



## Contents

### Introduction to the workshop 1

### The debate 3

Proposed research themes for the *Improving Human Potential Action Harnessing socio-economic research to the needs of European society* 3

Social science research needs in relation to *Improving Human Potential* actions concerning 'research infrastructure' and 'research training networks and fellowships' 8

Potential socio-economic research contribution to Thematic Programmes and Key Actions 11

### Conclusions 13

### Appendices 14

The European Science Foundation acts as a catalyst for the development of science by bringing together leading scientists and funding agencies to debate, plan and implement pan-European initiatives.

## Foreword

During the development phase of the current Fourth Framework Programme, the ESF Standing Committee for the Social Sciences (SCSS) played a significant role in building the case for the establishment of a programme on *Targeted Socio-Economic Research* (TSER), and for the incorporation of socio-economic components in other programmes.

More recently, in its contribution to the 1996 ESF position paper *Beyond Framework Programme IV*, the SCSS sought to maintain this impetus by proposing for FPV a research theme addressing *Change and stability in European society* and by indicating where social science research could be integrated within programmes on information technology, environment, transport and health.

Under the leadership of its new Chairman, Professor Robert Erikson, the SCSS has continued, since then, to provide further specification of the potential socio-economic research contribution to FPV. At a recent workshop in Stockholm, the Committee brought together leading social scientists and Commission officials to debate the Commission's proposals for social science research within FPV.

This *Briefing* reports on the Stockholm debate and aims at providing a further ESF contribution to the discussions taking place in the Commission, the Council of Research Ministers, the European Parliament and in other organisations at a European and national level.

**Peter Fricker**  
ESF Secretary General

## Introduction to the workshop

Professor Robert Erikson (SCSS Chairman) welcomed all participants to the workshop and expressed his gratitude to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences for their willingness to host the meeting.

The purpose of the present workshop, he explained, was to build upon SCSS's earlier work in this field by fostering discussion of the European Commission's preliminary drafts of the proposed content of socio-economic research in the Fifth Framework Programme (1998-2002) in order to provide feedback and advice from the scientific community. The focus would be threefold in addressing:

- *Improving Human Potential* (IHP) actions on *Harnessing socio-economic research to the needs of society*;
- reinforcing human research capital in the social sciences through 'research training networks and fellowships' and 'research infrastructure';
- potential social science research input to the main Thematic Programmes and Key Actions in FPV.

Professor Erikson viewed the workshop as an innovative venture in initiating an active dialogue between social scientists and the European Commission on the future social science contribution to FPV. In this important respect, Professor Erikson welcomed the participation of Dr. Achilleas Mitsos (Director, Human Capital and Mobility/Targeted Socio-Economic Research, EU Directorate General XII) and his colleagues and their willingness to engage in this debate on the preliminary proposals concerning socio-economic research priorities.

Dr. John Smith (SCSS Scientific Secretary) introduced briefly the content of ESF's work in the social sciences which over the past 20 years had ranged across 20 scientific programmes and networks from the first programme on *Migration in Europe* launched in the late 1970s to the latest network *Human reasoning and decision-making* launched this autumn. Each scientific programme involved, on average, over 100 researchers from throughout Europe collaborating within a framework of research activities spanning over a period of three to five years. Drawing upon the experience of these programmes and the extensive networks of social scientists involved, the SCSS began to take an active role in demonstrating the case for the necessary integration of social science research in European Community Framework Programmes.

As a consequence, the SCSS was invited by the European Commission to provide expert advice in this field, particularly through two commissioned reports *The Social sciences in the context of the European communities* (H. Newby, H. Nowotny, 1991) and *Social science frontiers in European research* (G. Martinotti, 1993). Similarly, the European Parliament's Scientific and Technological Options Assessment Panel (STOA) invited SCSS to convene jointly expert hearings on *Assessing the role of the human and social sciences in European research* in 1993 and the expert presentations were subsequently published.

In inviting participants to the present workshop, Dr. Smith explained that SCSS had tried to ensure some continuity with this earlier advisory work, and to draw upon the experience of its own programmes and networks. Dr. Smith thanked all participants for their willingness to engage in this dialogue, and particularly to Professor Helga Nowotny and Professor Guido Martinotti whom, as former SCSS Chairpersons, had devoted a lot of time

and energy to this earlier productive work.

Finally, Dr Smith offered apologies on behalf of invited participants who had been unable to attend owing to other pressing professional commitments – Professor Fredrik Engelstad (Norway), Professor Joao Ferreira de Almeida (Portugal), Professor Rainer Münz (Austria), Professor Arne Ohman (Sweden) and Professor Bert van der Knaap (the Netherlands).

