

**Horizon 2020 Working Group meeting of the ITRE Committee
Re: Social sciences and cultural and creative industries in H2020.
Implementation of Challenge 6 and mainstreaming social sciences
into pillars II and III.**

The European Alliance of Social Sciences and Humanities (www.eassh.eu) wishes to draw the attention of the ITRE Committee to three broad issues:

- European social science and humanities research is world leading, as demonstrated by delivery of excellence through the European Research Council and by the influence of thought and expertise throughout the world. Europe will reap increased benefits from existing SSH investments by properly mainstreaming SSH research into expert systems, innovation and public awareness.
- The Horizon 2020 integration approach of the challenges is not delivering as envisaged, and in particular the integration of social and human research across the challenges has not been successful.
- The greatest challenges faced by Europe are social, political, cultural, and economic. Therefore a better understanding of the dynamic forces affecting these challenges need commitment by the EU of long-term strategic investment.

World class social science and humanities research

Pillar 1 of Horizon 2020 supports research selected on the sole criterion of excellence; whether under the frame of the European Research Council or the Marie Skłodowska-Curie programmes for researcher mobility. Indeed we are confident that the growing success of the SSH community demonstrates how European SSH researchers are delivering highly relevant evidence for policy makers around the world.

Figures produced by ERC show that the SSH community is an active participant in seeking support from the ERC. With the arrival of Horizon 2020 the funding distribution has not been 'pre-allocated' to panels but responds more flexibly to the demands of scientists in different research fields. Since the start of Horizon 2020, the success rate for SSH climbs from 9% in 2013 to almost 11.3% for the Starting grants and from 6.8% to 14% for Advanced Grants.

This is a significant increase which clearly demonstrates the extent to which there is a pool of world class SSH research in Europe, which can continue to provide the foundation knowledge and insight for policy makers. We hope that

the Parliament will continue to endorse the need for sustained long-term investment for social sciences and humanities research.

Social Sciences and the Humanities Integration

During the development of Horizon 2020 the EU Parliament ensured that, where needed or appropriate, social sciences and humanities research would be 'embedded' across all societal challenges. In November 2015 the Commission published a report assessing how well the embedding policy in the societal challenges and industrial leadership priorities had been delivered since the start of Horizon 2020. In many aspects, the report makes uncomfortable reading.

According to the Commission's own figures, less than a quarter of the partners in projects under the topics 'flagged' for SSH (less than 40% of the total of topics) are actually social science or humanities researchers. This picture looks even bleaker when the projects funded under SC6 are removed, with fewer than 20% of participants under SSH flagged topics are social scientists. Humanists such as historians, media researchers, and philosophers are virtually absent. Worryingly, the Commission's own report highlights that almost 30% of projects have no SSH partner – despite having been flagged as requiring an SSH contribution.

Across all the 2014 calls addressing Europe's major societal challenges and the industrial leadership priorities **as few as 7% of projects will benefit from insights from social and humanities scholars**. In total, the share of budget going to SSH partners out of the total call budget will stand only at 6% (see annex 1 for table on overall data). More worryingly, Societal Challenge 6 has one of the lowest success rates of pillar 3: 1.2%. The 1-2% of the budget allocated to SSH actors via the LEIT programme seems to have missed completely to attract social entrepreneurship and creative industries. According to some preliminary analysis undertaken by EASSH we believe the true position to be somewhat worse than the Commission's report suggests.

Finally, **the budget allocated to SSH collaborative research** in core matters like migration, employment, economic policy, youth, inequalities and so on, **has sharply declined from FP7 to H2020** (from 620 Meuros to around 400 Meuros – official figures are not made available by the Commission)

Understanding and addressing Europe's challenges: the next step

The title of the programmes of the third pillar suggest that Horizon 2020 is expected to examine the most pressing challenges which are faced by Europe and are driven by powerful social, economic and political dynamics. This has been echoed by the European Parliament priorities.

There are technological approaches, which will benefit European society greatly

in the years and generations to come. However, discovery of new technologies alone will not solve all problems and won't nurture a fast changing world and cater for future generations social and cultural needs. As yet we do not yet fully understand what drives change or even where change is happening. The social science and humanities ought to be playing an important role in examining European societies helping to define questions, which need to be addressed and provide research to maximise the investment in emerging opportunities (e.g. social innovation¹). We need to understand the emergence of **radical ideologies** and how to understand and manage **migration**; the insights and answers will not only be technological. We are concerned about the overreliance on the hope that technology will resolve all or being the only key to read our future developments, while social sciences and humanities are too often considered as a late "add-on" on otherwise technological endeavours.

Perhaps the fastest growing business sectors in Europe are built on concepts and knowledge created by SSH scholars. Genuinely innovative businesses are emerging in areas related to the **art and culture market**, and **creative and digital industries**. While these continue to grow at a rapid pace we will be confronted by new issues around understanding what it means to live in a 'digitally born' society while avoiding the "surveillance society". New ethical principles for human dignity and **ethical governance** will be required. These are based on European most fundamental values and represent Europe's comparative advantage on the global research landscape and future social development.

As we look beyond Horizon 2020 into the next Framework Programme, the European Parliament must identify the principles and needs that will define the next decade. The social sciences and humanities have helped articulate and develop Europe's core values, democratic citizenship, and train the next generation in a resilient and innovative spirit. EASSH looks forward to engage in a constructive spirit with the development of existing and future research funding frameworks.

¹ 'Employing a bibliometric analysis, this study examined the patterns of social innovation research of 949 publications indexed in Scopus from 1966-2015. Results identified that the social innovation domain is in development, demonstrating percentage exponential growth in the volume of publications occurring in 1966-2004 (10%), 2005-2010 (22%) and 2011-2015 (68%). Nearly **55% of the research was conducted by European scholars**. The field is multidisciplinary, with key knowledge clusters residing in urban studies, ecological resilience, transition management, and user innovation.' Weerakoon, C, McMurray, A, Rametse, N and Douglas, H 2016, 'A preliminary bibliographic analysis of the social innovation literature', in Anne de Bruin, Kate V. Lewis (ed.) *Proceedings of the 3rd Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Conference (SIERC 2016)*, Albany, New Zealand, 10-12 February 2016, pp. 345-360.

Annex 1

The Integration of Social Sciences and Humanities in Horizon 2020: Participants, budget and Disciplines, European Commission (October 2015), table 1, p.9.

Budget allocated to SSH-flagged topics and to SSH partners (million €)					
Horizon 2020 parts	Total budget 2014 calls	Budget allocated to SSH-flagged topics	Budget going to SSH partners	Share of budget going to SSH partners under SSH-flagged topics	Share of budget going to SSH partners out of the total call budget
SC1	589	275	33	12 %	6%
SC2	293	104	29	27 %	10 %
SC3	583	94	21	22 %	4%
SC4	539	226	21	9%	4%
SC5	306	124	16	13%	5%
SC6	114	83	70	84%	61%
SC7	205	79	28	36%	14%
Total SC	2629	985	218	22%	8%
LEIT-ICT	710	100	13	13%	2%
LEIT-NMBP	533	21	3	16%	1%
LEIT-SPACE	130	17	1	7%	1%
Total LEIT	1373	138	18	13%	1%
Total	4002	1123	236	21 %	6%
Total ex. SC6	3887	1041	166	16 %	4%

