

## Promoting Internationalisation of the Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe

### Foreword

The Standing Committee for the Social Sciences (SCSS) decided in 2006 to launch a project to map and promote the social sciences in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The project focused on the role of the ESF Member Organisations and was therefore called the MOCEE (Member Organisations in Central and Eastern Europe) project. A special ESF effort was, and still is, necessary in this field because the potential of CEE researchers is far from being used exhaustively in the international scientific arena.

The MOCEE project targeted the following ten CEE countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia. The objectives were:

- to study the research needs of CEE countries in the social sciences;
- to promote the dialogue between CEE and other European scientific communities.

The project was implemented through expert meetings, which focused on the identification of national features of social science support mechanisms in different CEE countries. The expert meetings provided: an opportunity for CEE science policy makers, science administrators and researchers in international collaborative projects to meet; a forum for dialogue and exchange of ideas; and an opportunity to learn about ESF instruments. The participants dealt with issues such as 'infrastructures of networking', 'procedures of networking', 'improving the visibility and accessibility of the scientific community in Central and Eastern Europe', 'motivations in international collaborations', 'standards and tools of quality' and 'new research cultures of networking'.

The project resulted in several deliverables and identified further development steps:

- The publication of the report of the Aleksanteri Institute (University of Helsinki) on 'Status and Developments of Social Science Research in Central and Eastern Europe'.<sup>a</sup> The report sums up the general context of the social sciences in CEE regarding, e.g., the administrative structures, the allocation of resources and national research policies.
- The publication of a book edited by Ilona Pálné Kovács and Dagmar Kutsar (members of the ESF Standing Committee for the Social Sciences – SCSS) on interna-

nationalisation of social sciences in Central and Eastern Europe<sup>b</sup>.

- A foresight project (ESF Forward Look entitled 'Central and Eastern Europe beyond Transition: Convergence and Divergence in Europe') to define the social science research agenda for researchers studying the Central and Eastern European countries and also to give funding advice to research councils all over Europe.
- Extension and refreshing of the ESF database of referees from the CEE region, and encouragement of the CEE Member Organisations to open their databases for one another.

The present ESF Science Position paper is also one of the results of the MOCEE project. The authors, Dagmar Kutsar and Ilona Pálné Kovács, played leading roles in that project and have based their work on the ideas and suggestions accruing during it.

The document has been approved by the ESF Standing Committee for the Social Sciences.

**Sir Roderick Floud**  
SCSS Chair

**Professor Marja Makarow**  
ESF Chief Executive

a. Virtasaalo, I. (2008) *Status and Developments of Social Science Research in Central and Eastern Europe*. ESF

b. Pálné Kovács, I., and Kutsar, D. (Eds) (2010) *Internationalisation of Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe. The 'Catching Up' – A Myth or a Strategy?* Routledge, Abingdon, 227 p.

## The problem

Europe today is far from being a homogeneous region, not just economically but also in the cultural sense. The Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries share some common characteristics originating from their historical past and from the party-state system that they had during the common Soviet regime. These common features are to be found in the institutionalisation and operation of their scientific lives as well, although there are also marked differences within the group.

Social sciences have always been under the influence of the social, political, cultural and historical contexts and patterns of the societies that they represent and reflect. Having the highest potential to explain the societal processes, social scientists, among scientists in general, were put under the greatest ideological pressure and censorship. This is why, in comparison to other sciences, the social sciences were especially divided according to the political orders of West and East in Europe.

There was extremely limited networking and collaboration between eastern and western scholars; the eastern scientific organisations turned away from the West and did not support research crossing the borders between West and East. Europe in general lacked scientific infrastructures and the legal framework that would have been the preconditions of collaboration between the two parts.

Whereas the integration and convergence of the national economies is a fundamental objective of the European Union, the 'Europeanisation' of further fields and activities, although more indirect and less visible, is also necessary. This recognition led to the establishment of the European Research Area (ERA). Significant efforts will, however, still be required to achieve real convergence and collaboration between the eastern and western social science communities. The social sciences, in general, have similar problems interrelated with decreasing political, governmental financial support and prestige explaining it by the increasing distance of social science from 'real problems'. This paradox makes it difficult to implement evidence-based policy and knowledge-based economy everywhere, but scholars in Eastern Europe are limited by cumulative disadvantages.