In order to establish the framework of the workshop debate, Professor Erikson asked Dr. Mitsos to present the European Commission's preliminary proposals for socio-economic research in FPV. In his opening remarks, Dr. Achilleas Mitsos firstly thanked the ESF/SCSS for taking this important initiative in starting the dialogue with the scientific community on the Commission's proposals for socio-economic research in FPV. He emphasised that the Commission does not have the 'key' to what socio-economic research can or should contribute to Community research programmes addressing European policy-making. He saw the present meeting as beginning a valuable consultation process with the social science research community to define the scientific content and appropriate mechanisms to allow socio-economic research to play a full and proper role. The Commission's proposal concerning FPV placed emphasis on the need for Community-funded research to address European problems and to meet citizen's social and economic aspirations. This new approach was embedded in the Commission's proposal for the three 'vertical' Thematic Programmes (i.e. *Unlocking the Resources of the Living World and the Ecosystem; Creating a User-Friendly Information Society; and, Promoting Competitive and Sustainable Growth*). Socio-economic research expertise needed to be present in these Thematic Programmes and their respective Key Actions. Through the

'horizontal' programme *Improving Human Potential*, operational mechanisms will be implemented to bring socio-economic research perspectives into the drafting of these thematic programme Key Actions and their 'calls for proposals'.

An essential tool to help achieve this goal was to create a 'focal point' within IHP to act as means through which appropriate socio-economic research expertise/perspectives could be channelled to the thematic programmes and key actions. The proposed IHP action *Harnessing socio-economic research to the needs of European society* was designed to meet this purpose. Dr. Mitsos explained that the preliminary draft of this action made available for discussion at the workshop offered three broadly defined themes and issues:- 'Societal trends and structural changes'; 'New development models encouraging growth and employment'; and 'Governance and citizenship' (Appendix 1). The present overall emphasis on major processes of social, economic and political change was designed to tap into and attract the research interests of the main social science disciplines. Accompanying actions to provide research training networks and fellowships and research infrastructure support would reinforce the social science research capacity to tackle these themes. Clearly, these broad themes would need to be narrowed down in order to focus research on policy-orientated goals. The greater specification of the research questions would have to come about through interaction between social scientists and policy-makers. In this way, the Commission hoped to mobilise the best research teams and individual researchers to tackle topics which were at the heart of citizen's concerns. Dr. Mitsos welcomed this workshop as an important first step in this process.

## The debate

### **Proposed research themes for the *Improving Human Potential Action Harnessing socio-economic research to the needs of European society***

As a general remark, the observation was made that the 'Explanatory Memorandum' which introduced the European Commission's proposal concerning the Fifth Framework Programme (Com (97) 142 final 30.4.97) placed considerable rhetorical emphasis on the major socio-economic challenges facing Europe. Yet, this was not translated into socio-economic research needs within the proposed major thematic programmes i.e. *Unlocking the Resources of the Living World and the Ecosystem*, *Creating a User-Friendly Information Society*, and *Promoting Competitive and Sustainable Growth*. Clearly, greater focus on the 'human dimension' of these research themes was required. This work could draw upon well-established social science research expertise, for example, on the social shaping of technology and innovation; and on socio-economic, attitudinal and behavioural analyses relating to the environment, health and urban development. Bearing this important need in mind, the broad-based socio-economic research themes presented in the IHP programme (below) were well-chosen; they were likely to attract high quality research teams and individual researchers and hence offered the opportunity for relevant expertise to be used in specifying the content of the main thematic programmes.

### **Societal trends and structural changes**

Professor Gordon Marshall presented his views on the Commission's preliminary text on this research theme. The text had identified important social

trends which were evident in many contemporary European societies and worthy of study as a contribution to the development of public policy-making in Europe. The key issue would be the research design and methodology of the projects which would seek to provide valuable results *vis-à-vis* the questions posed. Professor Marshall argued the case for a 'productive marriage' of quantitative and qualitative research methodology combining social survey approaches with social networks analysis. When network analyses were linked to large-scale social surveys then genuinely convincing causal narratives may emerge. In order to address socio-economic policy issues, such as why some immigrant families succeeded economically while others (seemingly identical) failed to thrive, and why some single parents who were dependent on welfare payments suffered chronic clinical depression while others were mentally-balanced, it was necessary to examine the actual social relationship in which immigrants and single parents were involved. In his view, whatever the substantive issues that were ultimately agreed upon for study under this research theme, considerable thought would need to be given to the role of changing social networks within the expanding Europe of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. For example, increased rates of migration created new communities-within-communities, and new possibilities for assimilation and conflict; geographical mobility affected family-life, with consequences for the types of informal welfare support that were available, notably for elderly parents by their children. These developments were taking place against a background of increasing globalisation on the one hand, combined with greater European regional diversity on the other. Such themes constituted major European policy concerns that could be addressed valuably by social scientists.

In the subsequent debate chaired by Professor Robert Erikson the following

points were made. It was agreed that a plurality of methodologies was required to study increasingly complex and interlinked societal changes. Social survey findings were incremental and particularly valuable over time. The time dimension was crucial to understanding people's life trajectories. Social science research methods needed to build "memory" into the process of studying individual and group behaviour. Here, several disciplines had skills and research experience to offer, e.g. political science and sociology in the study of attitudes, and psychology, sociology and statistics through lifecourse analysis of individual behaviour.

Social network analysis also held promise in relation to studying the implementation of particular policies and their 'take-up' at the different levels, European, national and regional. Similarly, such analyses were valuable in ascertaining how knowledge was acquired and used. Social network methodology was, therefore, pertinent to the other main research themes of FPV concerned with technological innovation and the 'user-friendly' information society.

