



Public consultation on EU funds in the area of investment, research & innovation, SMEs and single market.

A short response from the European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities

The European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the on-going consultation on EU funds. The focus of our position is the Programme of Research and Innovation, which is the one that our members have the most relevant experience.

EASSH has already contributed to the ad-interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 (H2020) and you can find [our full paper](#) on our website.

The Research and Innovation programme is a central programme to support research at a large scale in Europe. This programme has proved to be a fundamental investment for Europe as research is crucial for our future and a fundamental feature of advanced economies like Europe. In a hearing with the Lamy's group, EASSH has recommended that the next research and innovation programme could **double its budget**. EASSH has also launched a European-wide campaign on Twitter [#DoubleFP9Budget](#) which had an overwhelming response from European citizens. A recent policy paper prepared by the Commission has demonstrated that doubling FP9 budget would create an extra 650,000 jobs and grow the GDP by 0.46.¹

EASSH also would like to make two further recommendations to improve the next European Framework Programme following the experience of H2020. The cooperation programmes have a long tradition of creating dynamic collaboration among scholars across national borders, something for which there are no other funding available. Research thrives when scientists could compare their work and freely transfer knowledge from different areas and different disciplines. The overwhelming focus on innovation in the societal challenges part of H2020 left little space for good and relevant cooperative research to achieve its potential.

The second point is about the profound inconsistency in the allocation of resources to SSH between pillar one, excellence and pillar 3, the societal challenges in the funding distribution. ERC has recognised the high relevance of research in social and human issues to the point that the budget for these projects grew to 24% of the total ERC budget. These disciplines have demonstrated consistently over the last 10 years that they deliver high quality

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council 14 February 2018, *A new, modern Multiannual Financial Framework for a European Union that delivers efficiently on its priorities post-2020*
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-new-modern-multiannual-financial-framework_en.pdf



and relevant research. More importantly, the major concerns of European citizens, like inequality and unemployment or multicultural society are mainly addressed by the scholars in these disciplines. Nonetheless, there has been a failure to integrate and to use the potential of such research to appropriately address the societal challenges in H2020. Furthermore, the single challenge addressing some of the most pressing issues of the European society, challenge 6, received barely 1,2% of the overall funding and half of those funding were allocated to non-research related activities. In turn the lack of funding prevented to award high quality projects and lowered the overall success rate of the programme.

Finally, research excellence remains a criteria for all the areas of H2020 and therefore it needs to be understood that best researchers participate actively in all pillars according to their research needs and ideas: some require a high level of funding concentration at a single investigator and first research design as provided by ERC; some require a large collaboration, data validation and cross border collaborations like in the challenges. Research remains the essential investment of the framework programme.

The next framework programme must recognise this failure and make a substantial investment on democracy and social dimension, as we suggested in our [position paper](#) (December 2017). Finally, in the [last position](#) (January 2018) paper EASSH has made some clear and constructive suggestion about how better integrate the social dimension in research challenges or clusters, which are not led by research in humanities and social sciences.

Double the budget of the next Framework Programme is an investment which benefits our European society as a whole.