

Draft Work programme for 2007

Theme 8:

Socio-economic sciences and Humanities

Under the "Cooperation" Programme

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OBJECTIVE

Generating an in-depth, shared understanding of complex and interrelated socio-economic challenges Europe is confronted with, such as growth, employment and competitiveness, social cohesion, social, cultural and educational challenges in an enlarged EU, sustainability, migration and integration, quality of life and global interdependence, in particular with the view of providing an improved knowledge base for policies in the fields concerned.

I. CONTEXT

Policy context

The ambitious agendas set out by the Lisbon and Goteborg Summits can only be achieved through a process that reconciles distinct but complementary objectives. The need for economic development and progress while at the same time achieving sustainability and improving cohesion; the need to bring about change while at the same time reinforcing core values and respecting diversity in its various manifestations; the need to reinforce the EU competitiveness while at the same time developing new types of international relations with our partners.

The Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Theme will operate at the interface between these objectives. It will do this by supporting research and related activities aimed not only at providing the basis for policy development but also at improving insight and understanding of the key underlying trends and the factors driving them. This Priority should therefore help improve our knowledge in these fields but also our policies.

For example, the emergence of the use and generation of new knowledge as a key component of economic development raises questions not just about what is needed to support this process, but also on the consequences for society, the environment and the aspirations and wellbeing of the individual. On the other hand, society is itself evolving: falling birth-rates and increasing life-expectancy are changing the balance between economic activities that support the provision of social services and societal demand for such services. Furthermore, the evolution of the European Union, and the movement of peoples through migration and immigration raises fundamental questions as regards cultural diversity, life-long-learning, social inclusion, relationships with other States, citizenship and identity that need to be addressed to avoid social conflict and the fragmentation of our societies. More broadly, in the context of globalisation the European Union needs to do more to establish itself as both a preferred partner and an informed leader, to build useful interdependencies and to develop and maintain clear standards as regards, for example, conflicts and human rights.

Synergies with other thematic priorities and specific programmes

In addition to the support for policy development through the development and analysis of specific socio-economic indicators, and work on trend analysis and the identification of emerging issues, the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Thematic Priority will support the development of actions undertaken elsewhere within the "Cooperation" Specific Programme" and, where appropriate, within the Specific Programmes "Ideas" and "Capacities". Complementarities and synergies with other priorities of the "Cooperation" specific programme (in particular the "Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology", "Energy" and "Environment" priorities) are especially sought under activity 8.2.in this Work Programme.

Approach

Implementation

This Work Programme covers the first year of Seventh Framework Programme. It will be implemented primarily through calls for proposals that will draw on the budget foreseen for 2007 and 2008. This work programme is intended to implement only part of the seven-year research agenda for this theme on which a consultation has taken place recently (http://ec.europa.eu/research/consultations/list_en.html).

This workprogramme will focus on the production of new interdisciplinary knowledge, and on the interface with the needs and expectations of policy-makers and other interested stakeholders. There will be synergies, however, with the "Ideas" Specific Programme, which can fund curiosity-driven disciplinary carried out by individual researchers, and the Specific Programme "Capacities" that can support research infrastructures in the socio-economic sciences and the humanities.

Expected nature and scale of activities.

Priority will be given to supporting collaborative research projects rather than on new structuring initiatives.

It is not envisaged to support new Networks of Excellence under this theme during the first two years.

Under the Sixth Framework Programme, the Commission has already funded 20 Integrated Projects and 14 Networks of Excellence relating to social sciences and humanities that have mobilised a total Community contribution of € 238.5 million of which the EC contribution is € 142 million. A full evaluation of those large-scale structuring initiatives will be undertaken shortly.

In line with objectives of the Cooperation Programme regarding better coordination of national research programmes, provision has been made in this Work Programme to support a limited number of new ERA-NETs and ERA-Net-plus initiatives¹ as from 2008.

¹ ERA-NET activities will be subject to a joint call across the Specific Programme 'Cooperation' – See Annex IV

Research infrastructure issues will be addressed in the "Capacities" Specific Programme. However, the small, innovative proposals invited under the *Topic:"Emerging needs"* could open new paths to developing infrastructure for socio-economic sciences and humanities.

Proposals for funding should also strengthen the capability of the socio-economic sciences and humanities to contribute to the continuing development of the European Research Area. In consequence they are expected to:

- Provide a sufficiently broad European and comparative perspective on the research topics described in this Work Programme.
- Achieve co-operation within and between disciplines to the degree required by the issues being addressed.
- Involve, as appropriate, users and stakeholders in the implementation of the project, and develop clear and targeted dissemination and valorisation strategies, addressing and involving not only scientific audiences, but also policy-makers, other key actors and, where appropriate, the general public.

Structure of the Work Programme

The Work Programme is structured in terms of *Activities* that are subdivided into *Areas* and *Topics*. Proposals are invited at the level of *Topics*. Proposals for Collaborative projects and Co-ordination and Specific Support Actions must make a clear and important contribution to the core objectives described in each *Topic*. Proposals may address more than one *Topic*, but they should primarily focus on a single topic on which they would make the most important contribution and on which will be their center of gravity

The content of this Work Programme draws to a significant extent from two Internet-based consultations in 2004 and 2006 and from a number of targeted expert meetings to identify better research priorities in socio-economic sciences, humanities and foresight.

In this first Work Programme, all activities identified in the framework of the Specific Programme are addressed, at least partially. A particular emphasis is given to *Activities* 1 and 2 which deal with the strategic agenda of the Union on competitiveness, growth and employment as well as sustainable development. Over the seven years of the programme's implementation, it is intended that a broad balance will be observed among the *Activities*.

Particular attention is given to the contribution of Humanities scholars who could be involved in all activities of this Work Programme.

Funding schemes

Under the Socio-economic sciences and the humanities Thematic Priority, the "Collaborative projects" funding scheme allows for different types of projects to be financed:

- small collaborative projects (from € 500k to € 1.5 M)
- large-scale integrating projects (from €1.5 M to € 4 M) and
- research for the benefit of specific groups / projects targeted to special groups such as civil society organisations (up to €1 M)

The following gives an outline of the main features of these funding schemes:

a) SMALL COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

- *Targeted to specific objectives:*
- *research and development to generate new knowledge, improve European competitiveness or address major societal needs;*
- *Clear focus and approach at project level*
- *Overall work plan clearly fixed for the whole project life*
- *Major deliverables planned in detail*
- *No changes expected in work plan and deliverables*
- *Adequate project management*
- *Management of the knowledge produced (protection, exploitation, dissemination)*

b) LARGE-SCALE INTEGRATING PROJECTS

- *Set of defined, integrated, differentiated activities and covering a range of aspects, which can stand alone or can be used in combination:*
- *Objective-driven research and development within a clear defined scientific envelop, addressing a range of different disciplines. Significant advancement in the current State of the Art is expected.*
- *Tackling multiple issues and directed to achieve specific deliverables*
- *Large degree of autonomy of consortia both at work programme and partnership (all kind of stakeholder) level*
- *Updating and/or re-formulation of the work plan where when appropriate can be expected*

c) RESEARCH FOR THE BENEFIT OF SPECIFIC GROUPS (SUCH AS CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS-CSO)

The funding scheme supports research and technological development projects where the bulk of the research is carried out by RTD performers for the benefit of specific groups, defined as civil society organisations and their networks (CSOs) in this Work Programme. Research for CSOs aims to develop scientific knowledge related to CSOs activities in order to contribute to public debate.

Civil society organisations are considered to include any legal entity that is non-governmental, not-for-profit, not representing commercial interests, and pursuing a common purpose in the public interest.

In addition, Coordination and Support Actions, Public Procurement (through calls for tender) and Expert Groups may be used, according to the Topic profile.

International Cooperation

Enhanced International Cooperation is a key objective of the Seventh Framework Programme. The Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Thematic Priority will support the participation of researchers and research institutions from third countries in proposals that are submitted under the Calls. In particular the following *Topics* represent areas of significant potential mutual benefit.

- SSH-2007-1.1.3. Impact of internationalisation on Europe's research and innovation systems
- SSH-2007-1.2.1 Globalisation and its interaction with the European economy
- SSH-2007-3.1.3 Migration

- SSH-2007-3.3.1 Cultural interactions and multiculturalism in European societies - SSH-2007-4.1.1. Europe's role in global economic governance
- SSH-2007-4.1.2. Development paths in an historical and comparative perspective and their impact on Europe
- SSH-2007-4.2.1. Conflicts and Peace
- SSH-2007-4.2.2. Articulation of rule of law and protection of human rights at national, European and international levels
- SSH-2007-4.3.1. Europe seen from outside
- SSH-2007-4.3.2. Multilateralism and the new external relations of the European Union

In addition to this, support is possible for activities that take into account the broader strategic cooperation frameworks of the European Union (such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the New Neighbourhood Policy, the Asia-Europe Meeting process, etc) (See topic SSH-2007-8.0.2).

For very large countries such as China, India, Russia, the U.S., bilateral projects to stimulate cooperation with European SSH scholars can, however, be envisaged.

Equal opportunities and the gender dimension

The pursuit of scientific knowledge and its technical application towards society requires the talent, perspectives and insight that can only be assured by increasing diversity in the research workforce. Therefore a balanced representation of women and men in research projects is encouraged. The gender dimension of the research content should be addressed wherever relevant in the topics of this work programme.

Information and dissemination

Dissemination actions will be undertaken systematically by the research teams running the projects and the Commission using the latest available technologies (websites including specific electronic newsletters, projects websites). Particular attention will be paid to dissemination and valorisation actions that synthesise knowledge coming from projects to a wide variety of stakeholders including the policy makers at national, regional or European level.