In summary, from a policy research perspective, social science research on this theme should address the processes working towards (and, vice versa, inhibiting) stability in European society, particularly in terms of the strengthening of 'trust' and 'community-building'. Both quantitative and qualitative data would shed light on the conditions for, and the meaning of the terms 'trust' and 'community-building' for individuals and groups.

### **New development models encouraging growth and employment**

Professor Günther Schmid considered potential research strategies to support promising development models of growth and employment. He suggested

that an interesting approach was to distinguish between the quantity and quality dimensions of growth and employment (which were inter-related) and to ask which indicators and methodologies might bring forward new solutions. Adopting this approach, Professor Schmid identified three important issues that were missing from the Commission's preliminary texts on this research theme. These were as follows:

**(a) the issue of work sharing and income distribution.**

Research was needed to support or to reject the assumption that work sharing as a method of influencing income distribution (for example, shortening working hours to reduce unemployment) was an important determinant for growth and employment.

**(b) the issue of gender had to be made more explicit.**

There was a strong assumption that women's disadvantages in the labour market were important determinants of low growth and segmented or segregated labour markets that prevented mobility and flexibility.

**(c) the issue of global demand management.**

It was evident that growth depended much on the proper role of financing private and public investments. Given that the capital market was a complex set of national and international actors, this research question was not only a matter for mainstream economics but also a political economy approach that studied systematically the incentives and constraints of strategic actors involved in capital formation and implementation.

On the assumption that the 'European social model' aimed to balance quantity and quality issues in growth and employment, more attention should be given to the quality of jobs and corresponding income and career implications. There was a need for research exploring viable institutional

frameworks that provided employment, or the Dutch concept of "Kunstwort" or "flexicurity" (combining both flexibility and security), instead of the traditional model of job security. Given also the ageing of the European population, the question arises whether the old-age pension systems can be any longer financed primarily through social security contributions and earned income taxes or whether additional sources of financing (e.g. consumption, energy, property taxes and capital income) should be promoted in order to relieve labour costs and thereby encourage growth and employment.

Such innovative approaches would require also conceptual research to improve the infrastructure for comparative data sets. This should relate to the precision of definitions such as 'unemployment', 'employability' and 'flexibility'. Analysis of new trends of growth and employment will require 'data settings' that allow the merging of various data sources, with more emphasis on longitudinal data sets. As employment careers become more and more discontinuous the possibility of merging career patterns with contextual variables (such as policy changes, critical life events) becomes crucial for future research in this field.

These above points implied firstly that research should concentrate on 'transitional labour markets' that provided proper institutional frameworks to 'transit' between various employment statuses on a regulated or negotiated basis, for instance, between dependent work and self employment, between part-time and full-time work, between work and education/training. And, secondly, research was required on models of decoupling to some extent social security from labour market careers.

Professor Emilio Huerta commented on the Commission's draft text by emphasising the need to place more specific reference to individual firms' behaviour and their comparative

adaptability to the globalisation of economic life. While a lot of research had addressed multinational corporations' decision-making on locations for production and their consequences within Europe, more priority should be given to research on small and medium sized firms and their 'entrepreneurial culture' particularly because the SME sector continued to create new employment opportunities.

Professor Helga Nowotny chaired the debate following these two presentations. There was agreement that the driving concept of this research theme should be to encourage projects that tested the adaptability and resilience of the 'European Social Model' in the face of the globalisation of economic life. There were many economic initiatives/innovations at the national and regional level which could be studied valuably from a comparative perspective. An interdisciplinary approach was preferable, combining, for example, economics, demography and regional geography in order to reach a fuller understanding of why some firms perform better in some locations rather than others. The strength of Europe was the diversity of its employment policies and regulation. From this wealth of experience the possibility of exportable successful models for growth and employment from one country/region to the European framework should be explored. New conceptual models for growth and employment should maximise the development and utility of human and social capital.

### **Governance and citizenship**

In the absence of the invited speaker, Professor Kenneth Newton (owing to his sudden illness), the Chairman of this session, Professor Ronald Amann presented Professor Newton's paper adding his own further observations. The key issue of this research theme was the dual process of the deepening of European institutions and their linkage and the enlargement of EU

membership. This dual process was profoundly difficult and held the potential of conflictual interests stemming from historical and cultural roots. The Commission's draft text tackles this dual process by focusing on 'the need to re-assess the role of different levels of governance in Europe'. The text should be expanded to illustrate the inter-relationship between 'Governance' and 'Citizenship' and the parallel developments and tensions underlying them.

Governance implied institutions, their authority, demographic representation, differing regulatory and administrative cultures. Their effectiveness related to their handling of competing interests, their responsiveness and coalition building, and their ability to enforce compliance when decisions were taken. The smooth running and effectiveness of institutions depended to a large part on citizens' beliefs and shared identity concerning institutions' purposes and goals. There were increasing pressures for the development of European level government and trans-European public bodies of different kinds of functions. Simultaneously there are increasing demands for local and regional autonomy, and pressures for the preservation of existing structures and practices.

