

HORIZON 2020, antisocial and inhumane challenges

Since 2004, Sciences Po has embarked on a process of full integration into the European Research Area. The institution's scientific community, comprised of around 200 academics, has coordinated or participated in 17 projects within the Sixth Framework Program (FP6) and 28 within the FP7 (13 *SSH*, 8 *People*, 5 *ERC* et 2 *SIS*).

Fresh from this experience and convinced of the necessity of pursuing its efforts as part of Horizon 2020, Sciences Po wishes to make known its proposals for modifications to the European Commission's proposal for the new Research Framework Program, which was published on 30 November 2011 and presented to the Competitiveness Council held on 5 and 6 December 2011.

- In order to effectively integrate the humanities and social sciences into each societal challenge, to determine in advance the proportion of funded projects that have an obligatory social science and humanities component, predominant or secondary, against the totality of funded projects per societal challenge (outside of challenge 6).
- Refocus challenge 6 on the social sciences and humanities
 - Rename the challenge "Inclusive and innovative societies"
 - Remove the activities and instruments that are not axes of collaborative research and/or that concern the totality of societal challenges
 - Create a distinct challenge entitled "Secure societies"
 - Allocate a budget large enough to meet this restructured challenge
- Redefine challenge 6 based on objects of study in the social sciences and humanities
 - Develop the "Inclusive societies" dimension
 - Redeploy the "Innovative societies" dimension
- Offer research tools in accordance with challenge 6
 - Encourage collaborative research, itself a fertile ground for innovation
 - Function partly on an ascendant basis, without pre-established priorities
 - Promote targeted collaborations
 - Entrust the exploitation of results to experts

Horizon 2020 centres on three priorities: "*Excellent science*", "*Industrial leadership*" and "*Societal challenges*". The six challenges relate to the third of these priorities:

- Health, demographic change and well-being;
- Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research, and the bio-economy;
- Secure, clean and efficient energy;
- Smart, green and integrated transport;
- Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials;
- Inclusive, innovative and secure societies.

Social sciences and humanities research will be integrated into each of the general objectives of Horizon 2020. It is also mainstreamed as an essential element of the activities needed to tackle each of the societal challenges. "In addition, the specific objective 'Inclusive, innovative and secure societies' will support social sciences and humanities research into issues of a horizontal nature such as the creation of smart and sustainable growth, social transformations in European societies, social innovation, innovation in the public sector and the position of Europe as a global actor."¹

➤ **Sciences Po welcomes the activities offered in Section I, *Excellent science***, and particularly the strengthening of the European Research Council, the Marie Curie Actions and the research infrastructures. The social sciences and humanities will be able to use these tools to "reinforce and extend the excellence of the Union's science base and ensure a supply of world class research and talent to secure Europe's long term competitiveness and well-being"², in keeping with the objectives of the programme.

➤ **Sciences Po promotes a pluridisciplinary outlook.** It is essential that the teams from the social sciences and humanities engage with questions of health, food security, energy, transport, climate and security. While innovation must be encouraged through the cross-fertilisation of disciplines, different scientific communities must also be enabled to work autonomously on their distinct yet complementary research topics within each of the proposed "challenges". **One solution could be to require that a proportion of the financed projects out of the totality of projects financed by societal challenge (apart from challenge 6) have an obligatory social sciences and humanities component, predominant or secondary.**

Particular care must also be taken with the constitution of the Program Committees and National Thematic Groups to ensure that they have the means necessary to achieve this objective.

The European experience has demonstrated that strategies for integrating certain priorities in each of the public policies elaborated in parallel (*mainstreaming*) entails a strong risk of dilution or even disappearance of these priorities. Transversal integration does not prove efficient except in cases of maintaining a "double approach" combining integration with specific systems. Social sciences and humanities research would thus be put to better use as part of the other societal challenges than as a separate challenge contained in Horizon 2020.

