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## **Annex I: Social Sciences and the Humanities in Horizon 2020**

### **1. The Context**

During the preparation of the proposal of the Commission on Horizon 2020, the Commissioner and DG RTD received several letters from stakeholders (e.g. ALLEA-ALL European Academies) expressing concerns about the future of SSH research in Horizon 2020. To answer concerns the Commissioner accepted an invitation of the British Academy to speak about the future of SSH in Horizon 2020 on 11 November 2011.

At the same time, the so-called Inter-agency Task Group on SSH<sup>1</sup> launched an 'open letter' asking for 1) the inclusion of a substantial and independent SSH research programme into Horizon 2020, 2) the inclusion of SSH- research into the programme development and implementation of all other Grand Societal Challenges, such as climate change, energy, food, health, security, or transport<sup>2</sup>. This open letter has gathered more than 25 000 signatures so far.

The SSH scientific communities are therefore very much mobilised on the evolution of the inter-institutional debate on Horizon 2020.

### **2. Present situation**

The Horizon 2020 proposal of the Commission follows a one-pillar strategy for SSH (see annex) which actually reflects fairly well the concerns of the SSH communities reflected above. According to Annex I of the SP, "SSH will be fully integrated into each of the general objectives of Horizon 2020" (i.e. whether in Excellent Science, Industrial Leadership or Societal Challenges).

The current debates at the Council and the EP show strong support for this approach for SSH. However, two main issues seem now to gather attention:

1) One issue is the so-called "split" of Societal Challenge 6 between "Inclusive Societies" (with SSH) and "Innovative Societies" on the one hand, and "Secure Societies" on the other hand. The view held by the supporters of the split is that research on inclusive societies and research on security cannot be bundled together in the same Societal Challenge because they are too different (in terms of scientific nature and "clients").

2) Another issue is how the "mainstreaming" of SSH is going to be implemented. This concern has been expressed in the Research Working Group by several delegations while in the SSH communities there is a worry that "mainstreaming" could "dilute" or "instrumentalise" the contribution of SSH if the mechanics of "mainstreaming" were not adequate (and comparison is often made with the mainstreaming of equal opportunities in all policies).

### **3. Recommendations/proposed situation**

- There is no reason to deviate from the one-pillar strategy for SSH in Horizon 2020. However, the request for a split actually challenges this approach and there is therefore a

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<sup>1</sup>Comprised of: NET4SOCIETY2, the FP7-funded international network of National Contact Points for Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities; ALLEA, the European Federation of 53 National Academies of Sciences and Humanities; The European Consortium of Humanities Institutes and Centres; The Standing Committees for the Humanities and for the Social Sciences of the European Science Foundation.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.eash.eu/openletter2011/index.php?file=home.htm>.

need to explain better how it is important to mainstream SSH everywhere including in Societal Challenge 6.

- Most of the focus in the coming weeks will actually be on the "how" of "mainstreaming". The answer to this question depends very much on how "mainstreaming" of SSH is itself defined:
  - Approach 1: "mainstreaming of SSH" means that in each research topic in any of the pillars, there will be a SSH dimension. This means that at all levels of the governance and implementation of Horizon 2020, the SSH expertise should be present, even for the most technological topics.
  - Approach 2: "mainstreaming of SSH" means that in each of the pillars (and societal challenges) of Horizon 2020, a specific activity for interdisciplinary research with a clear SSH contribution is defined, while all the other research and technological activities of a pillar or Societal Challenge are "SSH free".

If one takes its inspiration from the current Horizon 2020 proposal, it is clear that both approaches have been followed (see Annex).

On one hand, in some Societal Challenges (health, energy, climate) as well as FET (under Pillar I), the "mainstreaming of SSH" is rather general, i.e. SSH will be asked to contribute nearly everywhere or in several areas of activities, across the whole research programme.

On the other hand, in some Societal Challenges (notably transport and "secure societies" under Societal Challenge 6), SSH has been embedded in a specific and separate activity (usually called "socio-economic activities").

