

FORWARD LOOK CONSENSUS CONFERENCE

Central and Eastern Europe beyond Transition: Convergence and Divergence in Europe
16–17 February 2011, Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB), Germany

Background Reading

For brief summaries of the background to the project and related documents, publications, information.

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PROPOSAL SUMMARY

This is a summary of the original proposal, for information. Details of the running project can be found on www.esf.org/cee

Introduction

The 'Forward Look' will set new frontiers in Social Science research on Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Previous initiatives by the European Science Foundation (ESF) looked at the research infrastructure in CEE rather than the content of research agendas (e.g. the report 'Status and Developments of Social Science Research in Central and Eastern Europe', and the Member Organisations in Central and Eastern Europe - MOCEE project). However, following a workshop attended by many members of the Standing Committee for the Social Sciences from CEE states, it was suggested that in the social sciences, a rethinking of the European research agenda would usefully complement other efforts to overcome the structural and resource challenges faced by researchers from CEE.

Since the regime changes took place with rather unexpected speed, research agendas have frequently been reactive. Research priorities of major transnational projects have also frequently been determined externally with a normative assumption that convergence with Western Europe is the goal of social development in CEE that knowledge will facilitate. Now that the period of rapid change in CEE has ended, it is necessary to reassess the convergence and divergence between the formerly communist states and western Europe.

Central and Eastern Europe has been an important topic of social science research throughout the period since the fall of communism in 1989/1990, but it is possible to divide research on CEE into two very approximate phases:

- In the 1990s, which could be referred to as the transition phase, the major focus was democratisation and economic transformation. Although the fall of communism *per se* initially attracted most attention, much comparative work later in the decade was concerned with analysing the character of the changes that followed the fall of communism. In economics, discussion

focused on whether rapid liberalisation and privatisation would themselves create the conditions for people to change their economic behaviour and reorient to a commercial and profit oriented outlook, or whether institutional change was a necessary prerequisite for capitalist development. In political science and sociology there was a debate on whether the revolutions were part of the 'third wave' of democratisation including Latin America and southern Europe (an approach labelled 'transitology'), while some transnational studies attempted to compare CEE to western European states. At an empirical level research focused on the development of the new institutional framework of democracy, the changing character of elites and their influence over economic and political change, the relative weakness of civil society development, the social welfare consequences of economic change, and changes in popular culture and attitudes towards the old and new regimes.

In the 2000s, which could be referred to as the consolidation phase, the European integration process began to dominate the research agenda. While EU enlargement *had been* a peripheral research topic at the point when detailed negotiations commenced in 1997-1999, within a few years it became the framework within which much social science research was conducted. Harmonisation and conditionality were viewed as leading forces driving political and economic transformation, with some underlying assumptions that convergence with western Europe was the benchmark for assessing development. Further new empirical concerns included questions of different types of capitalism, migration across Europe, problems of corruption and international crime, ethnic identities and their relation to political consolidation and the promotion of social justice according to EU norms, and social policy reforms and their meaning in terms of the character of social policy regimes in different countries in the region.

The Forward Look will build on this research and establish a research agenda for the next decade. Its focus will be on the states of Central and Eastern Europe that are currently in the EU, but with awareness that understanding developments there could be particularly relevant longer term. It should be noted that the EU currently embraces 27 states, of which ten formerly had some form of communist rule. Two of three current candidates are post-communist states; all five potential candidates in the Western Balkans were once

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communist; and all the European states included in the European Neighbourhood Policy are post-communist. Consequently, it is possible that – if enlargement continues at its present speed - by the end of the next decade, almost half EU member states will have had a protracted communist interlude in their past, and that this proportion will not lessen.

The contention therefore is that frameworks for European social science research which assume that the states of Central and Eastern Europe represent the ‘other’ compared to a western European ‘norm’ may be inappropriate. Convergence may prove more complex to map than a simple process whereby post-communist states ‘return to Europe’ and resemble the old EU member states. In order to understand the future direction of Europe, it is thus of vital importance to reassess societal development in the current post-communist member states. In this process, it should not necessarily be assumed *a priori* that the legacy of post-communist transition is wholly negative, or that the EU integration process has been entirely positive.