A Network of National Contact Points is instrumental for helping access to FP7 calls, and to lower the entry barrier for newcomers and raise the average quality of submitted proposals. A topic for supporting a trans-national NCP network through a coordination and support action is included in the first call of 2007.

II. CONTENT OF CALL

Activity 8.1 Growth, employment and competitiveness in a knowledge society: the European case

Rationale

Growth, employment and competitiveness are major challenges for Europe and are central elements of the Lisbon strategy which in its renewed form calls for the delivery of "stronger, lasting growth and the creation of more and better jobs" while respecting and promoting social and environmental objectives. Further development and completion of the Single Market are key to achieving the aims of higher growth and employment.

In addressing these challenges, Europe is faced with a number of challenges and opportunities stemming from intensified globalisation, emerging dynamic growth regions, continuous structural change, the EU's enlargement process, demographic changes, etc, each influencing Europe's ability to achieve the Lisbon goals and affecting its *socio-economic stability*.

The internationalisation of innovation activities, the impact of demographic changes, the interaction between knowledge and human capital, the increasing role of creativity, the role of the services sector and the globalisation of economic activities are major factors of change for the European economy. Policy interaction and coordination are essential in order to enable Europe to approach its challenges and meet the Lisbon objectives. Problem-oriented and policy-relevant research on these questions is needed.

The capacity to study growth, employment and competitiveness, and the relevant phenomena described in this workprogramme, depends on quantitative and qualitative methods, data and other resources. European researchers should play the leading role, but their research could be enhanced by the participation of research teams from non-European countries, which are encouraged to participate.

Research may draw on specific disciplines, notably economics, or involve interdisciplinary teams and perspectives as appropriate, with a view to drawing solid conclusions about the implications for national and EU policies.

Area 8.1.1 Changing role of knowledge throughout the economy

Objective

Research should improve understanding of the changing role of knowledge in relation to growth, employment and competitiveness in Europe as well as the implications of different types of knowledge for the economy.

Expected impact

Projects should advance the state-of-the-art with regard to the changing role of knowledge throughout the economy, promote the development of quantitative and/or qualitative methodological approaches, facilitate cooperation among researchers in Europe and beyond, support the formulation and implementation of relevant policies in Europe with the aim of enhancing growth, employment and competitiveness, and involve relevant communities, stakeholders, and practitioners in the accomplishment and diffusion of research.

Topics

SSH-2007-1.1.1 Interactions between knowledge, economic growth and social well-being.

Description

The research should aim at launching a prospective analysis about the possible interactions between knowledge in its different forms, economic growth and social well-being and cohesion. It should address what could be the outlook of the knowledge society for the future, especially for Europe (in comparison with its major partners) and draw policy conclusions for research, education, innovation, consumer policies and other policies at national and EU level. It should analyse the nature, sources and consequences of the processes that generate and apply knowledge underlying technological change. It should address the economic and social value of knowledge taking into account relevant developments in economic theories. It should consider different incentive structures for knowledge creation, diffusion and use, the role of creativity in the economy, evolving consumer behaviours, and the role of education and training systems. The development of policies in Europe should also be addressed, especially the promotion of a central role for creation, diffusion, exchange, and use of knowledge in our societies as well as of competences and skills.

Funding scheme: Large -scale integrating projects.

SSH-2007-1.1.2 Intangible investments and innovation in Europe

Description

The objective is to facilitate the understanding and valorisation of the contributions of intangible investments - related for example to knowledge or other externalities like the environment - to innovation, competitiveness, growth and productivity. It should address intangible investments and assets and the factors involved in their contributions at the level of the enterprise and higher-levels of analysis including the economy as a whole. For example the role of the different types of intangible assets and investments, competition and collaboration in the production of such assets, the importance of quality of work, the social environment and ICT (information and communication technologies) for these assets, the use of quality indicators as a means of their assessment, the role of capital markets in their valuation and the implications of globalisation, could be addressed. It could encourage the development or adjustment of tools to assess and measure the impact of policies aiming at the promotion of intangible assets and investments.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

SSH-2007-1.1.3 Impact of internationalisation on Europe's research and innovation systems

Description

The increasing engagement of firms within global knowledge and production networks and their ability to source knowledge internationally for the development of innovation capacities, including the question of “off-shoring” research and development, of cross-country and inter-firm knowledge and technology flows, and other factors driving the internationalisation of innovation activities, e.g. international trade and foreign direct investment will in part shape the future of Europe's knowledge resources and its role in the global economy. The objective of the research is to address the internationalisation and networking of research and innovation activities and systems, including the role and strategies of enterprises, universities, research centres, governments or formal and informal institutions (including, e.g., rules and regulations, norms, values), in a cross-country and inter-sectoral way in order to assess the impact and implications for European's research and innovation systems as well as their contribution to growth and competitiveness

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects and Specific International Cooperation Actions.

Area 8.1.2 Structural changes in the European knowledge economy

Objective

The objective of the research is to develop and improve the understanding of the socio-economic, demographic, spatial, and sectoral dynamics that underpin structural changes in Europe, and the role of these changes in growth, employment and competitiveness.

Expected impact

Projects should advance the state-of-the-art regarding the factors influencing economic structures and structural changes and their effects in Europe, and where relevant elsewhere. They should facilitate cooperation among researchers in Europe and beyond, support the formulation and implementation of European policies addressing structural change and its effects with the aim to enhance growth, employment and competitiveness, and involve relevant communities, stakeholders, and practitioners in the accomplishment and diffusion of research.

Topics

SSH-2007-1.2.1 Globalisation and its interaction with the European economy

Description

The objective of this topic is to assess and forecast the effects of intensified globalisation on the international competitiveness, growth performance and employment perspectives of Europe. Research will identify, evaluate and measure, when relevant, the determinants and patterns of changing international specialisation and the micro and macro economic effects of relocation of production and other activities for firms, industry sectors, regions or countries. Research should include aspects of European integration and EU enlargements in this context as well as the changing conditions for and the changing strategies of European

business in a globalised economy, the emergence of dynamic growth regions and countries and its impact on the EU, and international economic relations.

Funding scheme: Large-scale integrating project and Specific International Cooperation Action.

SSH-2007-1.2.2 The implications of developments in the service economy for the European economy

Description

The aim is to understand and assess the future evolution of the implications of developments in the service economy for the European economy in general, and competitiveness, growth, productivity, employment and welfare in particular. This research could address and assess the interactions between the dissemination of knowledge, service innovation, technical and organisational change and the evolving roles of consumers in generating productivity growth and performance in the public and private sectors. It can also address and assess the extent and nature of international trade in services and its contribution to the economy and society, as well as the functioning of the Single Market and the degree to which market-restrictions affect growth, employment and competitiveness. Different categories of services can be covered, including knowledge-intensive services, business services, social services, environmental services, personal services, and the ways in which their structures and economic and social contributions are affected by regulatory and institutional frameworks and cultural conditions in European countries and regions.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

SSH-2007-1.2.3 The role of finance for growth, employment and competitiveness in Europe

Description

The objective of this topic is to contribute to a better understanding and appraisal of recent and future evolution of the relations between developments in the world of finance and growth, employment and competitiveness, including the policy making perspective. The research should address these changing relations at macro, meso and micro economic levels, with an emphasis on Europe, taking into account for example supply and demand on financial markets, including changing savings patterns of households, innovations in financial services and products, socially responsible investment, capital mobility, the integration of capital markets and internationalisation of banking and insurance activities. Research issues should include relations of finance with the real economy, such as on the financing of start-up businesses as well as the growth and expansion of established enterprises, taking into account the role of banks, stock markets, investment funds and venture capital, other financial sector investments and speculative investment, including the impact on the behaviour of companies and their time horizons. The impacts of these relations on Europe's research, innovation and production systems will be assessed.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

Area 8.1.3 Strengthening policy coordination coherence in Europe

Objective

To improve the understanding of the role of policy coordination and policy coherence in relation to economic policies, especially macroeconomic policies, labour market policies as well as education, research, development, innovation and Single Market policies, including institutional aspects of governance. Research addressing policy coordination should include aspects of coordination at the EU, the national and the regional government level alone as well as across those levels.

Expected impact

Projects should advance the state-of-the-art in the area of policy coordination and coherence, including its institutional aspects, facilitate the cooperation among researchers in Europe (and possibly beyond), increase the awareness and information about the formulation and implementation of measures increasing the effectiveness of policy interaction and coordination, and develop strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, and practitioners in the accomplishment and diffusion of research.

Topics

SSH-2007-1.3.1 Macroeconomic policy, its interaction and coordination with other policies

Description

The objective of this topic is to contribute to the evaluation of macroeconomic policy and its interactions with other policies, and their impact on growth, employment and competitiveness especially in the context of European integration, enlargement and the Lisbon strategy. In the context of recent and future EU enlargements, research should address the issues related to macroeconomic policy, including the effects of the integration of monetary policy as well as the coordination of fiscal policies and public finances at the Community level on growth, employment and competitiveness. Macro-micro policy coordination issues monetary-fiscal policy mix questions, and demand issues might be considered. Moreover, proposals should include issues related to the interaction of macroeconomic policy with other policies, especially from the point of view of their contribution to growth, competition, employment and competitiveness, and of European social models, taking into account comparisons with areas outside Europe.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

Activity 8.2 Combining economic, social and environmental objectives in a European perspective: Paths towards sustainable development

Rationale

Over a long period, European societies have made a variety of broadly-based efforts to combine economic and social approaches in order to address changes in society. The European Community and subsequently the EU incorporated the combination of objectives in

the Treaty (Art. 2) and they were included as a key part of the Lisbon objectives. The socio-economic models that have evolved in Europe embody inter alia ways of dealing with these combined objectives.