Citizenship, at the individual level, was affected by the Europeanisation of cultures as individuals were increasingly subject to similar sets of social, economic and political forces. Although a common European identity was presently weak, it seemed likely to gain strength under the pressure of these common forces in future years. Modern society, however, involved also increasingly individual and fragmented life-styles, greater demands for individual autonomy and greater freedom for minorities. This had manifested itself in demands for more individual political involvement to protect and develop diverse social and political values.

Research on the topics of Governance and Citizenship needed to understand these parallel developments and hence focus its attention on:

- trends in individual values, identities and aspirations across Europe (current and pending EU member countries);
- institutional trends and the emerging organisational features of Europeanisation;
- the relationship between individual and institutional trends.

The preliminary draft texts were right to emphasise the importance of research on the evolution of welfare states, patterns and strategies of integration, the foundations (both solid and weak) for the construction of collective identities, and the impact of a common audio-visual media.

Following this presentation, the debate focussed on the embeddedness of institutions and the extent to which they would serve as potential barriers to European economic and monetary union. Comparative research on a longitudinal basis was needed which examined how national and regional institutions, in all their diversity and interactions, were responding to the European integration process. Performance would also be an important factor in relation to a re-assessment of the role of different levels of government. Movement towards European economic and monetary union was taking place at an historical period following the collapse of communist states in Europe. Hence, democracy was no longer challenged by an 'ugly alternative'. Citizens can be expected, therefore, to demand better performance and effectiveness from democratic institutions and procedures.

Concerning Citizenship and European integration, Professor Max Kaase added that three perspectives would be essential, drawing upon a strongly established research tradition mainly in political science and sociology. Firstly, *intermediary structures* (i.e. political

parties, mass media, public interest groups, trade unions) should be studied to measure the extent to which 'Europeanisation' is occurring within them. Such research would be valuable, for example, as an empirical basis for prospective studies of the factors at play in constructing a European party system.

Secondly, *accountability* of redefined levels of government at European, national and regional level will be crucial. At present, the low turn-out at European Parliament elections compared to national parliamentary elections indicated citizens' views on where accountability operated. The design and implementation of new mechanisms of accountability will be clearly a central policy and research issue as European monetary and economic union proceeds. Citizens were likely to become more frustrated, giving rise to more tensions, if greater accountability of European institutions were not achieved.

This point led to the third essential perspective, *participation*, and the need for research on new procedures to widen the basis of who is 'included' in democratic decision-making and to meet new demands for participation in political institutions.

In summary, this research theme should examine at the regional, national and European level the multi-faceted nature of the building of a 'European Identity' and its embeddedness in reformed democratic institutions and citizenship rights.

## **Social science research needs in relation to *Improving Human Potential* actions concerning 'research infrastructure' and 'research training networks and fellowships'**

### **Research infrastructure**

Professor Max Kaase observed that there was no question in European policy-makers' minds that European diversity (in terms of institutions and culture) must thrive even as the process of economic and political integration within the EU context continued. It was exactly this process, however, which would create simultaneously, through regional mobility across the European Union (and beyond), even more diversity in the sense that previously culturally relatively homogeneous units will become internally more heterogeneous. This process entailed a large potential for enhanced understanding between peoples, but also for social and political conflict. It was essential for social science research to examine this process of differentiation under conditions of globalisation, and to analyse its consequences in a mid-to long-term perspective.

General social surveys and welfare surveys, representative sample surveys of national population usually conducted every second year on systematically varying and continuous central topics of interest to social science, had become standard and highly utilised tools of social science research in many countries. With this type of longitudinal evidence available, the micro study of social and political change had been undertaken for many years. Using these data bases, analyses of central topics such as changing values, political beliefs, work habits, religious convictions, communication behaviour and lifestyles had been underpinned by solid empirical evidence.

Unfortunately, up to this point, such topics could not be studied comparatively across European countries in a systematic manner because the present surveys (with the small exceptions of the Eurobarometer and the International Social Survey Programme) addressed only national problems in individual countries. The ESF *Beliefs in Government* (BiG) project (published in five volumes by Oxford University Press in late 1995), which involved a major stocktaking of changing political orientations of citizens in postwar Western Europe, relied exclusively on secondary analysis of existing data bases harboured in academic data archives. The BiG project revealed the extent to which 'white spots' in the landscape of data on social and political orientations were present across time and countries.

The acknowledgement of both the need for and the potential of richer comparative data sets on European social and political change subsequently motivated the ESF Standing Committee for the Social Sciences to develop a blueprint for a European Social Survey (ESS). The preparation of the ESS blueprint was being undertaken by social survey researchers from 20 European countries and it was planned to be completed by the end of 1998 for presentation to potential funders. It would entail, as its core element, a concept for a representative sample survey of the adult population of European nations to be conducted every second year with a mixture of fixed and variable questions. In order to enhance the analytical potential of the ESS, it was planned to add socio-statistical information from official sources (e.g. EUROSTAT) and data on nation-specific institutional social and political arrangements from the countries and regions where individual survey respondents reside.