In the CEE countries, the worse financial and infrastructure conditions, the objectives, the tools and the institutional systems of science policy are not yet compatible in every respect with the situation of more advanced Western European science which, of course, cannot be described as a homogenous landscape either. Specifically, the positive impacts of modernisation in the fields of science management and financing are restricted by rather less science-friendly political attitudes, by the tendency for the state to shed public functions and by the backward institutional system of public services.

The widespread misunderstanding of post socialist societies that they simply lag behind the West according to all macro and micro indicators has led western

**Table 1.** Coordinators of social sciences and humanities projects in EU Framework Programmes (1994-2006)

Coordinator/Projects	FP4	FP5	FP6
Austria	3	19	10
Belgium	6	21	9
Denmark	3	3	1
Finland	3	6	1
France	23	40	16
Germany	20	42	26
Greece	5	7	5
Ireland	3	5	3
Italy	11	16	17
Luxembourg	1	1	0
Netherlands	18	12	10
Portugal	2	4	2
Spain	5	10	4
Sweden	6	6	4
United Kingdom	46	53	21
<b>EU-15</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>129</b>
Bulgaria	0	2	0
Czech Republic	0	0	0
Estonia	0	0	2
Hungary	0	3	3
Latvia	0	0	0
Lithuania	0	0	1
Malta	0	0	0
Poland	0	1	3
Romania	0	0	0
Slovakia	0	1	0
Slovenia	0	1	0
<b>EU-12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
Turkey	0	0	3
<b>EU Candidate Countries</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
Iceland	0	1	0
Norway	7	7	3
Switzerland	0	1	1
<b>EU Associated Countries</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>
Not defined	3	8	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>146</b>

Source: Must, U. (2010) Collaboration of social science researchers of central and eastern European countries in European research programmes during the period 1994-2006. In: Pálné Kovác, I. and Kutsar, D. (Eds) *Internationalisation of Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe*. Routledge, Abingdon, pp.99-115. p. 107. [CORDIS \(http://cordis.europa.eu/\)](http://cordis.europa.eu/)

scholars to underestimate the capacities, resources and challenges which are the assets of the CEE social sciences. A great proportion of scientists in Central and Eastern Europe know the new, innovative scientific methods and infrastructure but they have fewer opportunities to apply them and international cooperation has not

therefore yet become an integrated part of their scientific existence. The problem is that the domestic limitations of eastern social sciences contribute to the disadvantageous starting position for integrating to the West in terms of financial, institutional and personal capacity.

There is no doubt that we can recover lot of developments, but the coherence and synergy in European social sciences can be reached besides the catching up of objective conditions, just in case new academic traditions and cultures of doing collaborative research are developed, where eastern and western scholars are equal partners with acknowledged academic contributions and mutual trust.

## Development processes of CEE social science

Every country has its own specifics for Science and Technology (S&T) governance due to historical experiences, cultural and public understanding of science, the institutional setting, policy making experiences, general economic development of the particular country and its international and regional positioning.

The maturity of Research and Development (R&D) policies varies among the CEE countries. Some of the countries transfer mechanically 'best practice' from abroad while other countries have been identifying local deficiencies and adjusting the instruments accordingly. Despite the variations in S&T governance, the focus of national research policies is very similar indeed in CEE countries. Two interrelated themes dominate national research policies in CEE countries: a knowledge-based economy and economic growth. The major obstacles are not in designing an integrated strategic policy direction but in designing the mechanisms and institutions for its implementation.

The social sciences are strongly dependent upon different national settings, national research traditions and national funding. However, the focus of national research policies in CEE countries is not on the social sciences. The importance of the social sciences is admitted implicitly as a tool to manage and understand the rapid changes and development that the respective countries are facing. Unfortunately, this position is not very strong and it is not supported by adequate funding.

The benefits offered by social science research to society are not fully understood in CEE countries. Social scientists are not seen as providers of adequate responses to complex societal issues and as facilitators of social transformations. The governing political elites and public funding bodies do not understand the crucial role the social sciences can play in the development of society. The disciplinary areas are also freeing themselves from the legacy of the state socialist era. On the one hand, the need for cross-cultural research has never been greater than in the societies that have changed rapidly in the CEE countries; on the other hand, the social sciences have no visible, well-funded position in the academic world. Among the science funders this is the case in many western countries also, but the disproportion is greater, resulting in very fragile institutional capacities for advanced research tasks, primarily for empirical research. The other eastern speciality is the different inner structure of social sciences. It is understandable after a very long authoritarian regime that political science, as well as social psychology, philosophy, communication, the science of public policy, had to start almost from zero in the 1990s. These branches of the social sciences, compared with, for example, economics or social geography, have less prestige and suffer from institutionalisation problems.

