consultations reveal. How to understand this paradox?

Alessandra Bajec, “The Tunisian bill against NGOs risks stifling civil society”

<https://noria-research.com/mena/tunisia-anti-ngo-bill-risks-suffocating-civil-society/>

The Tunisian parliament continues its work to rewrite the law on associations. Although information is scarce, it appears that a bill submitted by a group of ten members of parliament on October 10 is the basis of these efforts. If the legislation in question is adopted by the Assembly of Representatives of the Tunisian People and ends up on the president's desk, it will introduce significant restrictions on the creation, activity and financing of associations. The most immediate consequence, it will considerably hamper the work of NGOs in the country.

Bassem Snaije, “Tunisia’s ‘doctor no’: restoration of sovereignty or worsening of dependence”

<https://noria-research.com/mena/tunisia-dr-no-restoring-sovereignty-or-deepening-dependency/>

Tunisian President Kais Saïed appears to have adopted a “just say no” strategy when dealing with powerful financial partners. Regardless of the economic difficulties facing his country and the immediate benefit that foreign currency loans could bring, the President is, for the moment, looking for another exit route. All this raises a number of questions: Can Tunisia afford Saïed's strategy? Do the President and his government have alternative solutions to those of the IMF, the EU and other international institutions such as the World Bank? Is Saïed at risk of being caught by his bluff and driving a very fragile and struggling economy to the brink of collapse?

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PUBLICATIONS

Hakim Fekih, "Kais Saied and Tunisian capital: Intimidation, conspiracy and collaboration"

<https://noria-research.com/mena/kais-saied-and-tunisian-capital-intimidation-conspiracy-andcollaboration/>

On July 28, 2021, Tunisian President Kais Saied welcomed Samir Majoul, President of the Tunisian Union of Industry, Commerce and Crafts (UTICA). The meeting was one of several organized by Kais Saied in the wake of his coup, aimed at securing buy-in from major social groups as he begins the transition to a new political regime. Establishing an understanding with the national capital was considered particularly important by the President: The economy had long been in free fall, the public health crisis precipitated by Covid - including the 4th wave of summer 2021 was the deadliest in Tunisia - having only accelerated its fall. In the eyes of public opinion, businesses, like the political class, have not played their role in getting the country out of its difficulties. The article returns to the nature of Tunisian capitalism in order to explore the relationship that the Tunisian president has built with national capital.

Dhouha Djerbi, "The age of community enterprises: Rural women in Kais Saied's vision of alternative development"

<https://noria-research.com/mena/the-age-of-communitarian-enterprises-rural-women-in-kais-saiedsvision-for-alternative-development/>

The Tunisian agrarian sector is supported by an informal and largely feminized workforce, known as "Amilat". In the wake of the 2011 revolution, the plight of the Amilat has become a rallying point for human rights, women's rights and rural activists of all stripes. Overrepresented in the interior regions of the country, the 'Amilat' rarely seek to work in agriculture out of personal conviction, attachment to the land or even a desire to stay in rural areas.



Rather, they do so because employment opportunities in their developmentally disadvantaged background are limited. Most of those who fall into this category are also responsible for maintaining a household, have to deal with sick or absent husbands and fathers, or have spouses who work in equally precarious jobs.

RESEARCH

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PUBLICATIONS

Xavier Guignard, "What was is no more, what will come is uncertain: Palestine after October 7"

<https://noria-research.com/mena/fr/ce-qui-etait-nest-plus-ce-qui-viendra-est-incertain-la-palestine-apres-le-7-octobre/>

Returning from a month of investigations in Lebanon and Qatar, Xavier Guignard, co-director of Noria's MENA program, spoke with Colin Powers, editor-in-chief of the program. This article is an abridged version of their exchange.



Colin Powers, "Architects of Economic Collapse: Abdel Fateh el-Sisi, International Finance and Egypt's Road to Scarcity"

<https://noria-research.com/mena/architects-of-economic-collapse-abdel-fateh-el-sisi-international-finance-and-the-road-to-penury-in-egypt/>



Ten years after the start of the reign of Abdel Fateh el-Sisi and while five more have just been secured, the Egyptian economy remains mired in a dragging crisis. In some ways, this is a crisis born of the global financial system. Ultimately, however, it is the result of a senseless policy.

RESEARCH

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EVENTS

Closed round table, Chatham House rule: “Understanding and responding to the challenges of Kaïs Saïed’s Tunisia”, October 26, 2023, Irish Cultural Center, Paris

Tunisia is facing a triple political, economic and social crisis which is difficult to see how it could be resolved in the short term. The media silence surrounding it and the absence of a concrete international response risk both accelerating the country's confinement in a hopeless situation and reinforcing a model of cooperation focused primarily on migration and security issues.

