Net 4 Society

Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) in European research. Harnessing vibrant communities

ITRE working group meeting

Social sciences and cultural and creative industries in H2020. Implementation of Challenge 6 and mainstreaming social sciences into pillars II and III.

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Main Net4Society Activities

- **Training & Exchange for SC6 NCPs**

- **International Conferences**

- **SSH Integration support**
  Expert meetings, Factsheets, Monitoring, "SSH Opportunities" documents

- **Brokerages & Partner Search**

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- **International network of National Contact Points** (NCPs) for **Societal Challenge 6 "Europe in a changing world: Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies" (SC6)** in Horizon 2020 - EU Programme for Research & Innovation

- Established in February 2008

- Members from more than 50 countries in Europe and beyond

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European Commission **Research Community & NCPs**

What is SSH integration –
A researcher's point of view

SSH integration is **NOT** :

1. Designing Business Plans

2. Stakeholder Participation

3. Communication and Dissemination activities

4. Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)

5. Ex-post social acceptance of technological innovations...

→ *SSH integration is SSH RESEARCH in interdisciplinary projects where SSH is not merely an ex-post add-on to otherwise technological projects.*

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SSH Facts and Figures

- SSH represent the largest research community and the largest student body in higher education in Europe (with an overall share of more than 40%)

- SSH are not a monolith – they are themselves interdisciplinary, combining different methodologies and research approaches

- Traditionally very strong and diverse communities (especially in comparison with the US or China in this area) because of high variety of histories and cultures. Essential in a global intercultural world…

- High impact of this community on European priorities e.g. the European agenda set in July 2014 by the new EP after the Juncker's plan

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Facts and Figures: Budgets

- With SSH increased relevance in the European Framework Programmes (since FP 6) oversubscription has been an ongoing and ever-increasing problem

- In FP 7, Priority 8 (SSH) - Success Rate: 13% (FP7 overall 20%)

- Horizon 2020, SC 6 – average 9% (including non SSH), humanities related topics below 2%. (H2020 overall average 13,5%)

- Highest oversubscription also applies to SSH in the ERC, the ERA-Nets HERA (2,5%) and Norface, and COST (4%)

- Europe's largest research community has access to extremely limited research funding opportunities in Horizon 2020 (1,2 % budget share), which, in turn, limits the overall impact this research can have, including outside Europe

In a global world, European SSH research should circulate more, not less.

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Consequentially....

The considerable budget decrease (by more than 30%) from FP7 Theme 8 to H2020 SC6 in collaborative SSH research actually prevents the circulation of knowledge in Europe and outside Europe which Europe embodies!

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Integration of Social Sciences and Humanities throughout Horizon 2020

The Commission has dedicated substantial efforts into the integration of SSH research by:

1. Flagging SSH relevant topics of all Work Programmes (37% in WP 14/15; 41% WP 16/17)

2. Monitoring SSH integration (SSH 2014 Integration Report) which has documented the need for further improvement

3. Increasing SSH awareness within the Commission services (RTD and beyond) and Programme Committees

4. Increasing the involvement of SSH community in the implementation, including the introduction of the SSH Stakeholders' workshop in 2014

5. Supporting Net4Society with its integration activities (including co-NCPs activities)

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How can interdisciplinarity work?

- The topics should be drafted in order to motivate inter-disciplinarity

- SSH researchers need to be included at the onset of the design process, not as an after thought or "add-on".

- SSH-expertise must be mandatory in the evaluation of interdisciplinary project proposals – and an evaluation critieria

- Contributions from Arts and Humanities should be taken into account more adequately

- Interdisciplinarity is not only a top-down process... How to convince the scientific communities to cooperate?

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Conclusion
Europe needs 'research on societies'

The need for SSH research is more rather less in Europe given such issues as:

- Migration and integration of migrants
- The future of European democracies
- Peace within Europe and European defense
- Inequalities & social welfare issues
- Employment and sustainable growth (beyond GDP)
- Culture and education in Europe
- Europe's interaction with the world

Why should we weaken our capacities to think our future?

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Recommendation for „FP9"

These topics demand their own 'Societies Challenge', they cannot be mainstreamed across other challenges

A dedicated society-focused programme is needed:

▪with an adequate budget

▪new instruments and designs for interdisciplinary research projects, while garanteeing a close monitoring of the process

Integration of SSH throughout H2020 and **society-focused Challenge** complement each other

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Thank you for your attention!

- Social networks

- Newsletters
  - ISSUES e-magazine
  - e-newsletter

- Website
  www.net4society.eu