

## ESF Forward Looks Topics– 2006 Call for Proposals

Nr	Unit	Lead Unit	Project	Main Applicant	Researcher(s)	MO(s) involved	Comments from Proposer/ Office	SCH Ranking Comments
<p><b>SCH General Comments (to be passed on to the EUROCORES FL selection Committee):</b></p> <p>SCH based its considerations on the following general principles: “ESF Forward Looks” should respond to the overall criteria of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>timeliness:</b> focus on emerging research questions and scientific topics;</li> <li>- <b>usefulness (1):</b> contribute to the structuring of the relevant field[s] at a European scale;</li> <li>- <b>usefulness (2):</b> lead to better informed decision-making on MOs and other research funders for medium/long-term resource allocation.</li> </ul> <p>SCH found that the proposals received were – as texts – insufficiently elaborated representations of what a FL proposal should be about.</p> <p>For its one recommendation, SCH therefore placed its emphasis on the strategic importance of the topic (rather the specific text received), as evidenced by the willingness of some two dozen ESF Member Organisations to invest, through national and international funding plans, in the study of “religion” in contemporary society.</p>								
<p><b>RECOMMENDED for further development (with conditions)</b></p>								
05	SCH SCSS	SCSS (co-lead SCH)	<p><b>Re-emergence of Religion as a Social Force in Europe</b></p> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Religion; Secularisation; Religious revival; Social cohesion</p> <p><u>Abstract:</u> Europe faces today unprecedented issues of religious pluralism, church-state relations, and cross-national integration. Central research questions for the social sciences may be: What role has religion played in the shaping of national identities in Europe? What is the role of non-Christian religions in contemporary Europe? Is religion in Europe increasingly achieved rather than ascribed? Do significant differences exist between people who identify themselves as religious and those who do not with respect to political and sociological variables? What role will religion play in the progress of the European Union? Is there a religious revival in Europe comparable to the one in the US?</p>	M. Bjerge (DK)		The Danish Social Science Research Council		<p>SCH finds that the topic addressed by the proposal is of utmost relevance. With religion playing such a prominent role in the public sphere, the exploration of possible research agendas on “religion” under an “ESF Forward Look” would be eminently timely. The current text is largely inspired by the research agenda of the funded social science ERA-Net project NORFACE. But even as it stands, SCH can see in the proposal potential for a much needed integration of “Humanities” perspectives. An excellent starting point could in fact be the scoping exercise conducted by 15 research councils and the ESF on religion and value studies under the Humanities ERA-Net HERA (“Values, Beliefs and Ideologies as Forces behind the Changing Europe”). Unfortunately the proposal, as it stands, ignores this important exercise. Once the Social Science and Humanities perspectives are appropriately integrated, the resulting research questions will be challenging, both scientifically and socially: the role of individual cognitive psychology in tracing micro-level experiences of “religion” in an, allegedly, secularising world; the</p>

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								<p>relationship of “religion” with competing worldviews, such as scientific images of the world; the expansion of the notion of “religion” to incorporate cultural practices (of increasing importance in a multicultural Europe), to name only a few of these issues. SCH also considers it necessary to create an appropriate forum for integrating stakeholders from outside the academic domain in the process of identifying research needs.</p> <p><u>SCH recommends that this proposal be further developed under the following conditions.</u> A preparatory workshop must be convened to bring together the relevant expertise in the full breadth of the field. SCH should take the lead in the further development together with the proposers, in order to integrate the scoping exercise conducted under HERA, and relevant national experiences which have been identified by SCH but which are not considered in the proposal as it stands.</p>
<b>NOT RECOMMENDED (with comments for possible further developments)</b>								
04	SCSS	SCSS [sole lead]	<p><b>Ageing and challenges for the European Social Model</b></p> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Ageing; health; politics; economy; sustainable welfare state</p> <p><u>Abstract:</u> The European population is ageing and the trend will last for the current century. The ageing is due to increasing longevity and falling birth rates. Pressures on social policy will increase. The question is how social policy can be designed to meet these pressures. Can social policy generate positive feed-back on fertility and human capital formation in general, as well as on economic growth and other fundamental determinants of the future tax base such as labour supply? The population change also has important political and cultural consequences. One crucial challenge is the integration of immigrants in labour markets.</p>	M. Bjerge (DK)		The Danish Social Science Research Council		<p>Looking jointly at all three suggestions for FLs under the topic “Ageing” (No.4, 11, 18) SCH finds that they are, as they stand, tailored almost exclusively to some select Social Science approaches.</p> <p>SCH holds the view that the exploration of research agendas on aspects of “Ageing” would greatly benefit from “Humanities” approaches: issues such as solidarity, the individual experience of life-cycles, diverging cultural concepts of the value of ageing - and the simultaneous existence of different cultural concepts of ageing in multicultural societies (“wisdom culture”) might be relevant here.</p> <p>SCH would also like to draw attention to the need for more research into the creation of suitable environments and life tools for a society with a shifting demographic balance. Clearly, ethics and social philosophy should be a constitutive component of research into</p>