When designing a Forward Look on societal, political and economic developments in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as on new challenges for social science research resulting from the profound changes that have been taking place in this region for 20 years since the collapse of the state socialism, one can point to the following important reasons for the FL:

- a) Developments in CEE not only profoundly influence populations in CEE but are also critically important for the future of the European society at large. CEE breaking free from the Soviet empire, which after fifteen years resulted in the membership of many states in the EU, has been one of the most important processes shaping the 21st century in Europe (and elsewhere).
- b) Developments in CEE are too many, on too many levels, and are too complex to be creatively studied without reference to strategic visions of where CEE is heading. Without being backed by such visions future research may slide into endless preoccupation with local details.
- c) Developments in CEE are unique in providing an opportunity to evaluate future consequence and limits of social constructivism (introducing and shaping social order by ‘big bang’ instant political decisions

rather than allowing for its autonomous self-forming evolution).

The Forward Look will identify developments in CEE which will, could or should become hot research topics in the study of CEE as a part of European society and as such be promoted and endorsed by national and European grant institutions; and to outline ways in which foresight on CEE can contribute to the development of social sciences in general.

Crucially, the agenda for future research needs to be established with a very major role played by the scholarly community within the new EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe. It is also recognised, however, that many colleagues originating from this community are currently integrated into research institutions in western Europe, and that west European scholars also play a valuable role in conducting ground-breaking research. Research findings from everyone involved in the field must be surveyed in order to determine future research directions. Crucially, the needs of user communities throughout Europe also have to be addressed. Synergies between academic and policy-oriented research, conducted by a wide variety of institutions, are becoming stronger. Future research agendas must be constructed to harness the forces of all parties involved.

The Forward Look will formulate policy recommendations to set up priorities in social sciences with respect to designing future research programmes to be tackled in the next 5-10 years. It will employ foresight methods in order to analyse future scenarios of developments in CEE in a pan-European and global context. The intention is to improve the science policy-making process by providing actors and stakeholders with a more informed understanding of future challenges in order to support science policy definition (drafting future research priorities/informing policy) and actively to take part in the strategic development of future research in the social sciences (embedding participation of scientific expertise in the policy-making process). New perspectives on the socio-economic and political changes, and responses to the changes and scientific challenges, after 20 years of transformation and EU accession, will form part of this process.



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State of the Art & Scientific Challenges

Members of the working group that formulated the Forward Look proposal prepared brief reports on some of the major research questions and scientific challenges that arise in a number of the social science disciplines and made suggestions about future research agendas:

- **Economics** (János Mátyás Kovács, Institute for Human Sciences IWM, Austria)
- **Social Structure** (Bogdan Mach, SCSS)
- **Democratic Institutions** (Terry Cox, University of Glasgow, UK)
- **Local governance** (Ilona Pálné Kovács, SCSS)
- **Political Culture and Identities** (Silvia Miháliková, SCSS)
- **EU Integration** (Karen Henderson, University of Leicester, UK)

This was not an exhaustive survey, but merely indicative of the broad scope of the issues that need to be addressed. While the project is designed to be interdisciplinary, the major focus overall is on issues of governance. The Forward Look is designed to develop and integrate such ideas so that its Final Report may make more concrete suggestions for the formulation of science policy. In other words, this was a starting point, and was not intended to predict or preempt the FL's final conclusions. The FL is interested not only in formulating coherent research agendas, but also, crucially, in how they could best be implemented.

Forward Look Activities

While the major activities of the Forward Look will revolve around the conference and workshop programme and its outputs, it should commence with a systematic survey of existing research funded by major national and international sponsors, most particularly – but not exclusively – ESF member organisations. It is particularly important to identify the main actors currently determining priorities in Social Science research on CEE. Previous ESF reports have looked at research structures within the University sector and state-funded academic research. However, given the importance of funding challenges, exogenous influences on research agendas are of great significance in the region, particularly in transnational projects (whether coordinated in CEE or in old EU member states), but also at other levels. For the recommendations produced by the Forward Look to have maximum effect, it is

essential to understand the current structures of agenda-setting in Social Science research on CEE.

