

Letter to European Commission ITRE Committee

On behalf of fifty-seven associations representing tens of thousands of European social scientists and humanists we want to raise some concerns about the development and management of Horizon 2020 ahead of the appointment of the new Commissioner. We think it is pivotal to explore and make sure that Mr Moedas is aware of the actual situation of the Social Sciences and the Humanities (SSH) in Europe. We therefore hope that the ITRE Committee will investigate the questions below at the Parliament hearing.

EASSH represent most of the European associations and academies on Social Science and Humanities. We have continuously monitored and responded to the development of Horizon 2020 but have been very disappointed by the action of the Commission regarding SSH in Horizon 2020. We have two majors concerns: the large decrease of budget for SSH in societal challenge 6 and the lack of effectiveness of the so-called “SSH embedding policy”.

On the one hand, we have seen how the budget of Social Challenge 6, ‘Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies’ has been effectively hollowed out by other programmes being folded into the challenge. **At a time when Europe meets demanding economic, political, cultural and human challenges, it is paradoxical that the previous Commission decided to downsize the SSH budget from 623 Meuros in FP7 to around 350 Meuros in Horizon 2020 (Societal Challenge 6).** While the total budget of SC6 is 1300 Meuros, it is unacceptable that only 350 Meuros are dedicated to SSH research on inclusive, innovative and reflective societies. The budget for SSH under SC6 should be restored to at least its previous levels under FP7 in order to enable serious comparative and policy relevant European research on education, employment, identities, migration, crime, youth, fiscal evasion and so on which remain acute problems in the EU. **An important concern to raise with Mr Moedas is therefore:**

The budget for SSH under Societal Challenge 6 must be increased to at least its former absolute levels under FP7, i.e. 623 Meuros (this would still represent a relative decrease for SSH from 1.2% of FP7 to 0.8% of Horizon 2020)

On the other hand, the “SSH embedding policy” promised by the Commission has not worked properly. Net4Society demonstrates in the document ‘Opportunities for Researchers from the Socioeconomic Science and Humanities’ that not more than 25% of the calls are SSH-relevant; the ‘Humanities Scientific Committee Opinion Paper,’ from Science Europe, September 2014, argues and proves that only 10% of the calls in the Horizon 2020 Working Paper mentions the humanities. **Thus, the SSH have not been fully and adequately embedded in the Work Programme for 2014-15 and there are justified fears that the situation will not improve in the Work Programme 2016-17.**

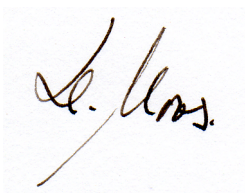
We know that the European Parliament has always expressed support to SSH in the Framework Programme, including during the Horizon2020 negotiations. This support must continue and be expressed in the actual decisions and actions of the Commission according to the inter-institutional rules, and the incoming Commissioner must pledge to follow up accordingly. We would therefore

like to suggest a number of actions for change, needed **to ensure the full inclusion of SSH in the Horizon 2020** (building on Science Europe Opinion Paper):

1. SSH-scholars should be integrated into the **Advisory Groups** for all challenges
2. **Topic descriptions** should harness all possible resources like social, cultural, historical and educational dimensions
3. SSH should be **fully integrated into research projects** because the interpersonal sense-making are integral to all research and therefore in all research questions
4. **'Integrative Platforms'**/web based platforms for networking, capacity building and preparation of interdisciplinary and trans disciplinary projects should be formed for the Social Challenges
5. 'Integrative Platforms' should be developed with **governance structures** that allow for a broad range of actors (researchers, practitioners, policy makers etc.)
6. The integration of SSH and thus the human factor should be a criterion in the **ex-ante project assessment**
7. SSH-relevant topics should have **SSH panellists** in order to be able to evaluate proposals properly
8. SSH embedding should be part of the **ex-post evaluation**

We do hope that the Honourable Members of ITRE will agree with these sensible suggestions for SSH research in Europe. We would be happy to follow up on this letter by meeting Committee members in person.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Moos', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Lejf Moos, Coordinator of EASSH

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Associations represented at the EASSH Annual Meeting in Berlin, May 9th, 2014

ACADEURO	Academia Europaea	EASR	European Association for the Study of Religion	FTCP	Foundation for transatlantic Culture and Politics
ACSS	Academy of Social Sciences (UK)	EAUH	European Association for Urban History	FU	Freie Universität Berlin, Division Research
AEC	Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique e	ECHIC	European Consortium of Humanities Institutes and Centres	HDCA	Human Development and Capability Association
AISEA	Italian Association of Ethno-Anthropological Sciences	ECREA	European Communication Research and Education Association	HERA	Humanities in the European Research Area
ANUAC	National Academic Association of Cultural Anthropologists	EEA	European Economic Association	IHA	Irish Humanities Alliance (IE)
CEL/ELC	Conseil Europeen des Langues	EERA	European Educational Research Association	ISSP	Irish Social Science Platform
CENDARI	CENDARI	ELC	European Language Council	JPI CULT	JPI Cultural Heritage and Global Change
CLARIN	CLARIN ERIC	ENIUGH	European Network in Global and Universal History	MedioEvo	MedioEvo Europeo
CLIOH	CLIOHnet/CLIOHRES.net / CAHEA	ERSA	European Regional Science Association	MIN	Ministère de la Recherche (FR)
CNRS	Alliance Athena (FR)	ESA	European Sociological Association	Net4Soc	Network of National Contact Points: SSH/SC6
COEURE	Cooperation on European Research in Economics	ESC	European Society of Criminology	NetIAS	Alliance Athena (FR)
DARIAH	DARIAH	ESCLH	European Society for Comparative Legal History	NetLAS	Network of Institutes of Advanced Study
DGIA	Max Weber Stiftung (DE)	ESCoP	European Society of Cognitive Psychology	RCC	Rachel Carson Center Munich
EACS	European Association for Chinese Studies	ESEH	European Society for Environmental History	REELC	Réseau européen d'études littéraires compares
EADH	European Association of Digital Humanities	ESF	European Science Foundation	RISE	RISE Network
EADI	European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes	ESHS	European Society for the History of Science	ScienceEurope	Science Europe
EARA	European Association for research on Adolescence	ESS	European Social Survey	SLE	Societas Linguistica Europaea
EAS	European Sociological Association	EASA	European Association of Social Anthropologists	FIEC	Fédération internationale des associations d'études classiques
ECPSA	European Confederation of Political Science Associations	RFIEA	Résey Francais des Instituts d'études avancées	EuroSEAS	European Association for Southeast Asian Studies
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