This conference was an opportunity to contribute to the public and political debate through a detailed analysis of the Tunisian situation and to discuss the concrete modalities of responses to these challenges. It brought together academics, experts, journalists, civil society actors and decision-makers

Speakers:

- Sarra Grira, journalist, editorial director of Orient XXI
- Colin Powers, researcher, senior fellow and editor-in-chief of the MENA program, Noria Research
- Hatem Nafti, essayist, member of the Tunisian Observatory of Populism
- Camille Abescat, researcher at Noria Research, post-doctoral researcher, Sant’Anna University of Pisa
- Sara Prestianni, Advocacy Director of EuroMed Rights, Brussels
- Hamza Meddeb, researcher and director of the political economy program at the Carnegie Middle East Center

TRAINING

Training the next generation of researchers is the guarantee of independent research and our contribution to its future. Noria Research is committed to offering a unique framework for training in the craft of research (field survey, writing, dissemination, project creation).

3 training programs were offered to young researchers in 2023:

Round tables

Noria launched its round tables to listen to the young research being done. These monthly meetings allow doctoral students to present their work and discuss their investigation techniques with more experienced colleagues. In a caring scientific framework, Noria supports young doctoral students in training in the craft of research: field investigation, construction of a scientific analysis and dissemination in innovative formats. Since their creation, more than 70 young researchers have presented their work in five major regions of the world, including 8 in 2023:

- January 17, 2023, Sofia Stimmatini, "Outlining research on disappearances in Morocco. Return from the first months in the field"
- February 21, 2023, Manon Laroche, "Egypt's foreign policy in the post-revolutionary context. Current situation and questions"
- March 21, 2023, Manon Denieuil, "The maintenance of Bashar Al Assad's policy of terror on the Syrian population in a post-war context"
- April 11, 2023, Shreya Parikh, "State surveillance and racialization in Tunisia?"

- May 15, 2023, Claire Lefort-Rieu, "Governing forced migration in Cameroonian contexts"
- June 27, 2023, Christelle Mazloum, "Distance and deviance: taking a stand for the Syrian regime in France since 2011"
- November 28, 2023, Pauline Cherbonnier, "Diplomacy and military tools. French legacies and transfers to Cameroon and Togo (1945-1970s)"
- December 19, 2023, Louna Hassaïni, "Tasfut Taberkant" Socio-historical analysis of the Kabyle uprising of 2001"

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Scholarships

Noria organized the fifth 2022-2023 edition of field grants for young researchers, amounting to €1000 each. These grants support researchers who carry out an investigation in a field considered difficult and/or whose work develops strong methodological reflection and/or who carry out an original publication project in order to promote their work.

The 2023 laureates

Rakiétou Mamadou Ouattara: “A professional group facing African urban development: training, positioning and strategy of Nigerien, Burkinabé and Malian architects in their country”

The objective of this research is to analyze the strategies deployed by sub-Saharan architects, individually and collectively, to participate in debates and the construction of West African cities. The idea would be to study the operating conditions of little-known national players in the West African real estate industry, whose arrival on the market can have a huge impact on the middle classes, and shape the future of cities of the South. This work would make it possible to reposition architects individually and collectively in debates on urban production, to highlight their communication, advocacy and visibility strategies in their missions.



Claudia Howald: Memory and post-memory practices of Afro-Colombian urban youth in the Colombian Pacific

In the current context of Colombia, which seeks to evolve into an uncertain society after the peace agreement, the collaborative and intimate ethnographic research project focuses on young Afro-Colombians in the Chocó department (Pacific region). The project seeks to understand what it means to be young, to be born in a context of war and at the crossroads of multiple historical exclusions, by considering the memory and post-memory stories of Afro-Colombian youth in the city of Quibdó.



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The 2023 laureates



Samir Abdelli: "Believe, know, say. An intellectual history of Islam through the prism of the commitment of Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch (1909-1999)"

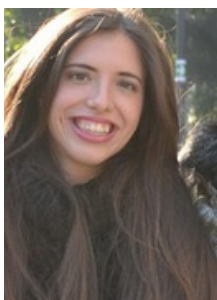
His research focuses on an intellectual history of contemporary Islam in France during the second half of the 20th century and deals with scholarly circles linked to Islam through the prism of the case study of the intellectual and religious trajectory of Eva de Vitray -Meyerovitch, a French intellectual known for her work on Sufism, public figure of conversion to Islam and buried near the Rumi mausoleum in Konya.