The social sciences consequently suffer more than other fields of sciences from the overall shortage of public research funding, mainly because they are not among the priorities of the national research policies and funding. Funding is poor also because of the scientometric criteria that follow the traditions of natural sciences and that do not accept the specific features of social sciences. Social scientists may not be considered competitive just because they do not meet the exact criteria of academic excellence elaborated and supported by the so-called 'hard scientists'. The share of R&D in GDP is around half of the EU average and the proportion delivered to social sciences is below 10% in most CEE countries. The share of R&D from GDP will hardly reach the Lisbon target, 3% by 2010, and the social sciences will thus continue to cope with low funds and struggle for survival.

The poor financial conditions in R&D and the comparatively low prestige of science related to a change in values in the market-oriented society are some of the

**Table 2.** Changes in R&D main indicators in Eastern and Central Europe, 1980–2005

Country	Bulgaria		Czechoslovakia		Poland		Hungary		Romania	
	1980	2005	1980	2005	1980	2005	1980	2005	1980	2005
<b>GERD/GDP</b>	2.5	0.5	3.9	1.4 <sup>1</sup> 0.5 <sup>2</sup>	2.2	0.6	3.2	1.0	No data	0.4
<b>Number of researchers, in thousands</b>	31.6	21.6	39.6	37.5 <sup>1</sup> 17.5 <sup>2</sup>	96.3	55.0	31.4	23.0	71.1	33.4

Note: <sup>1</sup> Czech Republic – <sup>2</sup> Slovakia.

Source: Horváth G. (2010) Inequalities in the Central and Eastern European research area: Challenges of regional decentralisation. In: Pálné Kovács, I. and Kutsar, D. (Eds) *Internationalisation of Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe*. Routledge, Abingdon, pp. 115-130, p.122. Author's compilation based on national statistical database 1980, and Europe in Figures. Eurostat Yearbook 2008.

reasons why young people are less inclined to build their careers in the sciences. The CEE social sciences are also severely affected by the 'brain drain'.

Thus, the suboptimal mass of researchers and low funds complicate their participation in international networks: the same small group of academics is available and visible for the international partners, frequently by personal contacts and, because of the missing funds for hiring researchers or assistants to run the networking, these scholars become overloaded and sometimes, meeting new challenges, they are uninterested and unmotivated to increase their overload even more.

Another problem is the ageing of academics – a reason as well as a consequence of a kind of conservatism of the scientific institutional set up. The number of academic jobs is hardly increasing; they are occupied by academic seniors, who would rather avoid competition and changes initiated by the young scholars anyway. A considerable part of the old generation has not got accustomed to international requirements, to the western scientific culture. Based on long-standing social capital, established scientists are mostly able to obtain some funding, enough for their own work but not sufficient to hire new scientists and start wide projects involving participants from abroad.

The lack of research infrastructures is also a great obstacle to internationalisation of CEE social sciences. It concerns not only databases but also the personnel that would help scientists develop proposals and applications or administrate the running projects. The institutional setting is 'sclerotic' since it has not adapted to the new challenges of Europeanised scientific life (lack of skill, of organisational units to monitor calls, to make applications, search for partners, etc). Frequently funding schemes are complicated and an application requires much administrative work, just like the organisation of international events, which is an obvious part of any cross-border collaboration. With the lack of English-speaking administrators and of well-prepared assistants, the scientists are forced to do everything, which they themselves feel, not without reason, to be a waste of their already limited time.

## The slow and contested internationalisation

During the state socialist period in Central and Eastern Europe, research links in the region were established primarily within the COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) while links with Western countries were relatively limited. After the change in the regime, the countries of Eastern and Central Europe quickly revived connections with the West.