The challenges faced in combining these objectives today are clearly major, from increased globalisation, demographic change, migration, ecological challenges, particular issues for developing countries such as large-scale urbanisation, etc. The variety of approaches taken in Europe and their different historical backgrounds provide a laboratory for understanding how the objectives might be successfully combined or otherwise. Comparison with relevant other world regions can further enhance understanding and help develop these key questions in the broader context.

Social and regional cohesion are particular aspects of these questions. Social cohesion presents a difficult challenge today with a number of economic, social and cultural changes and instabilities in society. Regional cohesion also presents a major challenge especially following the recent enlargement and some regions already in the EU also face particular development questions for the future.

The overall aim therefore is to provide a significantly improved understanding of how economic, social and environmental objectives might be successfully combined in an international perspective, through addressing how European (and other) societal models have fared in doing this, how they are evolving and addressing the new challenges they face, and how the key social and economic cohesion issues in an enlarged EU can be addressed, thereby providing a basis for major decisions on relevant strategies and policies.

Area 8.2.1 Socio-economic development trajectories

The objective is to understand how European and other socio-economic development trajectories have fared in combining the objectives, the conditions under which this occurred, their ability to confront new challenges, and to draw lessons for policy. It is also to explore some broad but fundamental questions that are relevant for understanding how economic, social and environmental objectives might be combined, and their implications for European sustainable development strategies, including at the EU level.

Expected impact

The projects should: a) advance the state of the art on the performance of different socio-economic patterns and approaches in combining economic, social and environmental objectives and their ability to address new challenges, b)) advance the state of the art on trade-offs or synergies between economic, social and environmental objectives. c) enhance cooperation in the areas researched between researchers in Europe and in other geographic regions, d) involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research, e) provide knowledge that will be relevant for economic, social and environmental policies and especially for their combination, in the short or longer term.

Topics

SSH-2007-2.1.1 Analysing, comparing and evaluating the various societal models in a medium- to long-term perspective

Description

The aim is to achieve a better understanding of the different approaches taken (explicitly or implicitly) across countries or regions or local communities to combining economic, social

and environmental objectives, the extent to which these approaches are part of the various societal models in those places, their degree of success in combining them, and their ability to confront new challenges in order to draw lessons for the future. In doing this, research should compare the various socio-economic development trajectories in different European countries or groups of those countries, other developed countries and relevant developing or emerging countries. The degree of coherence within the individual models could also be addressed, as could the usefulness of typologies of models, and the differences between large and smaller countries. Specific challenges facing developing and emerging countries in combining the objectives could be included. The role of different socio-economic groups in the approach taken, including their influence in policy, is also of interest. Gender issues as well as issue of culture should be also included

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects and Specific International Cooperation Actions.

SSH-2007-2.1.2 Trade-offs and synergies between the different aspects of Sustainable Development

Description

Research should address the extent to which and the conditions under which trade-offs or, on the contrary, synergies or mutual support, exist between the different objectives related to Sustainable Development. For example: (i) between the economic and social aspects: e.g. between levels and types of growth, on the one hand, and social cohesion or inequalities, on the other; between economic flexibility and quality of life; (ii) between economic and environmental aspects: e.g. the role of levels and different types of growth; (iii) between social and environmental objectives: e.g. between poverty reduction and environmental protection in developing countries, consumption behaviour; (iv) between economic, social, and environmental objectives in the perspective of sustainable development: e.g. combating unemployment, developing new markets for clean technologies, diminishing the 'ecological footprint', improving quality of life and the living environment. It could address how the trade-offs and synergies occur at different levels, macro to micro. It should identify factors that may enhance the effectiveness in achieving the combination of objectives.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

SSH-2007-2.1.3 Development and applications of tools for the assessment of policies and socio-economic forecasting.

Description

The development of databases, accounting frameworks including harmonized input-output tables and related analytical tools, models and consistent expert systems (i.e. combination of different types of models according to the question to address) covering the European countries, based on common classifications that have been agreed at international level, would make international comparisons on structured assessment of policies possible. It would also enable the elaboration of a European and world projections and scenarios socio-economic and societal issues. Such a methodological development should interpret the most advanced theories; including those for the macro and micro economic systems; it should also take into account the main cross-sector issues like environment land use, and trade-offs between conflicting objectives.

Funding scheme: Large-scale integrating projects.

Area 8.2.2 Regional, territorial and social cohesion

The objective is to address challenges facing regional and social cohesion regional and urban development in the context of the broader economic, social, environmental and cultural changes taking place, the effectiveness of policy in addressing them, and lessons for policy. In addition to the wider perspective of Area 8.2.1. above, the following topics address meso issues, , either in spatial terms (regions, rural areas, cities) or in cross-sectoral socio-economic terms (the environment, energy and society interfaces and dynamics).

Expected impact

The projects should: a) advance the state of the art on regional cohesion, regional and urban development and/or social cohesion b) enhance cooperation in the areas researched between researchers in Europe and in other geographic regions, c) devise strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research, d) provide knowledge that will support relevant policies

Topics

SSH-2007-2.2.1 Regional development challenges in an evolving international context

Description

The aim is to provide an understanding of the key regional development challenges in the light of the major economic, social, political and cultural changes taking place in the world, such as globalisation, European enlargement and integration, economic restructuring and relocation, and how they might be better anticipated and responded to. Regional development should be taken in a broad sense to cover economic, social and environmental aspects.

Research should address a range of issues in this context, for example uneven development of regions; the development of capacities or capabilities in the regions; competition between regions; regional specialisation and the role of different sectors in development, including service sectors' regional attractiveness; the role of regional policies and regional governance systems. The research should address the challenges facing different types of regions, for example those of Central and Eastern Europe or Southern Europe and special attention should be given to disadvantaged regions. Gender issues could be included where relevant.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

SSH-2007-2.2.2 The impact of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms on Europe's rural economies

Description

Research on the sustainable development of rural areas in Europe in the context of the CAP reforms can contribute to a better understanding of the key dynamics of change, of the adjustment process in rural areas and therefore of the impact of policy including the,

development of concepts and tools to analyse aspects of sustainable and integrated rural development. This could include research on rural typologies, governance methods including– local participation, land use planning, and the management of natural resources; the inter-relationships between local agriculture and forestry and related industries; links between agriculture/forestry and the rest of the economy; the spatial dimension; technology transfer and innovation; the knowledge and service economy in rural areas; the multifunctional role of agriculture including its environmental dimension; the impact of external drivers of change; “social capital” and social inclusion, demographic trends depopulation and related gender issues..

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

SSH-2007-2.2.3 Social platform on cities and social cohesion

A social platform will be organized on this topic, to discuss and help define a research agenda to be included in a later call for proposals during FP7. It is anticipated that the agenda will be ready for the call covering the 2009 budget. Representatives from different stakeholders and researchers will be included in this platform, in an open dialogue at European level. A wide range of views will be encouraged, and a process established that should lead to a focused research agenda addressing fundamental issues and key policy questions in this context.

Funding scheme: Coordination and Support Actions

SSH-2007-2.2.4 Socio-economic factors and actors that shape the "post-carbon" economy

Description

In relation to the EU policy objectives in the field of energy (notably those in the 2006 White Paper on energy) research will focus on the socio-economic cultural and political factors that shape energy demand and use in various environments (transport, agro-food, materials, housing, consumer behaviour, etc.) and on the necessary changes at systemic level that need to be initiated in order to develop an environmentally-friendly European model of energy policies that respond to the expectations and needs of European citizens, urban and rural communities.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

Indicative topics for a forthcoming call:

Under 8.2.2.:

- The impact of sustainable development strategies on the evolution of social inequalities, social protection and social services
- Cities and social cohesion

Activity 8.3 Major trends in society and their implications

Rationale

The last fifty years have been characterised by important changes in the way people live their lives and deal with evolutions in society, social structures and values.

Demographic changes are widely recognised as one of the major challenges for Europe. They include population ageing, low birth rates and immigration flows. These changes are affected by a number of economic, social and cultural factors and policies. But in turn, they also have an impact on a wide set of policy domains, ranging from the long-term sustainability of welfare, pension and health care systems, to education, lifelong learning, migration, transport, housing, etc.

Other major societal trends relate to the changing nature of work and of private life (in particular of family life and gender roles), the evolution of lifestyles, consumption patterns, values, attitudes and beliefs of contemporary societies.

Migration, technological developments, globalisation of economies and societal transformation processes have led to increasing cultural exchange within Europe and with other parts of the world and to a different perception of values and beliefs.

Research will address the causes of these trends, their effects and likely future impacts on quality of life, values and attitudes and on European societies, as well as their implications for national and EU policies.

Area 8.3.1 Demographic changes

The aim is to study the interactions between current societal and demographic trends notably the implications of trends such as ageing, low birth rates and migration in European societies and identify policy measures which could assist in meeting these challenges.

Expected impact

The projects should: a) advance the state of the art on the topic of demographic changes, their causes and implications; b) enhance interdisciplinary cooperation in the areas researched between researchers in Europe and in other relevant geographic regions; c) devise strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, and practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research, d) contribute towards the potential formulation, development and implementation of policies

Topics

SSH-2007-3.1.1 Impact of demographic changes in Europe

Description

The objective is to analyse the socio-political, economic and cultural dimensions and impact of demographic ageing in the Europe and its implications for policy making on a local, regional, and European level. Europe is currently facing many challenges related to the current demographic developments combining increasing life expectancy with low birth rates. Research in this area should address the impact of these developments on a number of key issues, in particular growth, employment and competitiveness, the contribution and

employability of older workers, the capacity of the economy to innovate and develop under the conditions of an ageing society, intergenerational solidarity, lifelong learning the potential social and economic contribution of active ageing, the sustainability of pension and health systems, and care and social integration of the elderly. Comparisons with countries outside Europe could be included if relevant, and gender aspects could be incorporated.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

SSH-2007-3.1.2 Determinants of birth rates across the European Union

Description

The objective is to study changes in birth rates over time and across countries and to identify the determinants of and attitudes towards these changes, in particular the current low rates, in view of the identification of better approaches in public and private policies at the local, regional and European Union level. Research should address the economic, social, cultural and psychological determinants of birth rates and include changes in work patterns and conditions, quality of life, family formation, housing gender roles, individual attitudes and access to birth control mechanisms. The analyses of different national approaches to formal and informal family related policies and the role of gender and culture in those approaches should also be analysed in this context., The causes and consequences of late maternity decisions, issues related to reproductive rights and birth control legislation, and the development of supportive economic and social policies should be included. Comparisons with areas outside Europe could be included if relevant.