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								<p>“ageing”, given that such research and the questions asked will influence, at a later stage, political choices.</p> <p>The proposals as they stand do not leave sufficient room for the integration and development of such and other, broader research agendas. The three proposals were therefore ultimately found to be lacking the necessary scientific, interdisciplinary edge.</p> <p><b><u>SCH does NOT recommend that this proposal be taken forward as an ESF Forward Look.</u></b></p>
11	SCSS	SCSS [sole lead]	<p><b>Challenges of an Ageing Society</b></p> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Demography of ageing; labour demand and ageing work force; solidarity and the “European social model”; ageing policy; monitoring social change</p> <p><u>Abstract:</u> It is well known that decreased fertility and increased longevity cause an ageing of society and associated to this European countries expect a host of changes in several domains. These imply structural changes and socio-cultural changes, changes in policymaking, and changes in the administrative monitoring of social change phenomena. In spite of increasing disciplinary research on population ageing, as well as policy recommendations of the European Commission, changes related to population ageing are not sufficiently studied, and the Forward Look proposes an integrative collaborative analysis of existing research as well as of neglected research areas.</p>	R. Bausch (LU)	D. Ferring (LU)	FNR Luxembourg	Letters to be copied to Ulrike Kohl, <a href="mailto:ulrike.kohl@fnr.lu">ulrike.kohl@fnr.lu</a>	<p>Looking jointly at all three suggestions for FLs under the topic “Ageing” (No.4, 11, 18) SCH finds that they are, as they stand, tailored almost exclusively to some select Social Science approaches.</p> <p>SCH holds the view that the exploration of research agendas on aspects of “Ageing” would greatly benefit from “Humanities” approaches: issues such as solidarity, the individual experience of life-cycles, diverging cultural concepts of the value of ageing - and the simultaneous existence of different cultural concepts of ageing in multicultural societies (“wisdom culture”) might be relevant here.</p> <p>SCH would also like to draw attention to the need for more research into the creation of suitable environments and life tools for a society with a shifting demographic balance. Clearly, ethics and social philosophy should be a constitutive component of research into “ageing”, given that such research and the questions asked will influence, at a later stage, political choices.</p> <p>The proposals as they stand do not leave sufficient room for the integration and development of such and other, broader research agendas. The three proposals were therefore ultimately found to be lacking the necessary scientific, interdisciplinary edge.</p> <p><b><u>SCH does NOT recommend that this proposal be taken forward as an ESF Forward Look.</u></b></p>
12	SOCH SCSS	SCSS	<p><b>Troubled and Troublesome Youth in a Changing Europe</b></p> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Psycho-social development; children and adolescents; problem</p>	B. Neizert (DE)	H.J. Albrecht (DE)	MPG	Copy to Leonie	<p>This suggestion is found to be clearly if narrowly defined in terms of a “Forward Look” proposal. It rather resembles, on the</p>