Workshops and conferences

The investigation of future research directions will be tackled first during three expert workshops which will combine foresight activities with the sub-themes highlighted in the proposal. The workshops will bring together leading researchers in the respective subfields to both map and evaluate the state of the art as well as to present ideas on the future scientific challenges and new research questions within each sub-theme. It is anticipated that the researchers will be based in a diversity of research-active institutions. The aim of the workshops, however, is also to identify the most effective means of implementing future agendas. Policy makers and stakeholders will therefore be involved at all stages of discussion. The final conference, informed by a science policy brief, will be predominantly concerned with integrating other stakeholders (e.g. policy actors, research councils, learned societies' representatives) in visions of how to implement and apply future research agendas. It will incorporate the main findings of the workshops in order to come up with a strategy for future social science research in CEE that will be contained in the Forward Look's final report in 2011.

Current Work Plan

- **First Management Committee Meeting**
Brussels, Belgium, 4 September 2009
- **First Scientific Committee Meeting** *Strasbourg, France, 8-9 October 2009*
- **Survey Oct 2009 – September 2010**
Mapping of existing research projects
- **Interim Scientific Committee Meeting 30 Nov 2009 – telephone conference**
Follow-up on workshop planning
- **Workshop 1: Bratislava, Slovakia, 4-5 February 2010**
Survey analysis - Horizon scanning/scenario analysis: expert views on future research challenges
- **Interim Scientific Committee Meeting 17 March 2009 – telephone conference**
Follow-up on workshop planning
- **Second Scientific Committee Meeting 12 May 2010 - Leicester, UK, May 2010**
Workshop preparation

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- **Workshop 2: Economics, Regional Disparities, Social Structure**
Leicester, UK, 12-14 May 2010
Using the results of horizon scanning, the survey and scenario analysis: establish priorities in research into economic and social questions. Discuss roadmapping for future research.
- **Workshop 3: Democratic Institutions, Local Governance, Political Culture** *Sofia, Bulgaria, 23-25 June 2010*
Using the results of horizon scanning, the survey and scenario analysis: establish priorities for examining the impact of governance structures, and their limitations, on in dealing with economic and social challenges. Discuss roadmapping for future research.
- **Road Map October/November 2010**
Presentation of summary findings on future research priorities (with regard to convergence/divergence in Europe)
- **Third Scientific Committee Meeting** *London, UK, 28 October 2010*
- **Fourth Scientific Committee Meeting** *Berlin, Germany, 6 December 2010*
- **Final Conference** *Berlin, Germany, 16-17 February 2011*
Present the roadmap developed on the basis of Workshops 2 & 3; discussion with stakeholders.
- **Outreach activities 2011**
- **Drafts of Science Policy Briefing and Final Report for the Management Committee meeting 2011**
- **Second Management Committee meeting 2011**
- **Publication of Science Policy Briefing and Final Report 2011**

Impact and Follow-up

It would be premature at this stage to present a vision of the research agenda that would be developed by the Forward Look, and the precise means of implementation. A full programme of outreach/impact activities will be constructed as an ongoing process, particularly once the detailed findings of the initial survey are available for discussion, and will be developed progressively as an integral part of workshop discussion.

The final report with policy recommendations should present strategic visions developed during the workshops and suggestions for an action plan. This will include a survey of the specific constraints on and potential of the social sciences in CEE, and possibly suggest new instruments; it should facilitate networking programmes in CEE; and support systems for stronger EU-funded research participation (e.g. new mobility schemes, new data infrastructures). The needs of user communities at local, national and international level must underpin all proposals made.

The broadest possible network of stakeholders would be required to implement the visions presented. These would include scientific organisations (at the operational level: Academies of Sciences, universities, non-university research institutes); ESF member organisations in CEE (intermediary organisation-level funding agencies); science policy makers and science administrators (national policy level - science officers at the ministries of science and education); foundations supporting scientific research in the field of social sciences, but also policy makers from other policy sectors reliant on the social science findings for the sake of evidence-based policy (policy relevant research); international scientific organisations, advisory groups etc.