Jennifer Howe: "Women cadres of the Khmer Rouge, 1975-1979: Understanding women's participation in collective violence"

Female members of the Khmer Rouge have been almost completely neglected by researchers, representing a missed opportunity to learn more about the dynamics of mass violence. Through interviews with more than 55 survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime, this thesis asks the following question: "how and why did women participate in the Cambodian genocide?" In doing so, the thesis highlights the diversity of women's experiences amid mass violence and offers new insights into individual motivations for participating in atrocities.



Elena Perino: "The memory of the selva: extractivism, violence and historical consciousness among the Shuar of the Ecuadorian Amazon."



My project aims to explore the impacts of mining activity in southern Ecuador on the life of a Shuar community located in the vicinity of an extractive megaproject. The study that I present continues and completes the efforts that have been made to assess the psychosocial damage caused by the violence perpetrated by companies and the State against the populations who live in mining sites, while nevertheless offering an attempt to integrate the analysis of different aspects hitherto separated or barely taken into consideration in relation to themes linked to extractivism: local conceptions linked to the environment, the body and illness and correspondences between the latter, the history of relations between national and international society and indigenous peoples and the different ways of understanding it and preserving its memory.

TRAINING

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The Making of a Researcher

The year 2032 saw the launch of the third and final season of The Making of a Researcher within the Noria training department. 6 training sessions were organized. The participation rate in these training courses has been increasing, reaching on average around fifty participants per session. The Making of a Researcher contributes to expanding our network of researcher-trainers and strengthening our network of internal trainers.

| Date | Speakers | Theme |
|------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 16/03/23 | Miryam Bercher, Sasha Leclerc | Precariousness of young research: state of play and battles to be waged |
| 30/03/23 | Alice Judell, Zara Fournier | Post-thesis: what are the career possibilities outside the academic world? |
| 20/04/23 | Yoletty Bracho, Christophe Broqua | Engagement, activism and research |
| 11/05/23 | Lora Labarere, member of the ANCMSP | Do a thesis without funding |
| 25/05/23 | Lama Kabbanji, Isaline Bergamaschi | North-South relationships and asymmetries in research |
| 15/06/2023 | Prunelle Aymé, Juliette Duclos-Valois | Write your thesis |

EDITORIAL PROJECTS

In line with its objective of opening the work of the social sciences to the greatest number of people without renouncing its academic standards, Noria Research intends to broaden its audience with an ambitious editorial policy which extends the scope of field research to a public at large, both expert (decision-makers, researchers, analysts) and informed (journalists, students), and to the general public.

The year 2023 was marked by the development of structuring editorial initiatives:

- **Work on the redesign of our website, with a view to professionalization and broader dissemination of our work**

The redesign of the website responds to a simple ambition: to combine the functional and the visual. Noria is proud to offer a clearer, refined site that makes it easier to read and target searches. A redesigned aesthetic to highlight all of Noria's intellectual productions and training offerings, while retaining its identity which focuses on immersion in the field with originality: photos, illustrations and maps.

- **The development of a collective work by and for young researchers in the social sciences, to be published by Éditions Karthala in spring 2024.**

This guide corresponds to the culmination of several years of training work and dissemination of field research know-how within our association, and of more than 5 years spent training young researchers and identifying their specific needs.

This researchers' manual is designed as a practical tool, a synthesis of the experiences and knowledge of our network, offering both a space for the dissemination of knowledge and skills and a practical learning tool.

Bringing together four coordinators, twenty-three authors and around thirty contributors, the development of the work was an experimental laboratory of collective work, a long-term work, crossed by long collective discussions both on the substance and on the form, having made it possible to identify the themes of the chapters and to clarify the tone of the book. The organization of a writing residency was in this respect a central time for the manual in order to confront our visions of this manual, our ways of writing, our experiences, and thus to bring the chapters into dialogue in an eminently creative movement. collective.

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- **The relaunch of a permanent editorial committee**

Always in line with its original ambition to bring academic standards of research into the public sphere, Noria Research has set up a permanent editorial committee whose mission in 2023 is to deploy a new publication effort while exploring the potential of new editorial formats.

In this context, two initiatives have emerged:

→ **Publication of analyzes online and with open access**

The editorial committee works with researchers and offers them the possibility of a publication which is subject to double peer review. A particular effort is made to support young researchers in writing their first publication.

To date, an analysis has been posted online:

Par Livia Perosino



Three other publications are planned
for early 2024

EDITORIAL PROJECTS

In line with its objective of opening the work of the social sciences to the greatest number of people without renouncing its academic standards, Noria Research intends to broaden its audience with an ambitious editorial policy which extends the scope of field research to a public at large, both expert (decision-makers, researchers, analysts) and informed (journalists, students), and to the general public.