Nowadays, cooperation is emphasised with EU countries and the United States while cooperation with other CEE countries is less active. Although scientific cooperation among CEE countries is based on bilateral agreements to a greater extent, there is also regional

**Table 3.** Participants by country in social sciences and humanities projects (1994-2006)

Participants	FP4	FP5	FP6
Austria	38	63	68
Belgium	44	67	103
Germany	111	157	196
Denmark	44	49	44
Spain	88	94	93
Finland	40	46	36
France	101	132	149
Greece	50	62	49
Ireland	30	34	28
Italy	103	132	149
Luxembourg	5	5	1
Portugal	47	36	38
Netherlands	89	101	112
Sweden	56	56	66
United Kingdom	140	189	246
<b>EU-15</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>1223</b>	<b>1378</b>
Bulgaria	0	26	31
Cyprus	0	3	6
Czech Republic	1	24	37
Estonia	0	21	22
Hungary	3	57	68
Lithuania	1	6	16
Latvia	0	8	13
Malta	0	3	6
Poland	2	38	67
Romania	0	14	22
Slovak Republic	0	11	13
Slovenia	1	24	32
<b>EU-12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>333</b>
Turkey	0	3	26
<b>EU Candidate Countries</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>
Switzerland	9	31	40
Israel	8	8	8
Iceland	2	2	1
Norway	39	36	55
<b>EU Associated Countries</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Third countries</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1054</b>	<b>1565</b>	<b>1947</b>

Source: Must, U. (2010) Collaboration of social science researchers of central and eastern European countries in European research programmes during the period 1994-2006. In: Pálné Kovác, I. and Kutsar, D. (Eds) *Internationalisation of Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe*. Routledge, Abingdon, pp.99-115. p. 107. [CORDIS \(http://cordis.europa.eu/\)](http://cordis.europa.eu/)

cooperation among the Visegrád countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) and among the countries from South-east Europe.

International collaboration between East and West has gone through tremendous changes. The enthusiasm of the early 1990s brought short visits and support on a small scale: provision of literature, guidance in curriculum development and introduction of new academic standards. In the mid 1990s, which was a period of mutual enrichment, the creation of preconditions for international collaboration began: the first programmes, available for academics from the East, of visits of several months to western universities and research institutes. The late 1990s saw the start of joint projects under the careful tutorship of Western colleagues.

Since the early 2000s, one can speak about a period of 'cosmetic' collaboration when the presence of eastern scholars and institutions on the list of participants has been considered to be a key to the success of a proposal. As a matter of fact, from the very beginning, the projects on the changes in the region, the so-called transitology, were usually launched by western scholars and the eastern partners' part was only to provide data and evidence. Sometimes the latter was even gathered by western colleagues without a real insider's expertise. The mere exchange of business cards at conferences and seminars seems to have replaced effective scientific discussions in the preparation of projects. Objectives, hypotheses and even conclusions are often adopted beforehand without any possible amendments initiated by eastern partners.

CEE countries are lagging behind those of comparable size in numbers of applications in the framework of the different ESF instruments. Self-devaluation of CEE social scientists is revealed in low self-confidence in applying for international funds, low frequency in occupying coordinating positions of international projects, low representation in international review panels and academic boards. The Central and Eastern European academic communities also show passive attitudes in communication and initiative-taking and in making use of available information (responding to external invitations, e.g., European Commission consultations over new Framework Programmes) or in contributing to developments of local and European science policy developments.

By scientometric standards, social scientists in Central and Eastern Europe have lower academic visibility compared to their western colleagues. Increasing requirements of academic excellence (quality of publi-

cations and academic impact) put East and West into competition over funds, academic attractiveness and other resources. However, the CEE region is often the loser, not having an equal chance to adapt to the competitive logic of European scientific funding. The lower numbers of international publications and conference participation unavoidably decrease the chance of joining international programmes and consortia, thus continuing the downward direction.

Nevertheless, exchange of experiences of academic and everyday life has led to changes in rooted stereotypes regarding the standards of living, ways of life and academic cultures. Today one can witness cases of good practice of real international collaboration in the social sciences between East and West, and the state of the art of internationalisation due to European efforts is much better than 20 years ago. However, we would like to emphasise that real convergence cannot be expected to emerge just from the personal efforts of the scientific communities of CEE. The problems and obstacles mentioned above need to be addressed by national and international scientific policy bodies, with instruments focusing on catching-up strategies.