The Forward Look will face a number of challenges because of the weaker support for social sciences in comparison to hard sciences (the amount of funding that is likely to be/or is being allocated to the social sciences) on the national level. There are also organisational/managerial issues as there is some instability at the science administration level which is dependent on political changes in CEE countries. There is also a question of openness to the recommendations, which might be counteracted by involving science policy level at the formulating of the recommendations level.

The greatest challenges relate to the rather broad scope of the Forward Look; yet it was the simultaneous transition of politics, economics and society that made the democratisation of CEE such a unique process, and the legacy of these changes, and the future responses necessary, cannot therefore be usefully assessed without recourse to the full range of social sciences.

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Forward Look Management Committee

represents the ESF and other commissioning organisations, guides and monitors the project

Chair

- **Professor Bogdan Mach**
Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

Members

- **Mr. Berry J. Bonenkamp**
Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research
- **Dr. Patricia Georgieva**
Rectorate of the University of Montenegro, Serbia and Montenegro
- **Ms. Petra Grabner**
Austrian Science Fund
- **Professor Everhard Holtmann**
Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany
- **Professor Leo Motus**
Estonian Academy of Sciences

Forward Look Scientific Committee

responsible for implementation, including scientific and methodological aspects

Chair

- **Dr. Karen Hendersen**
University of Leicester, United Kingdom

Members

- **Professor Dalina Dumitrescu**
ASEBUSS – The Institute for Business and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania
- **Dr. János Mátyás Kovács**
Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), Vienna, Austria
- **Professor Silvia Miháliková**
Comenius University, Slovak Republic
- **Professor Ilona Pálné Kovács**
Regional Research Center, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Pécs, Hungary
- **Professor Vello Pettai**
University of Tartu, Estonia
- **Dr. Agnieszka Wenninger**
GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Berlin, Germany

Consultant

Professor Ian Miles has worked in collaboration with the Scientific Committee and ESF to integrate foresight methodology. Ian is professor of Technological Innovation and Social Change at the Manchester Institute of Innovation Research.

ESF

Science:

- **Dr. Nina Kancewicz-Hoffman**
Head of Humanities and Social Science Unit ¹

Administration:

- **Mrs. Rhona Heywood-Roos**
Senior Administrator

¹ Previously Dr. Balázs Kiss, former Head of Social Sciences Unit (2007-2010)

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THE SURVEY REPORT

An Empirical Baseline for a thematic Rethinking of the CEE Research Agenda

The survey was carried out by Hans-Dieter Klingemann, WZB and Olivier Ruchet, Sciences Po Paris in 2010

Excerpts from the full survey report, which can be downloaded on www.esf.org/berlin-conference

Introduction

The Survey focuses on thematic priorities of research projects funded in three disciplines - Economics, Political Science, and Sociology - by European science foundations. The major questions the Survey was supposed to address were:

- Are the funding preferences of national foundations based in Western Europe on the one hand, and Central & Eastern Europe on the other, similar or different?
- How do they compare to funding priorities developed by supranational foundations such as the European Union's framework programs, the European Research Council or the European Science Foundation?
- Can one recognize research projects specific to a Central & Eastern European problem agenda?

Conclusions

The ESF Survey describes the research topics of projects funded by European foundations for an earlier time period. In doing so it establishes a baseline anchoring the rethinking of the research agenda empirically.

Funding priorities of 6 foundations located in Western Europe, 10 foundations located in Central & Eastern Europe, and 3 transnational European funding agencies were explored. 4.694 projects in the fields of Economics, Political Science, and Sociology that were funded in the five-year period of 2004 to 2008 have been classified by 22 modal research topics.

Focusing on the first three highest priorities and comparing average distributions of modal research topics for Central & Eastern European foundations on the one hand and Western European

foundations on the other the themes of economic "Competition" and "Economic policies" were under the top three in both groups of funding agencies. The emphasis on "Regions, urban-rural issues" was more important in the East while "Methodology" carried more weight in the West.