Funding scheme: Small Collaborative projects

SSH-2007-3.1.3 Migration

Description

The objective is to understand better the factors and conditions determining migration flows and the diverse experiences of migrants, as well as the implications for demographic changes and social, economic and cultural policies in Europe. International comparative research involving relevant non European countries and experiences is particularly welcome. Research should address changing migration flows and their causes, new host countries, new migrant populations and the diversity of their migratory experiences.. New immigration regimes and innovative migration management techniques on the local, regional and European levels as well as the perspectives of immigrants on migration management should be addressed. Specific issues such as questions of return and repatriation, unaccompanied minors as well as education and health from an intergenerational perspective can also be addressed in order to provide possible policy directions in the European Union including the Lisbon agenda.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects and Specific International Cooperation Actions.

Area 8.3.2 Societal trends and lifestyles

The aim is to study and analyse the evolution of key societal trends and their implications on people's lifestyles and policy making in the European Union today.

Expected impact

The projects should: a) advance the state of the art in the field of societal trends and lifestyle patterns in the Europe Union b) enhance cooperation in the areas researched between researchers in Europe and in other relevant geographic regions c) devise strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research d) provide information and guidance to policy makers

SSH-2007-3.2.1 Youth and social exclusion

Description

The aim is to achieve a comprehensive and integrated approach and provide policy recommendations to dealing with the social exclusion of young people in terms of causes, process, changes and prospects. Research in this context could examine trends in the social exclusion of young women and men, and could address issues such as their opportunities, prospects, and needs, economic and social representation, means of formal and informal participation and representation, empowerment and integration strategies, availability of employment and its quality, career possibilities, education and training issues, as well as access to public and private services and facilities, and housing. In addition, related questions such as poverty and inequality, social and cultural capital, discrimination, gender, migration, and insecurity of various kinds facing young people could be included. In addressing such matters, questions such as life projects, identity development, attitudes, deviance and drug use ought to be considered.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

Area 8.3.3 Cultural interactions in an international perspective

The aim is to study European societies in a context of increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds. In particular, an assessment of multiculturalism, cultural interactions and their relationship to integration, social cohesion in urban spaces, tolerance as well as intolerance, racism and xenophobia should be addressed in order to provide recommendations for future European Union policies. The involvement and contributions of relevant non European teams is particularly welcome.

Expected impact

The projects should: a) advance the state of the art in the field of cultural interactions among European societies and between them and the rest of the world b) enhance interdisciplinary cooperation in the areas researched between researchers in Europe and in other relevant geographic regions, c) devise strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research, d) improve the potential to influence the formulation, development and implementation of policies.

Topics

SSH-2007-3.3.1 Cultural interactions and multiculturalism in European societies

Description

The objective is to analyse how European Union societies are tackling issues of multiculturalism, diversities and traditions in view of policies which can lead to a constructive, positive and peaceful coexistence of peoples. Research is needed on the cultural, historical, political, social, psychological, educational and economic factors which facilitate or prohibit the peaceful coexistence of different cultures. Topics should include an assessment of concepts and practices of multiculturalism as well as historical migrations and their related transport of different languages, cultures, ideas, and knowledge. The cultural interactions between migrant and minority groups and the host societies, their role in the construction of a more tolerant society and the conditions for this to take place are to be analysed. Issues of cultural/religious dominance, identity and belongings, intolerance, violence, racism and xenophobia both in the host society and within the different migrant groups should be addressed. The integration of minority groups should be addressed and better understood and the role of cultural policies, intercultural communication and dialogue in this context should be explored. The significance of language competence on the integration of different migrant groups and at different stages of the migrant cycle could in this context be analysed. Finally, the role of the media and public discourse in the formation and results of diverse coexisting cultures should be explored.

Funding scheme: Small Collaborative projects and Specific International Cooperation Actions.

Indicative topics for a forthcoming call:

Under 8.3.2:

- Family life
- Conditions of work and impact on quality of life
- Consumer behaviour and protection

Activity 8.4 Europe in the World

Rationale

Global interactions and interdependencies are taking different and new forms, and have major impacts on the economy, society, institutions and security in Europe and in the rest of the world. At the same time, European countries and the European Union are not only reacting to events, but actively changing their role in world affairs.

The changing interactions between world regions and the rise of new global players are giving rise to major economic, political, institutional, cultural and social challenges to the current international system. New geopolitical relations, conflicts and threats are also

emerging, showing that global interdependence and global stability may not be automatically related. An improved knowledge base is needed to identify and tackle these issues.

Research under this theme should improve our understanding of how interactions and interdependencies are changing, what are the implications for development paths in different parts of the world, why conflicts are emerging and how peace can be achieved. It should also analyse the implications for the regions concerned, particularly for Europe, as well as for the global economy, institutions, and for other societal and cultural developments. Contributions from research focusing on particular regions (e.g. Africa, Asia, Latin America, Mediterranean) are also welcome, particularly when they address interrelations with other regions. Also, the inclusion of non-European perspectives, through research undertaken also by non-Europeans, on the topics detailed below is encouraged where relevant. Considering the global approach of this research theme, the participation of teams from third countries is particularly relevant.

Area 8.4.1 Interactions and interdependences between world regions and their implications

Objective

The main aim is to understand better the driving forces of global interactions and interdependencies, the relations between world regions and the factors shaping different development paths in a historical perspective.

Expected impact

The projects should: a) advance the state of the art in the field of global interdependence and economic governance and/or development paths, b) enhance cooperation between researchers in Europe and in the areas under analysis, c) create conditions for the scholarly community to prepare for future steps towards engaging in significant joint international research efforts, d) devise strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research, e) improve the potential to influence the formulation, development and implementation of policies on development, trade and other relevant areas.

Topics

SSH-2007-4.1.1 Europe's role in global economic governance

Description

The objective is to understand how the interactions and interrelations between regions of the world have been changing, the causes and impacts of the changes, how the rules for such interactions are developed, the role of and impacts on Europe, and what the outlook is. In particular, research could address and seek to synthesise the most important changes in recent years in the rules concerning flows of trade and technology, international finance, direct investment, natural resources, migration, social, political and cultural relations, illicit activities (e.g. trafficking and other forms of organised crime) and the provision of global public goods. More specifically how the rules affecting the interactions are developed, the changing relative influence of different actors, both public and private, in setting the rules, and issue of the accountability of international institutions in this context should also be

addressed. ; the role of European actors including the EU should be included. The outlook for the future should also be included.

Funding scheme: Large-scale integrating projects and Specific International Cooperation Action.

SSH-2007-4.1.2 Development paths in an historical and comparative perspective and their impact on Europe

Description

The objective is to foster understanding of how development processes have and are being affected by relations between world regions and countries, and the ways in which this is changing, in historical and comparative perspective. Specific themes could include the influence of economic, political, technological and cultural relations on development and its nature, including their role in fostering or hampering paths towards sustainable development; whether and how uneven development is linked to such relations, both past and present; the extent to which historical relationships such as colonial and post-colonial relations affect today's development paths; the role of urbanisation; factors enabling or hampering the building of economic, institutional and social capacity, of resilience to overcome poverty, including impacts of development aid approaches; the possibility for developing countries to define their own policies; gender and development relations. The impact on Europe should be included. A combination of themes and interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects, Coordination and Support Actions, Specific International Cooperation Actions

Area 8.4.2 Conflicts, peace and human rights

Objective

To understand the dynamics of conflict and peace, to examine the developments and articulation of the rule of law in fostering human rights, and to enhance the role of Europe in conflict prevention and resolution as well as in fostering the rule of law.

Expected impact

the projects should: a) advance the state of the art in the field of conflict and peace studies, as well as knowledge on the state of human rights, b) enhance cooperation between researchers in Europe and in the areas under analysis, c) allow the scholarly community to prepare for future steps towards engaging in a significant joint international research effort d) improve the contribution to formulation, development and implementation of policy at European or national level including peace keeping initiatives; e) devise and test strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research. f) where relevant, encourage the involvement of relevant civil society organisations in the research activities, in particular with the use of the funding instrument " Research for the benefit of specific groups".

Topics

SSH-2007-4.2.1 Conflicts and Peace

Description

The aim is to consolidate and advance knowledge on factors that trigger conflicts or facilitate just and durable peace. Research shall address the following issues: factors that induce violence or facilitate non-violence e.g. role of nationalism, religion, education, gender and other factors; early warning and other factors in conflict prevention; relations between endogenous/local actors and external actors including third party mediators and international organisations, in conflict de-escalation, transformation, reconciliation; tackling distributive and justice issues (e.g. economic compensations, access to resources, rights of refugees); civilian populations as targets of war; definition and implementation of peace-keeping and peace-making processes and missions, humanitarian intervention and/or assistance; disarmament processes and transitions to post-conflict and consolidated peace; relations between civilian and military organisations in the above, including the definition of rules of engagement and chains of accountability. These issues could be addressed in different combinations; historical perspectives, comparative research and contribution of teams from cases/areas chosen for the analysis are encouraged.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects, Research for the Benefit of Specific Groups (open to civil society organisations to set up partnerships with research performers) and Specific International Cooperation Activities.