## Suggestions for development

The social sciences in CEE countries have got beyond the first stage of institutional adaptation to international schemes, but much effort has to be made in the future in order to integrate personally and professionally into Europe-wide networks and collaborative projects on the basis of equal partnership and with prestige and academic excellence. The ERA needs the knowledge and expertise that CEE scholars can offer; it is worth investing in support for this policy aim, especially where worrying signs indicate that, contrary to the aims of internationalisation and increasing coherence, the fragmentation of social sciences in Europe may even grow. The recommendations below aim at decreasing the fragmentation by moving East and West closer; they cover a wide array of issues and offer concrete steps. The addressees are diverse because the obstacles themselves are diverse. Probably only uniting the forces of the different partners can result in success: a more balanced cooperation in

**Table 4.** Participation in ESF activities and proposals by scientists from Europe as a whole and from Central and Eastern Europe, 2004-2008

	Participation of scientists from			Proposals from		
	Europe as a whole	Central and Eastern Europe	CEE / Europe (%)	Europe as a whole	Central and Eastern Europe	CEE / Europe (%)
All areas	55,790	6,040	10.8	19,324	1,615	8.4
Social Sciences	6,870	787	11.5	4,355	415	9.5
Social Sciences / All (%)	12.3	13.0		22.5	25.7	

Source: Marks, J. and Kiss, B. (2010) International research collaboration in Europe: Strategy and role of the European Science Foundation. In: Pálné Kovács, I. and Kutsar, D. (Eds) *Internationalisation of Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe*. Routledge, Abingdon, pp. 9-34, p. 32.

European social sciences. The Standing Committee for the Social Sciences (SCSS) and the ESF Member Organisations are addressed and through them science policy makers and also the social science research community in Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, a number of recommendations concern the research supporting agencies in Europe in general.

### **Better communication**

Social sciences need effective communication within the scientific sphere: with the domestic scientific community, with other disciplines and internationally also. The other direction of communication is with society and national and Europe-wide politics. There is greater emphasis on the need to identify the potential of European social sciences to promote social development and welfare in the enlarged Europe, to recognise the needs of efficient trans-national research collaboration within the social sciences, to adjust the local, regional and pan-European funding structures and instruments to these needs, and – last but not least – to increase the academic competitiveness of Europe in the world.

One of the main obstacles to international scientific cooperation is the lack of interest in the social sciences on the part of politicians, though actually they are the ones who make most of the decisions on the funding of science. Their role is crucial, especially in CEE where, due to the wrong economic conditions, the share of the private sector in financing social science is much smaller than in the Western countries and the United States. The so-called relevance question, that is, the task of convincing the European public in general and policy makers in particular about the political and policy relevance of the social sciences, should be answered. Especially important is to convince politicians in Central and Eastern Europe about the role of social sciences in achieving ‘good governance’, which is a crucial factor of competitiveness and solidarity in Europe. Although the most important condition of acceptance by politicians is that social sciences deal with the greatest societal challenges, it is also very important that they have an impact on the agenda of politics and are capable of influencing politicians to accept the social scientific results. All the international scientific organisations, like ESF or the professional associations, are therefore encouraged to run a better and more efficient public relations activity towards the decision makers and towards citizens in general; thereby the social sciences may be surrounded by a more favourable climate.

### **More professional national setting of European collaboration**

The improvement of international cooperation can only be reinforced by strong institutional and resource allocation changes. CEE social sciences should continue to develop from the inside out, starting from harmonisation of R&D policies in general, paving the way towards higher academic excellence, greater self-confidence and participation in international collaborative actions. They need to increase their visibility in terms of academic

standards as well as the availability of information and open up their still invisible resources of people, opportunities and research fields – their internal richness.

Paradoxically, sometimes scientific institutions do not recognise the efforts scholars put into cross-border networking, although with the lack of appropriate staffing and infrastructure these efforts are a big burden on their time. The universities and research centres should motivate and rank internationally-known scholars in launching and participating in international projects. This is of course the task of the national actors of science governance as well, as international cooperation also requires the improvement of financial and institutional conditions. The scientific community alone will not be able to carry out the change of the seated paradigm.

International cooperation requires information on the scientific communities, their conditions of operation, fields of interest, research activities and, of course, on the persons who are able and ready to cooperate. This is the question of visibility. But the cooperation also requires information on opportunities for international projects, such as calls for tenders, and the scientific communities have to be in the situation to access this information and to make use of these opportunities.