Comparing distributions of modal research topics within disciplines shows that the following themes are characteristic of projects funded by Central and Eastern European foundations: "Economic growth", "Competition", "Regions, urban rural issues, development", and "Education, socialization". Distinctive of projects funded by West European foundations are: "Employment", "Civic society", and "Health". No significant differences were found for the remaining 15 modal research topics.

These major results signal both similarities and differences. However, similarities are more characteristic of the situation than differences – a result that is underscored by relatively low coefficients of dissimilarity between distributions of modal research topics.

An additional attempt has been made to locate "typical CEE" projects by expert evaluation. Looking at the overall distribution of projects rated "typical CEE" the following themes reached the highest priority: "Democratic institutions and processes" (14.0%), "Economic policies" (9.2%), and "Political and social identity" (7.2). The difference measures show that among the expert selected typical CEE projects there are, on average, almost 6 times more projects dealing with regional problems than among the "normal" projects; and topics such as migration or democratic institutions are, on average, overrepresented about three times.

The distribution of the research topics of the typical CEE projects can be compared to the distributions generated by the three groups of foundations. The comparison of the results obtained by the experts on the one hand and of the priorities of the foundations located in Central & Eastern Europe and in Western Europe on the other hand are of special interest. If the comparison of the distributions of the expert generated typical CEE projects and of the Central & Eastern European foundations would show a greater similarity than the comparison with the distribution of the Western European foundations then this result would signal a funding behavior of the Central & Eastern European foundations that could be called typical CEE. If, however, similarities beat dissimilarities for these two comparisons then this result would support the assumption of the

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emergence of a common European research agenda. Empirical results speak for the latter expectation. The dissimilarity index for “experts vs. CEE foundations” is: 27.1; the one for “experts vs. Western European foundations” is 28.8.

Comparison of the transnational European foundations and the expert selected typical CEE projects shows the largest coefficient of dissimilarity (32.1). “Knowledge, innovation” is the research topic that deviates most. Thus, there are good reasons to assume that much of the difference can be attributed to the incentives propagated by the goals of the programs of the transnational European foundations.

Finally, the analysis of the large-scale comparative research projects funded by the European Union’s Framework Programs did not discover large differences caused by an involvement of scholars working in Central & Eastern Europe.

Thus, the general result of the ESF Survey can be summarized as follows: The research priorities of foundations located in Western Europe and in Central & Eastern Europe do, indeed, show some differences in their research priorities. However, similarities are much more characteristic of the general picture and it seems reasonable to expect this trend to continue.

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THE METRIS REPORT

Emerging Trends in Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities in Europe



Executive Summary

METRIS stands for Monitoring European Trends in Social Sciences and Humanities. The aim of METRIS is to support the European Research Area (ERA) in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (SSH). This is particularly important for these sciences, because their knowledge is embedded into national systems, and the ERA brings about novel insights and perspectives that result from comparing national systems and situations as well as rising above such comparisons. European level research in SSH forms an important support for European policy-making.

Download the full report:

[METRIS Report – Emerging Trends in Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities in Europe \(URL: \[http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/metris-report_en.pdf\]\(http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/metris-report_en.pdf\)\)](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/metris-report_en.pdf)

Brussels, 2009, EUR 23741, ISBN 978-92-79-11136-5, DOI 10.2777/57083, 144 pages

This report offers an overview of emerging trends in research in the social sciences and humanities (SSH) in Europe. It is based on the contributions of 14 senior researchers who were asked to review emerging trends in research in the five priorities of theme 8 (Social Sciences and Humanities) of the 7th Framework Programme (FP7) as well as cross-cutting trends, and to formulate recommendations for further action. The report does not cover the important contribution of SSH to the other nine themes of FP7 although overlapping interests may be identified.