Professor Kaase expressed the hope that ESS would become a widely used instrument for primary comparative



research, and an important element in the European infrastructure for social research. It could also serve as a model for the type of European research infrastructure in the social sciences where national facilities cooperated in a network to create 'added-value'.

Professor Denise Lievesley's presentation complemented that of Professor Kaase by placing emphasis on the effective use of existing data rather than explaining the need for new instruments to generate the collection of high quality comparative data. In her view, the key role of the European Commission was to promote a culture of data sharing across Europe. Barriers to data access (particularly of cross national flows) needed to be identified and removed. Europe was data rich but access problems for researchers were formidable. On the other hand, researchers as data users must be sensitive to the concerns of data providers and respect confidentiality of data, copyright and intellectual property rights (IPR). In this respect, a generic research theme for FPV within the 'research infrastructure' heading was to foster a dialogue about the data required for 'good governance' and the ownership of public data.

In fostering a culture of data sharing, it was not enough to be concerned with creating research infrastructure within the academic sector but also that within the public sector. Public agencies which collected data should focus more on the user needs and their relevance to the community at the respective levels i.e. local, regional, national and European. At present, data collected regularly by official statistics agencies were much under-utilised. Social science expertise could be valuably drawn upon in advising on how official statistics and administrative data were handled and utilised. Within FPV, the European Commission should establish a working dialogue between social scientists and statisticians on how data from academic and official administrative sources could

be harmonised and disseminated to support research addressing EU social and economic policy goals. Specific efforts might concentrate upon filling important relevant gaps in the national networks of social science data centres, providing funds for sharing of expertise, integrated holdings, creating shared systems of access and enabling researchers to use data resources in other countries.

The preservation of data relevant for social and economic policy analysis was a crucial concern. In particular, the selection and preservation of electronic data from a variety of different sources should be given immediate attention. This was an essential priority because data resources grew in value over time and the more they were used. Professor Lievesley concluded that new investment now to provide the expertise and support systems necessary for European research infrastructure would ensure value for money in the medium-to-long term, because it would prevent duplication of effort and reduce the need to collect fresh data. The provision of such infrastructure and its maintenance was likely to have a major impact on the competence and ability of researchers to contribute to the competitiveness of Europe.

In the subsequent debate, it was agreed that the Commission's proposals to widen the coverage of the criteria governing research infrastructure support to include the needs of socio-economic research were a major step in the right direction. Importantly, the proposals went properly beyond the normal tendency to restrict the issue of research infrastructure to simply a matter of access. It was welcomed that the development of new research instruments, such as the European Social Survey, would be eligible under the research infrastructures heading. On the need for greater cooperation between the research community, statisticians and statistics offices, 'best practice' experience at the national level

could be explored for possible implementation at the European level (for example, on the model of the Norwegian Data Archive, NSD, and its cooperation with Statistics Norway and other data agencies). While it was recognised that the issue probably fell outside the remit of the Commission and FPV, the preservation and maintenance of high quality data resources was an essential component in the future policy development of the European Union. Greater attention would inevitably have to be given to this important issue in the coming years.

### Research training networks and fellowships

In chairing this session Professor José Ramón Montero opened the discussions by welcoming the clear statement made in the Commission's text that Research Training Networks and Marie Curie Fellowships would be open to all fields of scientific research of FPV, 'including the economic, legal and social sciences'. Drawing particularly upon their roles and experiences as scientific coordinators of ESF scientific programmes in the social sciences, Dr. Anders Malmberg and Dr. Massimo Craglia gave presentations demonstrating the value, importance and results of building networks in the social sciences at the European level. Such networking remained substantially underdeveloped in comparison with the natural, medical and engineering sciences. Dr. Malmberg (scientific coordinator of the ESF programme *Regional and urban restructuring in Europe*, RURE) argued that networking was an important goal in itself, because professional contacts and research collaboration initiated via networks were maintained productively throughout research careers. Hence, they created high added-value in terms of European research capacity from modest investments of funds. Furthermore, the evidence from RURE had shown that multi-national groups of researchers brought together in the

programme had subsequently gained project funding at the national and European levels. Hence, the process of the 'Europeanisation' of young researchers' training and careers tended to build naturally on networking initiatives.

Dr. Craglia (scientific coordinator of the ESF programme *Geographic Information Systems: data integration and data base design*, GISDATA) provided similar examples of the benefits of networking but also specifically linked these benefits to the related issue of research infrastructure-building and the need to strengthen European research capacity in handling geographic and spatially referenced data for policy analysis. Geographic information is increasingly used at national, regional, and local level for the analysis of urban problems, and the provision of public and private services. However, at the European-wide level current limitations in the availability and consistency of such information still hampers social science research and policy analysis at this level. Therefore, more explicit reference should be made to the inclusion of spatially-referenced data and its geographic information system based analysis within research infrastructures. This would also help to ensure that this research approach was employed in relevant actions of other specific programmes, for example, *Creating a User-Friendly Information Society*, *The city of tomorrow*, or *The integrated development of rural and coastal areas*.