¹ Annexe I.1.2., COM(2011)811final

² (5), COM(2011)811final

➤ **Sciences Po expresses strong reservations on the current structure of the challenge "Inclusive, innovative and secure societies"**. Sciences Po suggests the following modifications:

1. Refocus challenge 6 on the social sciences and humanities

- In accordance with the objectives fixed by the "Europe 2020" Strategy, challenge 6 could centre on two mutually reinforcing priorities (the 3rd priority of "Europe 2020" on sustainable growth being dealt with by the other societal challenges mentioned above): **"Inclusive and innovative societies."**
- Only challenge 6 currently integrates activities and instruments that are not axes of collaborative research and/or concern the totality of the societal challenges:
 - § 6.1.4 seeks to redress regional disparities in terms of performance in research and innovation in synergy with funds from the cohesion policy. It proposes to instate "EEE chairs," and support COST actions and strategies of smart specialisation.
 - § 6.2.1 aims to support measures linked directly to Marie Curie Actions, in the name of scientific excellence (training, mobility and career development for researchers, rights of researchers, etc.).
 - § 6.2.3 must, among other things, improve the accessibility and usability of the results of this research or allow for the establishment of an ethical framework for research and innovation. The European Commission also wishes to support equality between the sexes "by supporting changes in the organisation of research institutions and in the content and design of research activities,"³ without formalising this proposition in a dedicated research program.
 - The § 6.2.4. aims to ensure the development of international cooperation across the Framework Program by horizontal activities including the coordination of policies and programs of the Union and the Member States as well as joint actions, but also the creation of "European science and innovation houses" etc.

These activities are indispensable and will contribute to the establishment of a European Research Area that is more efficient, more structured and with deeper roots in society, enabling the major challenges to be confronted. They have a place in a dedicated space that would be a program common to all of the challenges. It is therefore crucial to **remove these activities from challenge 6 to give them meaning and ensure them the necessary visibility.**
- § 6.3 **"Secure societies" is an entirely distinct societal challenge that must be separated from the challenge "Inclusive and innovative societies"** in order to provide an effective response to the "range of security threats like crime, terrorism and mass emergencies due to man made or natural disasters"⁴, while ensuring that the social sciences and humanities are integrated into the axes of the challenge in the manner proposed above.

It is crucial for the state of security research that academic knowledge is able to distance itself from knowledge coming from experts in specific domains, in order to discuss their underlying assumptions. Academic knowledge in political theory, philosophy, epistemology of science, statistics, sociology and history provides broader and more objective visions than those put forth by interest groups, and is vital for **avoiding path dependency** and managerial "ultra solutions" that are sometimes worse than the initial problem. It is absolutely essential if we wish to avoid the creation of a "secure society" with little concern for transparency and democracy.

³ Annexe I, Volet III, 6.2.3, COM(2011)811 final

⁴ Annexe I, Volet III, 6.3, COM(2011)811 final

- **Allocate a budget large enough to meet this restructured challenge**

2. Redefine challenge 6 based on objects of study in the social sciences and humanities

- This challenge must take into account the necessity of **developing knowledge aimed at education and self-actualisation** for the health of participation in our democratic societies. It already emphasises what we currently know about an increase in political apathy, a polarisation of political choices and citizens' lack of trust in their political systems. But interest in and respect for democratic institutions is generated neither by the market nor by institutions. Thus seeking to resolve societal issues currently facing EU citizens solely through technological progress and organisational innovation is to misunderstand the role that historical knowledge, philosophical reflection and the humanities in general must play in the development of an engaged and active citizenry. The EU has difficulty securing the attachment of its citizens because it appears to be essentially focused on an economic development project.

It is always important to have an evidence-based policy and to examine in detail statistics and results such as those envisioned by the Horizon 2020 proposal. It makes sense to examine indicators of social exclusion, ageing and growth, even if these indicators are subject to different interpretations. In other areas, it would be unwise to think that statistics are always coherent, that different phenomena can be considered under the same categories, and that crucial political judgements are not embedded in the construction of these categories of "evidence".

"Inclusive and innovative societies" must respond to these problems.

- **Develop the "Inclusive societies" dimension**

Another axis could be added in addition to § 6.1.1, 6.1.2 and 6.1.3: **"Improving solidarity, active citizenship and democracy in Europe."**

This would investigate in the medium to long term the evolution of sociability and mobilisations of all kinds in order to understand current transformations in citizens' attention to, rejection of and participation in public life. This understanding is vital for envisaging structures and resources needed to improve our democratic systems.

- **Redeploy the "innovative societies" dimension**

After removing the activities described above, it would be useful to strengthen the proposed axes for collaborative research.