National science policy administrations of CEE countries must play an important role in providing and distributing information on international research projects. These administrations should and could do much more in this respect than they have done so far.

It is important to ensure that the information on international research projects reaches its potential national users. Therefore national science policy administrations should be knowledgeable about research organisations and research teams within their countries, and about their research interests and programmes.

The ESF Member Organisations should pay more attention to improving the availability of external communication addressed to the European academic community. They also should look critically at the extent to which national research funding policies and institutions support international collaboration (especially in the case of networking and *à la carte* programmes). They also should provide an overview of existing international research programmes from the perspective of country-specific needs and encourage researchers to take active roles in these programmes.

The availability of information on research programmes and opportunities is not by itself sufficient to stimulate participation in such projects. Incentives for researchers to join international cooperation initiatives must be introduced into the domestic evaluation systems. Researchers and research organisations themselves should of course actively seek information on European projects.

### **More targeted European instruments and channels to involve Central and Eastern European scholars**

Adjustment of the European schemes to Eastern European realities is necessary. At the present time,

the most important *funding schemes* are based on the typical situations in the western part of Europe; this is the reason why several schemes provide scientists with funding only for networking. The logic is that the research activities of the scholars have been well funded for years, thus only provision of networking support is deemed necessary – ESF and COST follow this logic in several cases. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, the situation is different: the eastern partner should obtain at least a small amount of funding for new research if full advantage is to be taken of his or her participation. In the CEE region, sometimes even the normal reimbursement method causes problems because neither the scientists nor the research organisations are able to pay for the travel and accommodation in advance. In adapting the funding schemes it should be taken into account that even the technical frameworks (like equipment, data, other resources) of the researchers could be limited therefore grants are needed for the *development of infrastructure* also.

A particular issue is the recruitment and retention of *young and emerging scientists*. International support schemes should pay even more thorough attention to the situation and the age structure of the science staffs in Central and Eastern Europe, where brain drain is even more acute than in the western part: young people leave not only for industry but also for the West. General prestige of social scientific work and moral support are important as well as establishment of forums like summer schools and international doctoral schools in the CEE region, where emerging scholars face the exciting challenges science always puts to the talented.

Shortage of scientific *management staff* in CEE leads to lower performance, which depreciates the prestige of science, from which a greater shortage follows. By *remote staffing*, that is, administrative and other kinds of assistance from abroad, a positive cycle may be started: broader assistance leads to better quality and higher esteem, whereby the participant in the international cooperation may be allocated more resources. Allocating funding for the training of national scientific management staff is of course a useful instrument to improve the administrative capacity of social sciences in CEE. In order to assist knowledge transfer and to strengthen capacity it would be useful to establish through competition a scientific centre in one or more CEE countries and allocate to it the conduct of a Europe-wide social scientific survey.

The unequipped, underfinanced social sciences in CEE countries are also characterised by inadequate provision of professional books and journals. The broadening of *open access* to all the professional publications via internet would solve or at least alleviate the negative effects. Open access would have several collateral advantages from environmental considerations to the higher speed and more equal spread of information.

The European social scientific community needs to develop mechanisms that take into account *publications in different national languages* and the extra costs of *publishing in English*, since open access needs disproportionate transmission costs. It should reconsider the

academic value of publications with clear policy output, e.g., expert analyses addressed to national governments and the European Commission.

One-sided *academic evaluation of scientific performance* is especially discouraging to even well-established Eastern scholars, who do timely and frontier research of policy relevance, even if that research is hardly quantifiable. CEE social scientists are particularly busy in meeting the community needs of rapidly changing CEE – by monitoring and reporting social realities, contributing to policy elaboration, etc. These academic efforts should be made more visible and rewarded taking into account that sometimes the only opportunity for social scientists in the region is to conduct applied research responding to government or market demands.

While the longer-term aim is certainly to involve CEE scholars in the leadership of large scale international research projects, there are many *other possibilities* of international involvement: international peer reviewing and panel membership are two ways, which can provide CEE scholars with experience of the western scientific culture, information on the hottest topics and may lead to higher levels of collaboration. It is favourable if funding agencies which need referees turn to CEE partners for names, and the provision of training or pairing up reviewers with different degrees of experience is also needed to ensure consistent quality of peer review processes.