In seeking partnerships in network fellowships and research infrastructure the Commission should include public agencies responsible for planning and service provision as well as industry (e.g. in relation to health and environmental policy development), and build upon the experience of the successful networks which have developed during the life-time of the Fourth Framework. In the general debate it was noted that the Commission's preliminary text

envisaged the awarding of exploratory grants “in order to bring together potential network participants for the purpose of elaborating a detailed work plan for a Research Training Network proposal”. It was agreed that this was an important mechanism for social science network building given the above-mentioned fact that European social science networking was in its early stages compared with other sciences. The ESF/SCSS had introduced three years ago a similar mechanism of “exploratory research grants” as a pilot scheme to encourage the development of new programmes and networks and the initial results were most promising.

The extension of the eligibility criteria for Marie Curie fellowships to include experienced researchers was welcomed particularly. It was suggested these fellowships might be valuably targeted towards bringing senior social scientists into the main Thematic Programmes and Key Actions in order to facilitate the inter-disciplinary approaches required. Such fellowships could offer an important incentive mechanism in fostering interdisciplinary research and, in doing so, act as a catalyst in the university research sector in this respect.

### **Potential socio-economic research contribution to Thematic Programmes and Key Actions**

Within the time constraints of a one-day workshop and given its primary focus on socio-economic research within the proposed IHP programme, it was impossible to address fully this major issue. As a general principle, it was agreed that socio-economic research input should be present in most Key Actions of the proposed three main Thematic Programmes. But, it was recognised that this may be difficult to achieve within the present timetable and proposed consultation procedures. However, it was welcomed that an

important new mechanism had been introduced whereby the IHP programme would be responsible for “the coordination and support of relevant activities throughout the Framework Programme concerning, in particular, researcher’s training support for research infrastructures and the overall socio-economic dimension of Community research”.

It was noted that the Commission proposed to implement this new mechanism through coordination and input on three levels: (i) participation from outside by social scientists being invited to elaborate details of the work programmes; (ii) the introduction of socio-economic criteria in the evaluation of projects in the respective Key Actions; and (iii) rapid collection and dissemination of relevant information about the Programmes and Key Actions. The general view arising from the workshop was that the greater involvement, and as early as possible, of social scientists in the specification of the work programmes of the main themes and Key Actions would be the most effective and workable mechanism. Prominent social scientists should be recruited for these tasks who were acknowledged by their peers as possessing established expertise in the respective fields of socio-economic research.

By way of illustration, short presentations were given on Key Actions concerned with *Health* and *City of tomorrow*. Professor Robert Erikson emphasised that research addressing health policy was giving increasingly more attention to socio-economic and behavioural factors (e.g. the working environment, and health damaging behaviour). There was substantial evidence that mortality rates, for example, amongst men between 45-65 years varied according to socio-economic status, working conditions and behaviour patterns. Such factors as little or loss of control over working conditions and health damaging

behaviour (smoking) had been measured clearly as contributory factors to heart disease. It can be argued that today health damaging behaviour and various environmental conditions account for the major part of health variations between population groups in Europe, rather than hereditary factors. Varying conditions in early life may also be important. In his view, preventive interventions were the best way forward for policy in the health field. There was a need for comparative research studies of preventive approaches in European countries in order to see what can be learnt from existing 'best practices' and their applicability at the European policy level. Established socio-economic and behavioural research expertise should be an essential component in specifying the details for the Key Actions on *Health and food* and *Environment and health*.

Professor Guido Martinotti observed that the content of the proposed Key Action on *The city of tomorrow* focussed mainly on technological perspectives and less on a people-orientated approach which considered the needs of the increasingly diverse populations in today's metropolitan areas. Current thinking about urban life was still largely based on the model of the 'first generation metropolitan area'. In this model, metropolitan development was seen as a growing differentiation of two populations; the inhabitants and workers (with the latter increasingly as commuters extending the boundaries of metropolitan growth). However, the increased mobility of people, combined with greater income and leisure, has led to the differentiation of a third population of 'city-users'. These people came to the city mainly to use its private and public services (i.e. shopping, entertainment, museums and restaurants etc.). This 'consumer population' was a growing phenomenon and the direct and indirect effects of its growth needed to be studied. Finally, and likely to be increasingly important for the future, a

fourth metropolitan population was becoming apparent – a specialised population of metropolitan businesses who conducted business and established professional contacts in cities. Both the 'city users' and 'metropolitan businesses' populations were a product of the service industry and the globalisation of the economy. In spite of the growth of information technology, the service industry seemed to require an increasing level of face-to-face contact. Reflecting this fact, the fourth population was constituting increasingly a 'transnational middle class' not living in one city, but in and between cities, and hence influencing the morphology and functions of large cities beyond its numerical weight.

In his view, the Key Action should include a new research agenda which, drawing upon research expertise on the new urban morphology and urban modelling, sought to:

- monitor and analyse these new developments and scenarios on the European level;
- link these studies with research on the main trends in the economy, particularly the demands of a services economy and globalisation processes:
  - to collect basic data on these new populations through survey interviews, by telephone/email etc;
  - to mount scenario-building, prospective studies on these new trends in order to indicate major problem areas requiring future policy responses.