SSH-2007-4.2.2 Articulation of rule of law and protection of human rights at national, European and international levels

Description

The aim is to foster knowledge on protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms with focus on the role of law. Research should clarify the following aspects: development of criminal justice, human rights and humanitarian law, with special attention to the application or circumvention of the Geneva Conventions; historical and current perspectives on war crimes and the different roles of military and civilian tribunals; binding vs non-binding status of human rights and their implications, including status of civilians in war situations; role of International Courts, distinction of tasks and synergies between them, guarantees for fulfilment of their ruling; weight of States in setting Courts and State's margins of appreciation; appeal systems, rights of victims in Courts; impact of the international system of legal protection for the individual and for vulnerable groups (e.g. minorities, children, victims of trafficking) with focus on situations of conflict and war; scope for alternative dispute resolution and restorative justice in the field of human rights protection, including the role of reconciliation commissions ; role of women and other civil society actors in human rights protection. Comparative analyses, interdisciplinary approaches and combination of some of the above aspects are encouraged.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects, Research for the Benefit of Specific Groups (open to civil society organisations to set up partnerships with research performers) and Specific International Cooperation Activities.

Area 8.4.3. Europe's changing role in the world

Objective

To improve the understanding of the changing role of Europe in world affairs and how this is seen by people outside; examine the implications of this for European policies and culture and for Europe's relations with other regions and countries.

Expected impact

The projects should: a) advance the state of the art in the field with the contribution of various disciplines and area studies, b) enhance cooperation between researchers in Europe and in the regions and countries under analysis, c) allow the scholarly community to prepare for future steps towards engaging in a significant joint international research effort d) increase awareness and information for the formulation or implementation of European cooperation initiatives in/with the regions and countries concerned, e) devise and test strategies to inform media and public debate in Europe and/or the areas under analysis, f) improve the contribution to formulation, development and implementation of policy at national or European level in relation to international institutions

Topics

SSH-2007-4.3.1 Europe seen from outside

Description

The objective is to develop non-Eurocentric analysis and awareness of the role of Europe in the world. Issues for research include how Europe at large, and the EU more specifically, are seen by people, elites, governments, media, literature and/or popular culture from outside Europe –selecting and, where possible, comparing specific regions (e.g. Middle East, African regions, South East Asia, South America) or major countries (e.g. China, India, Brazil, United States); the influence of cultural, economic, historical, linguistic, political, religious and/or technological ties and divides in shaping such views, and factors that lead to change. Research could also address the perceptions of Europe by people who choose it as destination for migration or asylum, as well as perceptions of where European borders may be located. Another issue for analysis is how the ways Europe is seen from outside is reported within Europe and influences specific forms of cooperation (e.g. bilateral or multilateral, economic, diplomatic, scientific) and cultural dialogue between Europe and other regions and countries. Combinations of research issues and interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged; full coverage of all issues is not essential.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects and Specific International Cooperation Activities.

SSH-2007-4.3.2 Multilateralism and the new external relations of the European Union

Description

The aim is to strengthen the understanding of multilateralism, including the relations between external and internal dimensions of EU policies. Research issues include the notion and practice of multilateralism, its relations with other concepts (e.g. unilateralism, hegemony, multi-polarism) and with international law, and how this relates to the changing role of the EU

and its member states in international affairs and institutions, including the relation between EU integration and other regional integration processes. The articulation between multilateralism and bilateral relations -including transatlantic relations, enlargement and neighbourhood policy, relations with ACP and other developing countries, the evolution of a EU foreign policy as well as the external dimensions of internal Community policies and the internal dimensions of external policies should also be examined. The changing relations between EU institutions in the context of bilateral and multilateral external policies, accountability and transparency issues, and citizens' perceptions of the EU role in world affairs could be a component of the research. Addressing these issues in a historical and comparative perspective is encouraged.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects and Specific International Cooperation Activities.

Activity 8.5 The Citizen in the European Union

Rationale

The European Union has often been associated with democratic consolidation and fundamental rights. The political rise of the European Parliament since its direct election in the late 1970s, the increasing recognition of the regional reality through the Committee of regions, and the so-called Copenhagen criteria have served as tools for enhancing democratic processes and citizens' rights in EU and applicant States. At the same time, critics suggest that the European Union is driven more by economic integration rather than a democracy and citizen participation. Criticisms relate to issues of citizenship, and participation, the direction of policy agendas, political trends and more.

The issue becomes whether a common European citizenship and a responsive and efficient new type of European democratic government and polity could or should emerge today that are compatible with other kinds of democratically accepted existing cultures, identities and practices within and across Member States and how this will happen.

Interdisciplinary research will address the various ways in which diverse forms and interpretations of democratic participation and "ownership", citizenship, diversities and commonalities can overcome problems and difficulties emerging at the national, regional, and EU level. In all areas, research should not only improve the current picture of socio-political situations, but also make the widest possible use of findings to develop or reflect upon possible solutions to more particular problems. It should therefore attempt to develop critical perspectives and innovative theories as well as building on empirical data. In this context, comparisons with other social, economic and political systems outside the EU area will be important. Analytical and critical new perspectives, interdisciplinarity [e.g. interaction between social scientists and humanities scholars] and reflection on policy relevance are important in addressing these issues.

Area 8.5.1 Participation and Citizenship in Europe

Objective

Understand the participation and representation of the citizen as well as to reflect upon contemporary definitions, perceptions and practices of citizenship in the context of the European Union.

Expected Impact

The projects should a) advance the state of the art in the field of citizen participation and citizenship in Europe; b) increase awareness and information for the formulation or implementation of European initiatives, including civil society initiatives, c) devise and test strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research. d) improve the contribution to the formulation, development and implementation of policy at national or European level. e) where relevant, encourage the involvement of relevant civil society organisations in the research activities, in particular with the use of the funding instrument " Research for the benefit of specific groups".

Topics

SSH-2007-5.1.1 Democratic "ownership" and participation

Description

The objective is to achieve a comprehensive knowledge of why and how participation and democratic "ownership" develop or are hampered, with the focus on Europe. Research shall include the role of civil society, social partners, non-governmental organizations, political parties and other relevant organisations; factors causing non participation of citizens and new processes instruments and structures enabling better informed and effective participation; political integration and participation of citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals; minorities and migrants; women and youth as social and political actors in the reconfiguration of democratic practices. The role of education and life long learning for citizenship could also be included. Research should compare and assess different forms of participation including direct participation and representative participation (e.g. electoral participation, referenda, formal consultation, citizen's initiatives, conventions as a form of preparing policy) in policy making. Issues of access to politics, expertise -including the role of think tanks, economic resources and justice. and relations between citizens and elites will be addressed.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects, Research for the Benefit of Specific Groups, (open to civil society organisations to set up partnerships with research performers).

SSH-2007-5.1.2 Reassessing Citizenship within the European Union

Description

The aim is to reassess definitions, perceptions and democratic practices of citizenship in the European Union. Research issues include the analysis of the democratic functioning of the European Union, the relations between representative institutions, consultative bodies, social partners, non-governmental organisations, executives and citizens within the members states and at the European Union; problems and prospects in the exercise of citizens' rights and broader fundamental rights in the EU, including access to the judiciary; citizens involvement in Constitutional processes, including lessons related to the EU Constitutional Treaty such as the role of referenda.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

Area 8.5.2 Diversities and Commonalities in Europe

Objective

Explore and analyse diversities and commonalities as these are reflected in European cultures and societies and to reflect upon how these can contribute to further understanding the future of Europe. A wide range of disciplines will be represented to explore issues relevant to history, identity, literature, the arts and the media in developing and conveying knowledge, attitudes and practices for European citizens.

Expected Impact

The projects should: 1) advance the state of the art in the field of cultural diversities and commonalities in Europe; 2) increase awareness and information for the formulation or implementation of European initiatives; 3) devise strategies to involve relevant communities, stakeholders, practitioners in the making and/or diffusion of research. 4) improve the potential to influence the formulation, development and implementation of policy at national or European level.

Topics

SSH-2007-5.2.1 Histories and Identities – articulating national and European identities

In view of enlargements of the Union, the aim is to better understand the way in which European cultures and identities are formed; the relationship between national and European identities, feelings of belonging, traditions, convictions and languages. Research could examine and compare how Europe impacts on daily life, ways of living, social environment, education and behaviours. The relationship between history and cultural heritage, including how cultural landscapes, including the imaginary and real geographies present in literature and the arts, contribute to building, strengthening or modifying regional, national or European identities. Diversity and common shared characteristics could also be addressed. Research could compare the effects of European Union enlargements on the representation of identities in the new Members States. Participation of researchers and research institutions from third countries is welcome.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

SSH-2007-5.2.2 Creativity, Culture and Democracy

The objective is to explore the origins, role and societal impact of creativity, especially in the context of literature and the Arts. Research could look at the societal, economic historical and political conditions under which creativity can best flourish, and how these influence and transform the socio-political landscape in Europe. Historical and anthropological perspectives can provide insights on how culture and creativity interact in diverse and alternative ways and how they contribute to the vitality of society, notably through the historical experiences of European cities. The influence of factors on creativity such as openness to other cultures, and commercial flows could be examined. The role of literature, philosophy, visual and performing arts in Europe in expressing ideas and challenges in relation to discrimination, human rights, social conflicts and in influencing democratic debate could be analysed, as could the use of the Arts throughout history for ideological purposes.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

Indicative topics for a forthcoming call:

Under 8.5.1

- **The media in Europe**

Activity 8.6 Socio-economic and scientific indicators

Rationale

The European Union, its Member States and regions are all involved in policy making. Policy should not be driven solely by indicators but it should be evidence based and make appropriate use of both quantitative and qualitative indicators together with relevant analytical methods including modelling. To do this, indicators and analytical techniques are needed that address the policy issues in question therefore, research under this topic should aim to improve the relevance, quality and quantity of indicators made available to policy makers together with the analytical techniques and models used for the in support of all aspects of policy. The impact assessment of policies and programmes should promote the development and the use of indicators in this context.