The first approach requires a systematic SSH contribution in all activities while the second approach has the advantage of keeping the interdisciplinary debate separate from otherwise legitimate scientific debates that may not always need to be affected by SSH considerations. This difference in approaches of SSH mainstreaming is not insignificant because the SSH contribution will be needed in particular during the preparation of the work programmes and at the critical level of the evaluation of proposals.

In practice, it will be important to convince the EP and the Council that all Societal Challenges take the mainstreaming of SSH seriously. Therefore all research activities should be able to reassure the Council and the EP that they:

- Embed SSH upstream at the level of work programme preparation through adequate mechanisms (such as ad-hoc SSH contribution to EAGs, specialised interdisciplinary workshop, ad-hoc consultations);
- Include sufficient SSH expertise in evaluation panels, depending on the weight of the SSH element in the definition of topics;
- Provide a monitoring tool for the mainstreaming of SSH in the longer-term in order to report on and possibly improve this mainstreaming if need be.

#### **4. Timeline**

It will be important to give quickly a positive signal that mainstreaming SSH is taken seriously across Horizon 2020 and leads to practical preparatory steps before the launch of the first calls. In particular expectations regarding the Societal Challenges are likely to be high. All SSH mainstreaming activities should start for the first call (i.e. the preparation for the call launched in early 2014 should start in 2013). The advantage would be the political coherence of the Commission approach.

## **Annex Ia: Mapping of SSH in Horizon 2020**

The position of the social sciences and the humanities (SSH) in Horizon 2020 is summed up in Section 1.2 of the proposal for the Specific Programme (p. 20). Namely “SSH research will be fully integrated into each of the general objectives of Horizon 2020”, i.e.:

- SSH are integrated in the pillar “Excellent science”
- SSH can also support some of the activities under the pillar “Industrial leadership”
- SSH “are also mainstreamed as an essential element of the activities needed to tackle each of the societal challenges to enhance their impact”.

It should also be noted that the JRC will also carry some SSH research (mainly in terms of modelling and risks and impact assessments).

### **1. Mainstreaming SSH in the pillar “Excellent science”**

SSH continue to be fully supported under the ERC, Marie Curie actions and research infrastructures in line with previous FPs.

Unsurprisingly, the role of SSH in Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) is less clear-cut. Whereas the objective of FET is to “identify and seize opportunities of long-term benefit for citizens, the economy and society” and as such calls for “intense collaboration across disciplines... (for instance...cognitive sciences, social sciences or economics) and with the arts and humanities” (Horizon 2020, p. 34-35), this general claim for interdisciplinarity with SSH is not illustrated by specific examples.

### **2. Mainstreaming SSH support in the pillar “Industrial leadership”**

While “Access to risk finance” and “Innovation in SMEs” have traditionally little relevance for SSH, the activities under “Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies” (LEIT) allow some role to SSH. There are three different cases:

- One domain “Nanotechnologies” (SP, p. 40) explicitly includes an activity on “Developing the societal dimension of nanotechnology”.
- Two domains allow for some SSH contribution (“Materials for creative industries” and “optimisation of the use of materials” in “Advanced materials”; “New, sustainable business models” in “Advanced manufacturing and processing”)(SP, p. 41-42).
- Three domains do not mention any SSH role (“ICT”, “Biotechnology” and “Space”).

There might be a case for some more careful harmonisation of the role of SSH in LEIT.

### **3. Mainstreaming SSH in the pillar “Societal challenges”**

Mainstreaming SSH is an important feature of Horizon 2020 and is particularly stressed for all societal challenges, thus enhancing trans-disciplinarity between natural sciences and SSH. Mainstreaming of SSH is actually present in the societal challenges but with evident variety. While 2 societal challenges dedicate a specific activity to SSH research (transport, security), 3 define one or a few activities with a strong SSH component (health, energy, climate action)

but also include potential SSH elements in other activities, while 1 rather scatter several SSH elements in various activities (food).