The above two examples were given to emphasise the need for more explicit recognition of the "human and social dimensions" within technology-led Key Actions. Similar points could be made about other Key Actions such as *Control of viral and other infectious diseases* where social and behavioural research on lifestyles, social support and networks etc. should be an integral part of the work programme in order that effective policy options may be formulated. In the ESF position paper

on FPV the SCSS had also demonstrated the case for more socio-economic research in Key Actions concerned with transport.

## Conclusions

Since the workshop was held the European Commission has published a new working paper entitled *Fifth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (1998-2002). Commission Working Paper on Specific Programmes: Starting Points for Discussion* (COM 97 553 final 5.11.1997). The new text concerning the socio-economic research components of the proposed *Improving Human Potential* programme have been abbreviated slightly compared with the preliminary texts discussed at the workshop, but, in substance, the proposed topic foci and contents remain unaltered. Hence, the contents of this report remain relevant to the Commission's new working paper.

In sponsoring the workshop, the ESF Standing Committee for the Social Sciences (SCSS) had sought to establish a working dialogue between social scientists and European Commission staff responsible for socio-economic research in EU Framework Programmes. The opportunity to debate the preliminary texts of the socio-economic research components of the IHP programme in FPV was most welcome as a first step in offering advice and feedback on the future specifications of EU-funded research in these fields. The broad conclusions of the workshop were as follows:

The workshop welcomed the new 'focal point' for socio-economic research provided by the IHP action *Harnessing socio-economic research to the needs of the European society*. The choice of broad-based topics addressing major European socio-economic challenges offered mainstream social science disciplines the opportunity to make a

significant contribution to the Fifth Framework Programme. The three topics were likely to attract the research interest of established research teams and individual researchers.

The accompanying Actions concerning Research Training Networks and Marie Curie Fellowships should give greater priority to socio-economic research. In particular, the new 'exploratory awards' were regarded as a valuable innovative mechanism to help motivate stronger proposals for social science networking which was less developed than other sciences at the international level. The introduction of Marie Curie Fellowships for senior researchers could be also valuably targeted towards bringing social sciences into the main Thematic Programmes in order to reinforce the need for interdisciplinary research approaches.

Socio-economic research input should be strengthened in most of the main Thematic Programmes and their respective Key Actions. The early involvement of invited social scientists in the specification of the work programmes of these activities would be the most effective and workable method of achieving this aim.

The collection and maintenance of high quality data resources was an essential component in the future development of the European Union's social and economy policy. The expansion of support for research infrastructure to include "the economic, legal and social sciences" was an important commitment in the FPV proposals as core underpinning to socio-economic research.

The stated aims of the socio-economic component of IHP were ambitiously stated as follows in the new Commission text: - "to develop the socio-economic knowledge base for a better understanding of key social and economic topics linked to the objectives of the Framework Programme and for the development of science and

technology policy and other Community policies". Given this statement, and the general 'preamble' to the overall FPV placing great rhetorical emphasis on promoting research to meet societal needs, the major issue of the level of resources to be devoted to socio-economic research within FPV

will become crucial. While this issue was not central to the workshop remit, it is quite apparent that the stated FPV objectives above imply the need for an increased budget allocation for socio-economic research within the FPV financial envelope.

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## Appendix 1

### **Harnessing socio-economic research to the needs of European Society** **Extract from European Commission Working Paper on *Improving Human Potential*** **programme (September 1997)**

The European Union draws its strength both from the social and cultural diversities between its members as well as from the similarities of their experiences and common values. In a period of increasing challenges, highlighted by unacceptable levels of unemployment, an increase in inequalities, and a declining relative contribution to the world economy, European society will have to undergo changes towards achieving sustainable socio-economic development, the improvement of the quality of life of all its citizens and to maintain and enhance Europe's competitive position in the world. Social sciences must therefore be in a position to respond to these challenges, overcome national boundaries, reinforce their co-operation and enhance their analytical capacity. Collective action can exploit the economies of scale, where it makes sense to pool resources, and exploit the economies of scope, where much can be learned from comparing different approaches to common problems. Furthermore the process of European integration itself has given rise to a new object of study - European society - which is different from the sum of its components, although clearly dependent on them, requiring research at the European level.

The objective of this line is to improve our understanding of

the structural changes taking place in the European society in order to identify ways of managing change and to involve Europeans citizens more actively in shaping their own futures. This involves the analysis of the main trends giving rise to these changes, the elaboration of new development strategies promoting growth and employment and the reappraisal of consultation mechanisms for collective action at all levels of governance. This line will therefore contribute to provide the policy decision-making process with a sound knowledge of the challenges facing Europe, of their global consequences and of possible policy options to tackle them. In particular, research activities under this line will be implemented taking into account the development of the Union's policies.

Support under this line will aim at developing a conceptual understanding of the processes described above, built upon empirical, comparative and prospective research, including constructing and integrating data and indicator systems and establishing a common research infrastructure.

#### **Societal trends and structural changes**

Modern societies are undergoing profound structural changes which are bringing into question established norms and

expectations. These structural changes are underlined by demographic trends, changing structures of the labour force - in particular, women participation - and the transformation of the life-styles and socialisation. Against this background, the research within this theme will aim at elucidating the complex interactions between social trends, life chances, economic changes, labour market institutions and cultural patterns, taking into account European regional diversities.