Area 8.6.1 How indicators are used in policy

Objective

The overall objective of this research area is to contribute to improving policy through the appropriate use of indicators, techniques to analyse them, models and evidence based methods, in the widest sense, at all levels, from the micro through to the macro, and across all phases of policy.

Expected impact

Projects should contribute in a significant way to assessing the state of the art in the field of the use of indicators and techniques to analyse in evidence based methods for policy. They should produce insight into whether indicators are successful in guiding policy. Specific problems in using indicators in policy should be identified.. Most importantly the research projects must propose significant new and improved ways indicators, techniques to analyse them, models and evidence based methods can be used in policy.

Topics

SSH-2007-6.1.1 Current use of and emerging needs for indicators in policy.

Description

Research under this topic should start by mapping the current use of indicators in the development, monitoring and evaluation of policies including R&D and innovation policies (e.g. with regard to the European Research Area). Research should develop better ways of using indicators in all aspects of policy. The research should look at how indicators, and techniques to analyse them (including modelling)- and evidence based methods have been used in the past and are currently being used in policy in Europe. It should investigate whether they are being used when relevant, if they are used appropriately, and why too little or too much use may be made of them. It should identify where the problems occur, whether in the choice of indicators, their quality, the official statistics from which they are derived, the limitations of the analytical techniques, the balance between qualitative and quantitative

indicators or the ways they are presented to policy makers and the public. The research may look at one or more levels of policy: supranational, national and regional, from macro to micro, and one or more phases of policy, from defining needs, objectives, ex ante evaluations and policy development to implementation and impact assessment.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

Area 8.6.2 Developing better indicators for policy

Objective

The overall objective of this research area is to address the need for new, improved and more appropriate indicators for policy. This is necessary because the use of indicators for policy is complicated by the fact that some of the indicators currently available are inadequate or inappropriate for policy use or simply of poor quality. Furthermore indicators must at one and the same time be empirically reliable and understandable and they need to be looked at both from the point of view of their value and validity when addressing particular policy issues.

Expected impact

Significant improvements in the indicators and methods and models that are used in them in impact assessment are to be expected. This should result in new and significantly improved ways of identifying which factors contribute to increased impact. Contributions to ways of improving policies through the efficient use of impact assessments should result from the work. Also there should be progress towards techniques to build indicators that adequately take into account a variety of different factors affecting impact.

Topics

SSH-2007-6.2.1. Improved ways of measuring both the potential for and impact of policy

Description

The Impact assessment of EU and national policies, including research policy and the European Research Area, is an area where the availability of relevant indicators is important; development of appropriate methods, including data series and models, to build and analyse them is necessary. Research is needed into indicators and methods in support of assessing the potential impact of policies. It should help to identify which factors can and do contribute to any such potential impact and how they contribute to it. The variety of factors could be economic, social, technological institutional, historical, geographical, ethical, related to gender, cultural or sector specific.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

Area 8.6.3 Provision of underlying official statistics

Objective

The overall objective of this research area is to contribute to improving the availability, quality and relevance of official statistics for use in policy. Research is needed on official statistics in order to guarantee that there are the best possible foundations on which to build indicators for use in all aspects of policy. This research may look at problems associated with existing official statistics as well as addressing needs for new official statistics.

Expected impact

Improved harmonisation and standardisation methods leading to more comparable official statistics relative to social, economic and human dimensions. The numbers of gaps in datasets should be reduced and more data on smaller unit and rare events become available. Streamlining the statistical production life cycle and make them more efficient. Official statistics which address key policy questions in a much better way than before. Availability of new and higher quality official statistics through the production of indicators which are more appropriate for policy use.

Topic

SSH-2007-6.3.1 Specific statistical issues

Description

Research is required into specific statistical issues be they horizontal in nature and applicable across all fields of official statistics or of a vertical nature addressing issues related to statistics on certain fields.

Priority will be given to research addressing issues related to key statistical policy areas such as: improvement of data quality, data integration, the statistical production process, data related to small areas and rare events and indicators and data delivery. Research improving the comparability of datasets and indicators through increased and appropriate harmonisation and standardisation. Linking sets of data from different sources and of accessing new sources together with assessing their impact. Increasing the availability of additional relevant and comparable disaggregations in order to solve the issue of "gaps" in statistics e.g. when gender breakdowns are not available. Methods to expand coverage to smaller regional units, sub-threshold and rare events. Streamlining of the statistical production and dissemination process and addressing the issues of quality in its widest sense including coverage, timeliness, comparability, confidentiality vs. usability, cost-effectiveness (including response burden), relevance, impartiality and reliability. Research should aim to build on the work of national statistical institutes or other organisations involved in producing official statistic. The work should be compatible with the European Statistical System and take into account work going on at the international level in order to improve comparability with third countries and linking with international organisations.

Funding scheme: Call(s) for Tender

Area 8.6.4 Development of methods for the evaluation of research policies and programmes

Objective

The overall objective in this research area is to study the specific ways in which indicators and other methods tools and approaches like modelling can be used for the evaluation of research policies and programmes (e.g. European Research Area). Attention should be paid to programme ex post evaluation and ex ante impact assessment and the contribution that they can make to public policy development and decision-making and to more effective and efficient public sector interventions.

Expected impact:

New and improved data collection, processing, and analytical techniques for the modelling of the performance and impacts of policies and programmes; exploitation of the research results for policy-making; improvements in the way policies and programmes are evaluated and their impact is assessed in an ex ante or ex post context. A new and better understanding of the additionality, scientific, technological, human resources, structuring, economic, social, environmental etc impacts of EU and national research programmes and their role and functions.

Topic

SSH-2007-6.4.1 Ex post and ex ante impact analysis of research policies and programmes

Description

The research should develop methods, tools and approaches for the evaluation of research policies and programmes at national and European level. It should estimate the impacts of research efforts and programmes on high-level policy goals. It should identify make available and accessible datasets and databases and modelling frameworks suitable for ex post and ex ante quantitative and qualitative analysis. The research under this topic should include the development and improvement of mathematic models which allow for the analysis of policy scenarios and the generation of concrete short-, medium-, and long-term estimates on the macro-economic impacts and the impacts on research employment and R&D intensity of Community and Member States (sectoral) research efforts and programmes. It should identify ways and means for assessing the effectiveness, efficiency, costs and benefits, and economic and sustainability impacts of research activities. The research could include how to define and use the relevant quantitative and qualitative information in this context. Research should lead to the quantification and understanding of the impacts of EU research. It should also analyse the role, function and impact of the different types of networks resulting from EU research and related policies. The outcome of this research should be useful for the national research programmes.

Funding schemes: Small collaborative projects. Under this area studies may also be launched using Call(s) for Tender

Activity 8.7 Foresight activities

Rationale

By identifying and anticipating the key drivers of change and the related socio-economic impacts, foresight can help to identify future research and innovation priorities going beyond the Lisbon strategy and can contribute to building a strong European Research Area (ERA).

Foresight will contribute to the analysis of changes in the global research system and their possible implications for European research policy. It will also provide strategic intelligence useful for the mid-term revision of FP7 and the preparation of the 8th Framework Programme (FP8).

Specific prospective activities will be carried out on S&T related themes, and support will be given for mutual learning and co-operation in foresight. Information will also be provided and awareness raised through studies, expert groups, and conferences.

Area 8.7.1 Forward Visions on the European Research Area

Activities in this area relate to the issues in the first and third axes of the specific programme (Key challenges and Research systems and policies in Europe).

Objective

The achievement of the ERA is the main priority for European research policy, and will remain so in the future. There is a need for developing perspectives on the future of the ERA and, as an input into that, for assessing the past and the present of the ERA, and for clarifying the main drivers of European S&T integration.

The objective of activities in this area is to obtain a better understanding of key aspects of the ERA, and involves answering questions such as the following: How much progress has been made towards the integration of the ERA? Has the search for economies of scale and scope in research indeed been the driver of the integration of the European Research Area? How much further can the integration of the ERA go, and what obstacles are preventing its achievement? What will be the future global framework of the ERA? What are the key future challenges that the ERA has to respond to? What should be the objectives of the ERA of 2020? How can we monitor progress towards those objectives and where do we stand today?

Expected Impact

Strategic knowledge for the governance and priorities of the RTDI system and for better adapting S&T policy to the shifting global research and technology environment, notably in the context of the mid-term review of FP7 and the preparation of FP8. An understanding of the degree and kind of progress made so far towards the realisation of the European Research Area, and the scope and modalities for future European S&T integration. An insight into when and where economies of scale and scope - the basic principle underpinning the concept of the European Research Area - hold in research. A limited set of credible scenarios and policy options for the future of the European Research Area. A solid basis for the further development of the external dimension of ERA, and the positioning of Europe in a global perspective, including strategic partnerships with key S&T intensive countries.

8.7.1.1 *Inside the European Research Area*

Under this topic, issues will be looked at which concern developments internal and specific to the European Research Area.

Topics

SSH-2007-7.1.1.1 Mapping the Past in View of the Future Integration of the European Research Area

Description

The policies supporting the development of the European Research Area have promoted greater collaboration and coordination between researchers, institutions, and public authorities.