→ The launch of the SOUS-TERRAIN podcast series

Noria Research is proud to have launched original audio content that talks about social science researchers and their profession, available on all listening platforms. Each 40-minute episode highlights a researcher who takes us on a journey through their field and who tells in detail their research and their contribution to understanding social phenomena. Using first-hand sound recordings and discussions with the researcher, this podcast shows what field research in the social sciences is today. How do we actually do research? What happens during a pitch? This series offers a sound immersion in a profession that is little known and allows people to discover in a new way what the craft of research and the production of knowledge is. Some episodes are in partnership with the CEPED (Center Population and Development - IRD - University of Paris) and the CEDEJ (Center for Economic, Legal and Social Studies and Documentation).

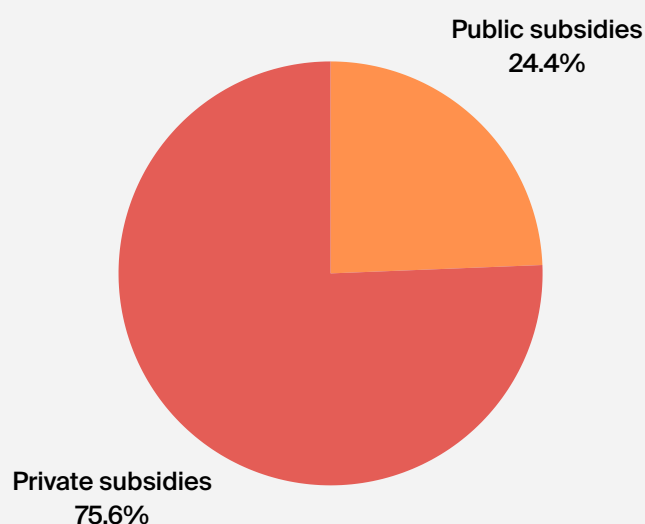
| | |
|---|---|
|  | 1# Ouïghours, la résistance discrète en exil Léo Maillet est le premier invité de notre série SOUS-TERRAIN, le podcast qui dévoile les rouages de l'enquête de terrain en sciences sociales. Cet... |
|  | enquêter face au secret Sarah Daoud est l'invitée de notre série SOUS-TERRAIN, le podcast qui dévoile les rouages de l'enquête de terrain en sciences sociales. Cet... |
|  | 3# Terres et violences politiques en Ethiopie Mehdi Labzaé est l'invité du troisième épisode de la série SOUS-TERRAIN, le podcast qui dévoile les... |

Two new episodes are planned for early 2024.

INCOME AND EXPENSES 2023

Income

Total amount of income 2023: €238,000 *



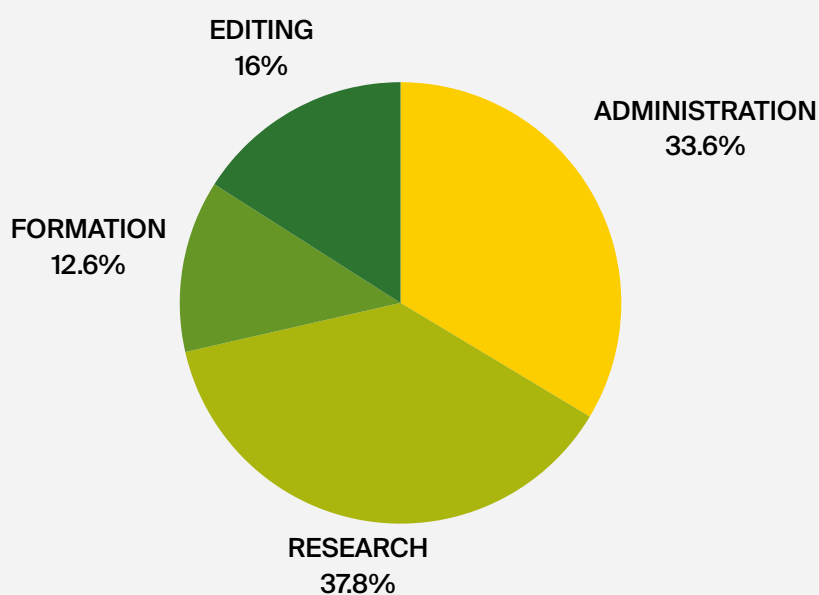
Expenses

Total amount of expenses 2023: €238,000 *

Expenses are distributed between the 3 pillars of Noria Research:

- Research
- Edition
- Training

The Administration division includes the daily administrative, human, financial and digital management of the association.



* Unconsolidated forecast balance sheet at the date of publication