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		[sole lead, with SCH input]	behaviour; social; policies; multilevel analysis  <u>Abstract:</u> The successful psychological and social development of children and adolescents remains a key issue for social science research and policies across Europe. While scientific knowledge has increased in previous years due to theoretical and methodological advancements, more efforts are needed to link neighbouring aspects and approaches by crossing the boundaries of disciplines and countries, and producing a 'critical mass' of cutting-edge approaches combined with sufficiently rich empirical data, in order to better inform and guide social policies towards children and adolescents.				Schneider; leonie.schneider@gv.mpg.de	other hand, a proposal for a major research project. While the topic as such potentially holds numerous angles for Humanities researchers, the proposal does not lend itself to the wide exploration of future research agendas required under the "Forward Look" format. <b><u>SCH does NOT recommend that this proposal be taken forward as an ESF Forward Look.</u></b>
15	SCH SCSS	SCH [sole lead, with SCSS input]	<b>Anthropology in Europe. Facing the Challenges of European Convergence in Higher Education and in Research. A Review of the Fields of Socio-Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology.</b> <i>Keywords:</i> Mapping Europe's anthropology; social anthropology and ethnology; anthropology's research output; integrating anthropological research; devising a research agenda  <u>Abstract:</u> The aim of this project is to map the discipline of Anthropology as it is practiced in Europe, within and beyond the academic field, with regard to teaching-training, and to the scholarly research carried out in the diverse 'traditions', schools and branches of the discipline. In so far as the present application is concerned, we propose to restrict the review to the fields of Socio-Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology. However, we believe that this reviewing exercise should be extended to the other fields of 'General Anthropology', namely Physical and Biological Anthropology. For the overall aim is to develop a complete picture of what Anthropology is and where it stands today. Thus to contribute to a more integrated and vibrant discipline, by unfolding its full potential. The interest in investigating the 'state of the art' and the scholarly legacy of the discipline is not merely antiquarian. One main purpose of this reviewing exercise is to identify the epistemological and methodological strengths of the anthropological approach. Thus, to be in a better position to ascertain the status Anthropology holds in the academy and in society. Anthropology is a discipline closely associated with a wide range of other disciplines. Therefore, it has great potentialities to act as a catalyst for interdisciplinary endeavours. Lastly, on the basis of the knowledge attained through the review, we aim at reaching a consensus with regard to the issues and themes that should be at the core of future research agendas.	M. Martinez Ripoll (ES)	A. Barrera González (ES)	CSIC	Emails to be copied to Maria Angeles Rodriguez-Peña, (CSIC) when sent out; ropena@or.gc.csic.es	This proposal addresses the need for cross-European research and Higher Education agendas in a relevant field of study. The proposal does not, however, lend itself to being a "Forward Look": it does not address wider research questions as such. <b><u>SCH does NOT recommend that this proposal be taken forward as an ESF Forward Look</u></b>  SCH sees the value of exercises such as the one proposed here in the run-up to the emergence of pan-European doctoral programmes. SCH wonders whether ESF should not play a role in such exercises, as they are concerned with the formation of the future generation of researchers.
18	EMRC SCSS	SCSS [co-lead EMRC]	<b>Ageing, Health and Pensions in Europe</b> <i>Keywords:</i> Pensions; Population Ageing; Social Insurance; Public Health; Disability; Retirement; Welfare State; Demography  <u>Abstract:</u> The ageing of populations is one of the main secular developments shaping the 21st century. Ageing will fundamentally affect individuals as well as the European welfare states which have shaped European labour markets as much as the health and well-being of European citizens.	J.D. Muskiet (NL)		KNAW		Looking jointly at all three suggestions for FLs under the topic "Ageing" (No.4, 11, 18) SCH finds that they are, as they stand, tailored almost exclusively to some select Social Science approaches. SCH holds the view that the exploration of research agendas on aspects of "Ageing" would greatly benefit from "Humanities" approaches: issues such as solidarity, the

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			<p>Globalisation and population ageing now exert large pressures on our welfare states, necessitating reform of pension and health care systems. Building on an already existing successful European, multidisciplinary collaboration, we propose as Topic for the Forward Looks 2006 ESF "Ageing, Health and Pensions in Europe". Aim of the proposed topic is to understand the key relationships between demographics, factor prices, welfare regimes, pension provision, public health, employment and well-being in a multidisciplinary and cross-national framework. With the proposed topic, we intend to contribute leading edge scientific knowledge to the core topics of the European social and economic policy debate.</p>					<p>individual experience of life-cycles, diverging cultural concepts of the value of ageing - and the simultaneous existence of different cultural concepts of ageing in multicultural societies ("wisdom culture") might be relevant here.</p> <p>SCH would also like to draw attention to the need for more research into the creation of suitable environments and life tools for a society with a shifting demographic balance. Clearly, ethics and social philosophy should be a constitutive component of research into "ageing", given that such research and the questions asked will influence, at a later stage, political choices.</p> <p>The proposals as they stand do not leave sufficient room for the integration and development of such and other, broader research agendas. The three proposals were therefore ultimately found to be lacking the necessary scientific, interdisciplinary edge.</p> <p><b><u>SCH does NOT recommend that this proposal be taken forward as an ESF Forward Look.</u></b></p>