The objective of this activity is to map the progress made so far towards the integration of the European Research Area so as to support the elaboration of scenarios on the future of ERA. The aim is to shed light on the policy instruments that have been (most) effective in promoting the integration of the European Research Area, the types of S&T actors and countries that have formed the most durable links, and the stages in the research process, and S&T disciplines, where integration has been best achieved. The actions implemented under this topic should also seek to assess the scope for further European S&T integration.

Funding Scheme: Call(s) for Tender

Indicative Budget: € 1 000 000

SSH-2007-7.1.1.2 Scale and Scope as Drivers of the European Research Area

Description

The economic literature has identified a substantial number of manufacturing and service industries characterised by so-called economies of scale and scope. The fundamental assumption underlying the concept of the European Research Area and its drive towards further integration is that research efforts are also marked by such economies. The hypothesis is that it is always better to coordinate research investment so as to achieve critical mass, and to pool competences so as to achieve a more productive knowledge mix. In reality, however, very little has been written on this topic in the field of research. Possible problems relating to integration could be, for instance, the creation of monopolies and a lack of dynamism.

The objective of this activity is to obtain a better insight into where economies of scale and scope can be found in research. For instance, when are large firms in a better position than SMEs to carry out research, and in which S&T disciplines, stages of the research process, or stage of the development of the S&T field? When is a network in a better position to carry out research than an individual institution? When is a large network better than a small one? When is a large research project (in terms of funding) better than a small one? While the expected results of this study will be clearly specified, the applicants will be invited to propose suitable methodologies. The comparative use of international data will be encouraged. The results from this study could serve as an input into the development of scenarios concerning possible future modes of integration in the ERA.

Funding Scheme: Call(s) for Tender

Indicative Budget: € 1 500 000

SSH-2007-7.1.1.3 ERA towards 2020: Scenarios and Options for the Future

Description

We need to identify new visions and perspectives for ERA towards 2020 which can help to orient future ERA-related actions. The questions to be answered are the following: what are the new challenges to be addressed? What form will the European Research Area take in the future? What possible avenues and approaches exist towards its speedy realisation? What are the main parameters the scenarios must take on board?

The aim will be to identify and analyse a limited number of credible scenarios and options for the future of the European Research Area. This work should build upon existing material concerning visions and scenarios for European research policies and take account of policy indications emerging from recent Commission communications or action plans.

Funding Scheme: Expert Group

Indicative Budget: € 500 000

8.7.1.2 Outside the European Research Area

This topic will address issues which concern the relationship between the European Research Area and the rest of the world. It will examine both those issues affecting all research intensive economies, whether emerging or developed, and those developments in the rest of the world which have implications for the European Research Area.

Topics

SSH-2007-7.1.2.1 The Joint Exploration of S&T Issues with Other Research-intensive Economies

Description

Today no science and technology region or country is self sufficient. Like Europe, other major research-intensive economies, whether emerging or developed, are forced to view their own development in a context of globalisation and world-wide competition. They face very similar challenges - the mobility of knowledge and the difficulty to appropriate it institutionally or nationally, world-wide competition for S&T disciplines and research labs, and the increasingly global nature of scientific knowledge production - but they also stand to benefit from new opportunities for strategic cooperation in key emerging technology areas. For Europe and the future development of ERA it has become essential to consider where its major competitors and potential partners are heading. The science and technology prospects and future positioning of the US, Japan, China, India, Brazil, Russia, Korea and South East Asia will affect Europe with an increasing intensity and impact.

The objective of this topic is to increase our understanding of where these major science and technology powers are heading as a crucial input into the development of ERA. Europe needs to be aware of emerging threats but also anticipate areas for cooperation and strategic partnerships to tackle common concerns: (1) Where is each region leading its own development and on what assumptions are their S&T policies based?; (2) How do different

research-intensive powers specialise and how do they position themselves in relation to Europe and ERA?; (3) What are the common interests and shared concerns with respect to future global challenges? Where are potential strands for international or strategic cooperation?

Funding schemes: Expert Group; Call(s) for tender

Indicative budget: € 1.000.000

Area 8.7.2 Research, research policy and interrelations with other policy areas (including joined-up policies)

Activities in this area relate to the first axis in the specific programme (Key future economic, social and environmental challenges).

Objective

The achievement of the Lisbon Agenda is the Community's main short- to medium-term priority. While knowledge is at the heart of this strategy, Lisbon also emphasizes the need for interaction between different policies: European research policy can help achieve objectives in other policy areas, while other policies - for instance, macro-economic, market, and competition policy - can help achieve research objectives.

The objective of activities in this area is to obtain a better insight into how policy developments in other policy areas affect the context in which research takes place, as well as into how other policies could be used to further research objectives.

Expected Impact

A better insight into the inter-relations between research and other policy areas from the perspective of the Lisbon Agenda. An improved understanding of how research could contribute to the realisation of objectives in other policy areas, and how other policy areas could contribute to the realisation of objectives in the field of research. A demand perspective on ERA, allying the demand/user perspective of lead markets with the objectives and instruments of a reinvigorated ERA. Inputs for the 2008 ERA communication.

Topics

SSH-2007-7.2.1 Lead Markets and S&T Specialisation in Europe

Description

Public authorities have powerful means of stimulating private investment in research and innovation through measures such as public procurement (accounting for 16 % of EU GDP), regulations, standardisation, consumer policy, and taxation. For instance, when public authorities issue a call for tender, they can specify functional requirements demanding innovative solutions. In a similar way, a new regulation related to a production process can enhance innovation and open up new markets. The creation of lead markets implies a demand-side perspective on science and technology. Public authorities can contribute to the creation of lead markets, while at the same time adapting and focusing research support measures in a proactive way. Business investment in R&D and innovation is strongly influenced by market factors and perceived risks.

The objective of this study is to explore the relation between lead markets and the ERA, and how lead markets can support European S&T specialisation. How can the demand/user perspective of lead markets be translated into objectives for the ERA? What present and

potential RTDI instruments can support the creation of lead markets? Which would be the parameters anticipating a lead market? The activity should exploit variables mentioned in the Aho-group report, such as technological opportunities, relative and emerging scientific strengths of Europe, demands from end-users on science and technology, economic weight in terms of GDP and spill-overs to other industry sectors, impact upon the daily lives of citizens, importance for quality of life, responsiveness to public interventions complementary to R&D, potential for a world-wide market, etc.

Funding Scheme: Expert Group; Call(s) for Tender

Indicative Budget: € 900 000

Area 8.7.3 The Future Dynamics of Key S&T Actors in Europe

Activities in this area relate to the third axis in the specific programme (Research systems and policies in Europe).

Objective

The European Research Area is composed of a multitude of different S&T actors, each with their particular roles and responsibilities as regards the financing and implementation of research: firms (including SMEs and MNEs), universities, research institutes (public and private), emerging actors, etc. These institutions develop research activities autonomously, but also establish links within and across sectors at regional, national and international level. As the economic, social, and environmental context in which these different actors operate changes, so do their respective roles and responsibilities, missions, business models, links with other S&T players and end users, etc.

The objective of work in this area is to deepen the analysis and scenarios already produced and to develop concrete recommendations on how to support the different European S&T actors given the changing context and their evolving role. They should take stock of recent work in this area (such as Foresight on Higher Education, and The Future of Key Research Actors in the European Research Area).

Expected Impact

Alternative roadmaps within the context of future European research policy and programme development. More policy-relevant insights into the evolving roles of key S&T actors in Europe, the challenges they are facing and will face, the ways in which they are reacting or could react in the future, and how policy could support them in this regard. Input useful for the preparation of the 8th Framework programme.

Topics

SSH-2007-7.3.1 The Future of Universities

Description

Universities develop activities in all three components of the knowledge triangle of education, research, and innovation. They establish close links with other S&T players and they are key players in the knowledge-based economy. Society's expectations of universities are high. Universities are supposed to provide high quality education, carry out excellent research, and valorise that research, for instance via spin-offs. But universities face a number of challenges. Because of ageing, the number of national students will eventually decrease, while the international competition for students is increasing. Research funding is allocated

more and more on the basis of assessments of research output and quality. The competition for research talent is global. Ethical questions are raised with regard to some of the research carried out.

Taking stock of the knowledge and scenarios generated by the foresight experts groups and studies realised under the previous Framework Programme, , the objective of this activity is to focus on success scenarios towards 2020. Key questions to be tackled relate to the changes in the demography of students accessing higher education (life long learning, more older-age students, more working students...), the increased need for a better coordination between labour market needs and the supply of trained people from universities, the growing demand in Europe for well trained researches (from European but also international origins), and the changes due to a better integration of the outputs of cognitive sciences and the ways to train people.

Funding Scheme: Expert group

Indicative Budget: € 800 000

Area 8.7.4 Blue Sky Research on Emerging Issues Affecting European S&T

Activities in this area relate to the first and second axes of the specific programme (Key future economic, social and environmental challenges, and Developments in emerging research domains).

Topic

SSH-2007-7.4.1 Blue Sky Research on Emerging Issues Affecting European S&T

Objective

European research policy must be pro-active rather than reactive, and must anticipate important changes in the European research system. This requires the early identification of issues which are just emerging or not yet visible on the policy radar, but could have far-reaching implications for European S&T in the long run. These issues could relate to the complex dynamics in and between scientific disciplines, within and between industries, as well as developments in other areas (energy, demography, global stability, poverty, sustainable development, etc.) with long-term implications for European S&T. These studies should be difficult to classify, be situated outside conventional frameworks, and present innovative and new action strands. The identification of such issues requires some risk-taking, an original vision, and a creative approach.

The objective of work in this area is to produce S&T foresight studies taking a long-term perspective and original approach.

Expected Impact

An improved policy-relevant insight into a broad range of issues pertaining to scientific disciplines, developments in other policy areas, etc. which could have far-reaching implications for European S&T in the long run, but which now are just emerging and not yet or just barely visible on the policy radar. The attraction of more researchers to the field of forward looking studies. Useful inputs for the preparation of the 8th Framework programme.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects.