As indicated in the "Europe 2020" Strategy, the notion of smart growth combines the dimensions of innovation and knowledge. To ensure that we are in a position to meet the challenge of future growth, it is important that different aspects of growth are taken into account by orienting research towards **questions of learning, education, training and the role of young people in society.**

The propositions relating to the **evaluation of public policies** are relevant. Reflection on the economic models that have directed public policy in Europe since the 1980s is crucial. It is now essential to elicit research that seeks to explain the crisis and recessions in Europe and formulate new models of both interpretation and orientation of economic and social policies. Research could be conducted on subjects such as the calculation of GDP, measurement of productivity, unemployment issues, how to integrate well-being into measures of national wealth, and our understanding and measurement of the utility and productivity of services, particularly services such as education, training and care, etc.



It is also legitimate to ask questions about **research policies and their effects on innovation**. It makes sense to develop knowledge on the interests and values of societal actors, both individuals and organisations, regarding research and innovation. **Ethical and gender questions** remain fundamental, and studies should be conducted to allow us to better understand the issues they raise.

In the same way, we must encourage research that proposes **innovative methodologies**, notably through the use of new technologies and the mobilisation of engineers, such as research that repositions the citizen in scientific questioning, developed particularly in the field of *science studies*.

3. Offer research tools in accordance with challenge 6

- **Encourage collaborative research, itself a fertile ground for innovation**

Europe has assigned itself the ambitious task of passing to a new economic model founded on growth that is intelligent, sustainable and inclusive. Such a transformation requires the development of a far greater capacity for scientific innovation.⁵ To measure up to this ambition, we must not only develop individual research activities such as those of the European Research Council and the Marie Curie Actions, but also encourage collaborative research, itself a fertile terrain for innovation, particularly in a field where teams are not obliged to base their work on equipment-sharing. It is crucial to promote comparative research, to bring together methodologies, references and repertoires; yet national funding is limited in this respect (in France at least). Moreover, leaving it up to the vagaries of national funding would most probably restrict collaborative research to the wealthier European countries and institutions.

It is becoming urgent to distinguish the end-goal of research (for example, to respond to societal challenges) from the means, methods and tools necessary to get there.

- **Function partly on an ascendant basis, without pre-established priorities**

As is set out in the Communication of the Commission,⁶ "Horizon 2020 will be a seven-year programme and there may be significant shifts in the broader economic and policy context as the programme progresses. Ensuring Horizon 2020's continued relevance will therefore also require to adjust priorities and resources, as and when necessary". Indeed, it is impossible to anticipate all needs from outset. It would therefore seem crucial, from the very beginning, to give teams the possibility of formulating their own research priorities in a rapidly-changing world.

While the system of annual elaboration of a work program in the FP7 allowed us to propose *in extremis* a topic on the Arab Revolutions of spring 2011, it was practically impossible for the teams to prepare a collaborative research project in time for it to be financed by the European Union as part of FP7. It was therefore not possible to use scientific results in defining the kind of tailored political response required in such a context.

To overcome this difficulty, one option could consist of devoting part of the funds dedicated to social sciences and humanities to "white" calls for proposals, in the framework of the collaborative research of this scientific community.

⁵ Annexe I, Section I.1.1., COM(2011)809 final

⁶ Article 3.(3), COM(2011)808 final



To this end, and to ensure that projects remain in accordance with the program's objectives, the following criteria could be retained:

- a clear definition of the outcome sought and its relevance to objectives pursued within the "Horizon 2020" framework and European policies in general;
- the value added by action taken at the level of the Union.

- **Promote targeted collaborations**

In order to maintain a high level of excellence and to focus on targeted scientific objectives, the size of research projects should be adapted to the nature of the objectives. In practice, small-to-medium projects tend to guarantee excellence and quality of results.

To develop strong scientific collaborations, it is useful to encourage the establishment of networks from very early on, especially as the SSH community remains fragmented in certain fields. Coordinating actions can be pertinent tools in this area.

- **Entrust the exploitation of results to experts**

Entrusting the dissemination and exploitation of results to experts in this area is probably the best way to shorten the path from research to benefit for citizens. The scientific coordinator of a research project may not always be the best-placed actor to push for innovative ideas and manage this aspect of a project. A solution could be to tender for proposals to fund support projects for dissemination (particularly via the translation of publications) and exploitation of research projects under development, in co-ordination with the scientific teams involved.

Open access to data and findings is also crucial to facilitate widespread access to research results by all manner of communities (scientific, political and civil) and must be strongly supported and developed.