### ***3.1 Health, demographic change and well-being***

SSH are well integrated in 3 out of the 15 activities under this societal challenge:

- 1.13: "Individual empowerment for self-management of health" (SP, p. 53)
- 1.14 : "Promoting integrated care" (SP, p. 53)
- 1.15: "Optimising the efficiency and effectiveness of health care systems and reducing inequalities" (SP, p. 54).

Some SSH contribution is also possible in 2 other activities (1.1 "Understanding the determinants of health..." and "1.3 "Improving surveillance and preparedness" SP, p. 50-51).

### ***3.2 Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine... and the bio-economy***

SSH are included in 3 out of the 4 main blocks of this societal challenge, i.e.:

- Sustainable agriculture and forestry: some SSH elements can be found in 2.12 "Providing ecosystem services and public goods" (SP, p. 55) and 2.1.3 "Empowerment of rural areas, support to policies and rural innovation" (SP, p. 55).
- Sustainable and competitive agri-food sector: some SSH elements can be found in 2.2.1 "Informed consumer choices" (SP, p. 56) and 2.2.3 "A sustainable and competitive agri-food industry" (SP, p. 56).
- Unlocking the potential of aquatic living resources: some SSH elements can be found in 2.3.1 "Developing sustainable and environmentally-friendly fisheries" (SP, p. 57) and 2.3.2 "Developing competitive European aquaculture" (SP, p. 57).

### ***3.3 Secure, clean and efficient energy***

SSH are clearly anchored in 1 out of the 7 activities under this societal challenge:

- 3.6 "Robust decision making and public engagement" (SP, p. 64)

SSH are also integrated in 3 other activities: in particular 3.1.3 ("Foster European smart cities and communities" SP, p. 60) and to a lesser extent in 3.4 ("A single, smart European electricity grid", SP, p. 63) and 3.7 ("market uptake of energy innovation, empowering markets and consumers", SP, p. 64).

### ***3.4 Smart, green and integrated transport***

This societal challenge has a specific and separate SSH activity under 4.4 "Socio-economic research and forward-looking activities for policymaking" (SP, p. 69). Other SSH contributions are sought for in such activities as 4.1.3 "Improving transport and mobility in urban areas" (SP, p. 66) and 4.2.1 "A substantial reduction of traffic congestion" (SP, p. 67).

### ***3.5 Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials***

SSH are anchored in 1 out of the 5 activities under this societal challenge, i.e. 5.4 "Enabling the transition towards a green economy through eco-innovation":

- 5.4.2 "Support innovative policies and societal changes" (SP, p. 74)
- 5.4.3 "Measure and assess progress towards a green economy" (SP, p. 74).

SSH are also integrated in 3 other activities:

- In 5.1 “Fighting and adapting to climate change” under 5.1.2 (“Assess impacts, vulnerabilities... risk prevention measures” SP, p. 70) and 5.1.3 (“Support mitigation policies” SP, p. 70).
- In 5.2 “Sustainably managing natural resources and ecosystems” under 5.2.1 (“Further our understanding of... ecosystems, their interaction with social systems and their role in sustaining the economy and human well-being”, SP, p. 71) and 5.2.2 (“Provide knowledge and tools for effective decision making and public engagement” SP, p. 71).
- In 5.3 “Ensuring the sustainable supply of non-energy and non-agricultural raw materials” under 5.3.4 (“Improve societal awareness and skills on raw materials” SP, p. 73).

### **3.6 Inclusive innovative and secure societies**

SSH research is found under section 6.1 “Inclusive societies” of the specific programme. It is made up of 3 specific “objectives”:

- “Promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” (p. 78)
- “Building resilient and inclusive societies in Europe” (p. 79)
- “Strengthening Europe’s role as a global actor” (p. 79)

A fourth “objective” is found under Section 6.2 “Innovative societies” of the same societal challenge, i.e.: social innovation and creativity under the objective “exploring new forms of innovation, including social innovation and creativity” (p. 79).

Beyond the core SSH activities already referred to in this societal challenge (see above section 1 of this note), “Secure societies” also dedicate a specific activity, i.e.:

- 6.3.5 “Ensuring privacy and freedom in the internet and enhancing the societal dimension of security” (SP, p. 82).