Indicative Budget: € 3 500 000

Area 8.7.5 Mutual Learning and Cooperation

Topic

SSH-2007-7.5.1 Mutual Learning and Cooperation

Activities in this area relate to the fourth axis of the specific programme (Mutual learning and cooperation).

Objective

Under the 6th Framework Programme, the Community supported mutual learning, coordination, and cooperation in foresight. To that end, it established the *Foresight Knowledge Sharing Platform*, implemented and supported through projects such as the European Foresight Monitoring Network (EFMN), FOR-LEARN and FOR-SOCIETY, an ERA-NET involving foresight practitioners.

The objective of work in this area is to continue the foresight monitoring, mapping and analysis activities such as those carried out through the EFMN, and to pursue further Member State consultation, cooperation and coordination in foresight as has been done through the ERA-NET. Activities in this area concern the fourth axis on mutual learning, coordination, and co-operation between Member State regional and national, Community, third country, and international foresight initiatives.

Work undertaken in this area will also serve the preparation of the ex-post evaluation of FP6-funded foresight activities.

Expected Impact

Improved foresight at European level due to better integration of foresight results obtained at other policy levels. Reduced fragmentation of the European foresight community as important overlaps and gaps will be reduced. Better quality of foresight in Europe because of the shared development and use of validated foresight methodologies.

Funding schemes: Support actions; Call(s) for tender

Indicative Budget: € 1 000 000

Activity 8.8 Strategic Activities

This part of the work-programme describes certain “horizontal” activities that are necessary for the good implementation of the specific thematic priority, in particular emerging and unforeseen policy needs, international cooperation, dissemination of programme activities and strategic studies.

Topics

SSH-2007-8.1 Emerging needs

Specific programme

Research on emerging needs will offer a space for researchers to identify and address research challenges not specified above. It will encourage innovative thinking about challenges facing Europe not being widely discussed up to now or other relevant combinations of issues, perspectives and disciplines.

Description

Under this work-programme, small², highly-innovative, collaborative research projects will be supported. These projects are invited to address challenges facing Europe – or challenges facing the world that are important for Europe – that have not been identified above. It could also, or alternatively, address the challenges that are identified in the Specific Programme and the Activities above, but in different combinations, from different perspectives or using any combination of social sciences and humanities disciplines.

Expected impact

Innovative understanding of challenges not widely discussed but nevertheless important for Europe now or in the future. Increased attention of policy-makers and other societal actors to these issues.

Funding scheme: Small collaborative projects

SSH-2007-8.2 Measures to support international cooperation

Specific programme

Given the strong international dimension of the research, international cooperation will be developed in all areas of the theme and project coordinators are encouraged to include partners from third countries where this would be appropriate to strengthen the research in question. Specific international cooperation actions will be undertaken on a multilateral and bilateral basis by taking account of the needs and mutual interest of the partners in the geographical regions concerned as well as those of Europe, taking into account also specific European strategic frameworks for cooperation. The European research priorities are identified in this Work Programme.

Given the limited resources of this theme, it is not realistic to envisage projects promoting international cooperation with each and every third country. Priority will therefore be given to supporting cooperation at the regional level e.g. EU-Latin America, EU-South East Asia etc. For countries such as China, India, Russia, the U.S., bilateral projects to stimulate cooperation with European SSH scholars can however be envisaged

Description

Specific international co-operation actions for the development of partnerships between communities of scholars, research institutions and agencies in the EU countries and associated ones in the FP and other world regions are to be supported, especially in relation

² It is however useful to recall here that the minimum requirements on participation in the 7th FP will still be at least three research teams from three different Member States.

to common challenges and opportunities. These would be embedded in the call for proposals expected under the thematic priority for the year 2007. They would include (a) horizontal measures such as strategic studies of research capacities and priorities, joint conferences and workshops, and joint summer-schools ; (b) collaborative research projects on topics of mutual interest for both parties (all topics included in this Call are in principle open to these research projects).

Expected impact

Increasing international cooperation in research and better understanding of other regions, cultures and their socio-economic and policy development

Funding schemes: Coordination and Support Actions, small collaborative projects.

SSH-2007-8.3 Measures to support dissemination of research

Specific programme

Specific dissemination actions targeted at particular groups and the general public will be undertaken, including workshops and conferences for researchers to discuss with policy-makers and other stakeholders, and the diffusion of results using various media.

Description

Dissemination actions will be undertaken systematically using the latest available technologies for exploiting the media (Websites, electronic newsletters, projects websites). Specific attention will be paid to dissemination and valorisation actions that synthesise knowledge coming from projects to a wide variety of stakeholders including the policy makers at national, regional or European level.

Funding schemes: Coordination and Support Actions.

Expected impact

Increased absorption of research results by society; better informed public opinion; improved debate and better policy discussion and outcomes in Europe.

SSH-2007-8.4 Trans-national co-operation among National Contact Points (NCPs) for Socio-economic sciences and the Humanities

Description

Reinforcing the network of National Contact Points (NCP) for the Seventh Framework Programme under Socio-economic sciences and humanities, by promoting trans-national co-operation. The action will focus on identifying and sharing good practice. This may entail various mechanisms such as benchmarking, joint workshops, training, and twinning schemes. Practical initiatives to benefit cross-border audiences may also be included, such as trans-national brokerage events. The specific approach should be adapted to the nature of the theme and to the capacities and priorities of the NCPs concerned.

Special attention will be given to helping less experienced NCPs rapidly acquire the know-how accumulated in other countries.

Proposals are expected to include all NCPs who have been officially appointed by the relevant national authorities. Other participants from the EU and associated countries are ineligible. If certain NCPs wish to abstain from participating, this fact should be explicitly documented in the proposal.

The action may also involve official FP7 contacts from the international cooperation partner countries.

The Commission expects to receive a single proposal under this heading.

Funding scheme

Co-ordination and support action; indicative budget: € 3 M. (It is expected that the project should last for a maximum of 5 years, and should in any case finish before March 2013).

Expected impact:

- An improved NCP service across Europe, therefore helping simplify access to FP7 calls, lowering the entry barriers for newcomers, and raising the average quality of submitted proposals.
- A more consistent level of NCP support services across Europe.
- More effective participation of organisation from third countries, alongside European organisations, in line with the principle of mutual benefit.

SSH-2007-8.5 Impact Assessment studies

Studies to assess the impact of EU research in social sciences and humanities on policy and on science.

Description

In depth studies are needed to assess the impact of research actions funded at European level in social sciences and humanities, on Policy and Science. Over the last decade the European Commission has funded some 450 collaborative research projects and more recently Networks of Excellence in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities. These research actions have brought together a large number of research institutions and communities of scholars in Europe generating new creative links and strengthened the European Research Area. At the same time, important policy messages were generated by projects which in a number of cases had impact on policy makers. This double impact on Policy and Science has to be assessed in order to improve future performance of collaborative research projects in the area of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Expected impact

Better understanding of the overall impact of Socio-economic and humanities research activities on policy making as well as on the scientific disciplines themselves at national and European level.

Funding scheme: Study following Call for tender (€1 million)

SSH-2007-8.6 ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus

Description

In the area of Social sciences and humanities, the ERA-NET scheme may be used to develop and strengthen the coordination of national and regional research activities by:

- Providing a framework for actors implementing public research programmes to step up the coordination of their activities. This will include support for new ERA-NETs as well as for the broadening and deepening of the scope of existing ERA-NETs, e.g. by extending their partnership, as well as opening mutually their programmes;
- Providing additional EU financial support to those participants that create a common fund for the purpose of joint calls for proposals between their respective national and regional programmes (“ERA-NET PLUS”).

A limited number of ERA-NETs and ERA-NET Plus schemes are expected to be implemented through this Call. However, contracts related to ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus are expected to be signed only in the first months of 2008.

Expected impact

European Research Area Networks (ERA-NET) have proved to be a cost-effective means for coordinating national research programmes. Such coordination is very important in the area of Social sciences and Humanities and it is expected that the ERA-NET scheme will contribute to this objective by bringing together relevant funding agencies and research councils.

Funding scheme: Coordination and Support Actions in the range of € 500 000 to 1.6 million.

SSH-2007-8.7 *Monitoring European Trends in Research in the Socio-economic sciences and humanities (METRIS)*

Description

As part of the implementation of the European Research Area, the objective is to prepare a system to establish the ‘state of the art’ of socio-economic sciences and humanities and to monitor its development in Europe at national and European levels in order (1) to inform relevant policy-makers and all other stakeholders, (2) to increase the visibility of research endeavours in different parts of the Union and (3) to increase the visibility of these sciences in European policy and society. The system will be developed in consultation with public and private research funding bodies as well as associations of researchers. It will include a bi-annual strategic conference on socio-economic sciences and the humanities (which could be held in Brussels or be part of the events of the Union presidency), the publication of a European report on the main trends in SSH research in Europe, and the maintenance of an on-line system with information about socio-economic sciences and humanities in Europe. METRIS will build-upon established national systems of providing information about socio-economic sciences and humanities where these exist, providing them with visibility and enhancing their European dimension. Where such systems do not exist, METRIS may in cooperation with the country in question launch information gathering measures to support national efforts. A network of personalities will advise the Commission on the content and data gathering exercises, which will be launched via calls for tender. A review of achievements in late 2008 will inform decisions about the further development, continuation or abandonment of the observatory.

Expected impact

Improved knowledge of the state of the art of European socio-economic sciences and humanities. Improved co-ordination of national and European policies in this field in Europe.

Higher visibility of research endeavours in the different parts of the Union. Better informed decisions by policy-makers and other stakeholders.

Funding schemes: High Level Expert Group and calls for tender (€1.5 million)