The study of these interactions should provide a better comprehension of the changing patterns of work and organisation of time, of the capacity of education and training to prepare individuals to a changing environment, of the role of technical progress in the social change and of the various types of organisation of productive activities according to their socio-cultural context.

In this context, research work will identify the common characteristics and distinctive features across Europe, their origins and the consequences for the development and reformulation of European policies.

#### **New development models encouraging growth and employment**

In a competitive world, dominated by an economy where performance

rests increasingly on “intangible” factors and assets, Europe has to explore new development models to ensure growth, job creation, the reduction of inequalities and the improvement of the quality of life.

This prospective work will investigate the dynamics of creation and distribution of wealth, in society at the world geo-economic level, in an “intangible” and services economy. The aim is to adapt or replace the economic and social regulatory instruments and management tools. This will involve the development of indicators and methodologies for assessing the social and economic added value of the various production models, identifying the short, medium and long-term competitiveness factors and characterising the economic, fiscal and trade policies best adapted to the European economic area and to the evolution of Europe in the world economic relations.

Given the prospective nature of this work, research will concentrate on case studies analyses of issues such as organisational innovations, initiatives facilitating the response to the increasing demand for services, the development of non-profit mutual supporting activities, and innovations in socio-economic partners co-operation. Research will also be needed to achieve the incorporation of socio-economic needs in technological development, focusing on methods of interaction between the various actors concerned as well as on the effects of the deployment of certain technologies according to the socio-economic context.

The development models will recognise the emergence of a knowledge society where the double role of knowledge - as the main tool for socialisation and to

enable the citizen to play a full role in society, and as a key factor for growth when successfully applied through innovation - is gaining greater significance given the closer relationship between knowledge, employment and social integration. Therefore, special attention will be paid to how education and training can stimulate innovation, lead to increase organisational capabilities and encourage social integration. These development models will take into account, where appropriate, the concept of lifelong learning.

### **Governance and citizenship**

The process of European integration, the increasing interdependence between the European economies and the growing relevance of transnational issues, such as the environment, health and security, lead to the need to re-assess the role of the different levels of governance in Europe. The aim is to achieve mutual articulation of responsibility and accountability at all levels and their real capacity as agents of change, whilst allowing for the development of mechanisms of dialogue, deliberation and decision-making to ensure effective co-operation between the actors concerned (including citizens, social partners, non-governmental organisations, associations).

Research will set out to explain to what extent the various types of economic and social regulation in Europe are the consequences of a specific socio-institutional and cultural construction, in order to define better European integration strategies. It will address both regulation by public authorities as well as civil initiatives. The examination of the role of public authorities will also cover the re-assessment of their missions, from the economic, political and social point of view, and of the concept of public service and the notion of public interest. In this framework, the analysis of the evolution of the

welfare systems will be a key element.

The analyses will be accompanied by the study of the concept of citizenship across Europe, and of types and systems of regulation to which they give rise. The extent to which they allow articulations in the context of the European integration process, in particular the co-ordination of the economic and social policies within a monetary union and the enlargement perspectives, will also be considered. European nations, in spite of their rich social and cultural diversities, share much history, experience and values whose understanding should provide the foundations for the development of a collective identity necessary for the continued construction of the European community. Research will analyse the influence of the various components of culture (traditions, language, history, heritage, religions, migrations) and of educational models on the development of values, taking into account the context of international development of a common audio-visual culture.

### **Implementation**

This line will be implemented through indirect actions, i.e. shared-cost actions, support for networks, concerted actions, and accompanying measures, including thematic studies and support for research infrastructure.

### **Coordination with the other specific programmes of the 5th Framework Programme**

This line will include the coordination, support and accompanying measures needed to ensure consistency with related actions undertaken elsewhere in the Framework Programme. Coordination and support activities will aim at:

- ensuring the adequate incorporation of socio-economic concerns in the research activities of the thematic programmes;
- ensuring the smooth and

timely flow of information on socio-economic research between the various research programmes;

- avoiding overlapping between the relevant research activities of each specific programme;
- facilitating the analysis and exploitation of results.

In operational terms, coordination and support can be achieved through:

a) Participation in the drafting of the working programmes and of the calls for proposals, in order to incorporate socio-economic concerns.

b) Assist in the creation of appropriate evaluation mechanisms in order to allow the selection of projects to take into account their socio-economic relevance and their potential contribution to the targets set by the

Commission's socio-economic criteria.

c) Act as a central point for the exchange of information between the various programmes, in order to establish a regular and smooth flow of information, avoid overlapping, and facilitate the joint exploitation and dissemination of the research results in the socio-economic area.

## Appendix 2

### Standing Committee for the Social Sciences (SCSS) Workshop on Social Science Research in EU/FPV Stockholm, 10 October 1997

#### List of participants

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Further reading:  
*Beyond Framework Programme IV*, ESF position paper, 1996 (ISBN 2-903148-86-4);  
*Further considerations on the EC's proposal for a Fifth Framework Programme*, ESF European Science Policy Briefing N°1, 1997

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