Another smaller but important step is to establish or broaden the support schemes targeted at eastern scholars' participation in conferences. Neither peer reviewers nor potential project partners can be found if there are no reliable, updated and accessible registries, under quality control, of scientists and national research projects, possibly in English, on the internet. It would be useful if, beside such registries, one could find one database on the region as a whole. Initiatives of this kind, like GESIS, should get higher appreciation by international organisations and forums.

## Pan-European dimensions

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Social research has grown in the last decades beyond the levels of a single researcher or research team and has taken clear paths towards internationalisation. The resources of CEE countries in adding value to European social sciences have grown with the advancements that European scholars have made during the last less than twenty years in modernising social sciences and promoting their internationalisation. Not less important have been the collaborative efforts of doing comparative research that have crossed the borders between East and West.

Social sciences in Europe are facing new challenges of comparative collaborative research: exchange of academic research cultures and experiences, elaboration of new methodologies and theoretical perspectives, the necessity of looking for niches in interdisciplinary research, of enriching competences in working with large datasets comparatively, elaboration of new approaches to data analysis, contributions to both response-mode

and policy-driven research and improving academic excellence.

If, besides the free flow of capital, wares, services and labour, the European Union also wants to promote the free flow of knowledge in order to take advantage of synergies stemming from international scientific cooperation, the EU must address the fact that the necessary conditions for international cooperation have not evolved evenly and consistently in the East-West relation. Furthermore, the unfolding economic crisis also does not favour convergence in this field.

*European science policy and even the community of western social scientists* play a crucial role in contributing to cohesion among the member states in general and to the catching-up of the new member states in particular. Social sciences are strongly dependent on their national settings, research and funding traditions. It is not the intellectual capacity in Eastern Europe that is weak or missing but the infrastructural capacity, the enabling mechanism, the financial and institutional means that could lead to equal partnerships on an international level. In the CEE countries, equal opportunities especially for social sciences to participate in pan-European research networks are still underdeveloped.

Therefore, by promoting internationalisation of the social sciences in Europe, the European science policy bodies *should develop their regional foci*. First of all, this means giving guidance in the *harmonisation of domestic science policies* towards creating preconditions – chances and choices – for academics by participating in and initiating international comparative research programmes and projects in social sciences. Second, this implies *equal treatment of European scholars in monetary terms*, with expectations of equally high-quality academic outputs. And, third, elements of *positive discrimination*, following the patterns of gender, age, stage of carrier, and the logic of the European cohesion policy as a whole, are to be introduced to encourage scholars from CEE countries to come up with research proposals, activate them with calls to contribute to science and policy consultations and, last but not least, to build more

intensive linkages between education and research on the European level by educating new generations of young social scientists. It would be especially useful to support young researchers through post doctoral programmes and seminars in fields where eastern scientific performance is weaker, for example public policy.

European social science research is still largely national and the funding agencies are mostly isolated from one another. A strong development of *common research infrastructures* in the social sciences is one of the keys to overcoming this fragmentation. Beside the networks of researchers to promote social sciences, networks of research centres (laboratories), where researchers from different social and cultural backgrounds can work face to face as analysts and experts, are also necessary.

Strong infrastructures in the social sciences mean sharing *common instruments of observation*, which supply the academic community with comparable data with common bases. They should be available and easily accessible equally to early career as well as advanced researchers and be multi-functional (used for academic as well as educational purposes and have outputs to practice). It is most important to strengthen the existing ones, particularly the European Social Survey but also further ones such as Eurobarometer, the European Value Survey, and to develop new ones to serve the needs of the European community.

European social sciences should not be a mere puzzle of national systems. Common efforts and strong, standing collaboration involving also the Central and Eastern European science communities as partners is the only way to reach the aims of the European Research Area. The visible imbalance in social sciences may impede or at least slow the convergence between the eastern and western parts of Europe and therefore also real political integration. Scientists, scientific managers and politicians, both at national and European level, have a common responsibility to realise and to invest in the opportunities provided by international social scientific cooperation.

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The European Science Foundation (ESF) was established in 1974 to provide a common platform for its Member Organisations to advance European research collaboration and explore new directions for research. It is an independent organisation, owned by 79 Member Organisations, which are research funding organisations and research performing organisations, academies and learned societies from 30 countries. ESF promotes collaboration in research itself, in funding of research and in science policy activities at the European level.

ISBN: 978-2-918428-17-6