

## **Proposals for recommendations from the CPU**

### **The place of the HSS in Common Strategic Framework**

**April 2011**

The recommendations made in this document are intended to outline the view of the French universities on the place of the Human and Social Sciences in European programming for the period after 2013. The focus is on planning and not on the scientific subjects within partnerships with regard to France.

#### **I. Towards a simplified programme**

Currently the Human and Social Sciences (HSS) are taking part in several programmes of various DGs of the European Commission: specific programmes of the 7th FPRD (cooperation, ideas, people, capacities), within the subjects of the transversal participation cooperation programme (environment-energy, health, etc.), other European programmes and the Structural Funds. Although these instances of participation respond to specific requests, it seems possible to make a number of simplifications:

- **Proposal 1:** Simplification can be achieved by combining calls, in particular by incorporating the "science in society" programme into collaborative HSS research or as a distinct item in the same programme.
- **Proposal 2 :** Reducing the number of financing schemes so as to simplify access to European programmes.
- **Proposal 3 :** The French universities advocate the further development of the European HSS operational platform which should in particular bring together all the European calls concerning HSS.

#### **II - Necessary balance between bottom-up and top-down approaches to ensure vertical and transverse structuring**

While the major challenges should respond to European issues, it is also necessary to establish mechanisms guaranteeing a balance with bottom-up research:

- **Proposal 4 :** The specific nature of the issues in society requires a specific HSS segment in future collaborative research. The HSS play a specific role in understanding, forecasting and anticipating changes that will occur in our society in the years to come, a process that also results from cooperation among the various HSS disciplines ;
- **Proposal 5 :** the French universities ask for 50% open calls for collaborative projects in order to better meet the needs of the different scientific communities and to encourage the diversity of disciplines.

- **Proposal 6** : the HSS play an important role in meeting the great challenges and in ensuring the emergence of creative and innovative projects. Hence the need to make them contribute to all the great challenges defined in the flagship initiatives of EU2020 and the new coordination mechanisms such as the EIPs. In order to enable the HSS to play an active role across the board both vertically or transversally and with a view to ensuring fair funding, a separate "HSS" budget should be created (possibly with specific funds earmarked for transversal activities) [Cf. proposal 12].

### **III - Towards setting up networks with a European scope**

Support for networking among researchers is essential and brings European research laboratories closer together. It is conducive to generating new ideas and fosters mutual European integration (post-doctoral students, researchers, experienced researchers, staff, etc.).

- **Proposal 7** : accordingly, it is important to ensure that a part of the calls are dedicated to collaborative research projects with a significant budget for coordination projects (15% or 20% increase of CSA for HSS).
- **Proposal 8** : these networks will be properly managed and will pursue precise short-term objectives (two years). They will be the fruit of a specific methodology and yield a return for the scientific and non-scientific communities.

### **IV - Towards a balance between large and small structures**

The HSS are diverse and multifarious. In recent years, the role of the HSS in work programmes has varied considerably according to discipline. However, associated with other fields, e.g. the Arts and the ICT sciences, they are a source of innovation. The humanities and social sciences provide essential tools for understanding Europe and its relations with other parts of the world, in particular with regard to questions of cohesion and management of cultural diversity. Having balanced recourse to all the HSS expands our knowledge of society.

- **Proposal 9** : ensuring that there are collaborative projects of limited scale (3 to 5 European partners) in the framework of collaborative research to facilitate administrative and financial management and ensure a plurality of disciplines and to secure access for new players on the basis of excellence.
- **Proposal 10** : creating a federative structure of calls in the framework of the major challenges by establishing a threefold division: 40% of topics of the major challenge will be tackled through a monodisciplinary approach, 40% through an interdisciplinary approach and 20% on the basis of a random topic. Each topic would benefit from specially earmarked funds and would be independent in the way it is operated. The "random" topic would serve to provide scope for a new idea emerging in the course of developing the project. That topic would be assigned on the basis of a decision by a committee external to the project.

## **V - The role of the Human and Social Sciences in social and technological innovation**

The Human and Social Sciences play a fundamental role throughout the innovation process, an increasingly important role in particular in knowledge transfer, within a social and community innovation context or within a technical and technological innovation framework, while at the same time fostering the emergence of innovative and/or creative projects commensurate with the future needs of society.

- **Proposal 11:** promoting calls for proposals jointly drawn up by researchers in human sciences and in other sciences, working towards bringing human and social sciences and the exact sciences closer together, or other sciences such as ICT, would lead to the emergence of projects which would not have been possible through a purely technological approach. The universities ask that within the framework of calls for collaborative research proposals a structuring working party be set up dedicated to the HSS to guarantee an interdisciplinary approach.
- **Proposal 12 :** The French universities wish to have the best guarantees that EU funding is devoted to the various aspects of innovation, in particular non-technological innovation, and also to the innovation economy and social and societal innovation. They advocate a call which in the framework of the ESF is dedicated to HSS so as to encourage the drawing-up of proposals, more specifically in terms of social and societal innovation, which is barely developed in our part of the world. This call could be open to proposals shared with other disciplines that should nevertheless comprise two-thirds HSS disciplines.
- **Proposal 13 :** The French universities undertake to enhance the visibility of the competencies of the universities of the humanities and social sciences in order to make their competencies and capacities more transparent and thereby facilitate their contribution to and use for market policy and society in general.