Trends in the SSH reflect not only societal developments, but also the changing structures of research itself. National research systems remain very different in Europe, and efforts should be made to understand the ways in which the construction of a unified European Research Area is transforming them. We need to better understand how the important changes underway in the modes of funding and in science policy are affecting research both in terms of quality and in terms of its social uses. This should start with an effort at creating a reliable database monitoring both public and private funding of SSH research in Europe. The quasi-ubiquitous calls for interdisciplinarity should not obscure the continued relevance of traditional disciplinary work, nor the need to achieve 'deep' interdisciplinarity between distant disciplines. The development of new intellectual property rights regimes and the changing economy of publishing call for measures aiming at ensuring public access to knowledge in the ERA. This, in turn, depends on the capacity to develop a strong and open European research infrastructure.

The group identified the following five trends in SSH research in the five thematic areas:

Major trends in society include demographic trends related to the slowing down of population growth worldwide and to the falling share of Europe in the world population, to ageing and its impact on social systems, and to migration flows. New approaches to the urban habitat, to the pace and forms of social change, and to advances in the field of biotechnologies are also important research trends. Research is also likely to focus on political issues such as the worldwide prospects of democracy, the crisis of traditional political representation, new intersections between the political and the religious, the transformation of the mode of governance characteristic of welfare systems, as well as new understandings of very long-term change.

In the rubric Growth, Employment and Competitiveness in a Knowledge-Based Society, the study of innovation will remain high on the agenda, in particular analyses focusing on the institutional and social dimensions of innovation and creativity. The emphasis placed on the role of intangibles in the so-called knowledge economy will increase researchers' interest in human, social and cultural capital, in the experience economy, and in measures of value. In this context, social welfare will be reconsidered as a productive factor. With the current economic crisis issues of

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financial stability and economic governance are also coming back to the fore.

Research on Citizenship will maintain a focus on issues of constitutionalism and formal citizenship, but it also renews itself by taking into account the proliferation of different types of citizenship. Issues of religious, sexual, scientific, biological citizenship are promising lines of research in this area. New forms of participation in the public sphere, and new participant subjects – such as corporations – are also attracting a growing interest. Researchers increasingly understand citizenship by analysing its limits or its confines and by looking at non-citizens.

In terms of Combining Economic, Social and Environmental Objectives, current trends point at a growing engagement of the SSH with the study of the environment in its various dimensions, such as biodiversity, landscaping, or conservation, while analysing the socioeconomic consequences of climate change. New approaches to social cohesion and to the analysis of social inequalities are developing, in part with a new emphasis on globalising trends. Alternative models of growth and alternative theories of value are also bound to develop, while studies of risk and risk-management will continue to attract interest.

Europe and the World is a thematic area for which EU support plays a significant role relative to the support at national levels. Next to the analysis of Europe's place in multilateral frameworks, innovative research focuses on a relational understanding of European identity and the social and political dimensions of memory. Europe as a knowledge-based economy and as an entity inserted in global circuits of cultural and immaterial artefacts is also important.

Next to these five areas, the group has provided selected examples of transversal research trends that renew vast swathes of the SSH. They are: the 'iconic turn' in a number of fields where the role of images, visualisations and iconic languages delineates a complex ecology of the visual; new approaches to space and spatiality that take into consideration the importance of physical space and lead to the rethinking of many territorialised concepts; a renewed interest in affects and emotions; and the erosion of the traditional boundaries of scientific research.

Following the analysis within the themes, the following important cross-cutting themes are flagged out for coordinated support in Europe:

- The future and the new forms of social welfare
- A new research agenda on migration breaking with methodological nationalism
- Interdisciplinary research on innovation
- Sustainability research on the 'post-carbon' city
- New approaches to value and valuation in the context of knowledge economies
- Space, landscape and virtuality as new socio-political environments
- Time and memory as social formations and as political issues
- The technologisation of research in the social sciences and the humanities
- The iconic turn and the analysis of iconospheres
- New approaches to governance and regulation

VITAL QUESTIONS

The Contribution of European Social Science



[Download](#) the Position Paper

Hard copies will be available at the conference

European Science Foundation 2009, ISBN 978-2-918428-04-6, 71 pages

The ESF Standing Committee for the Social Sciences, which is chaired by Professor Sir Roderick Floud, decided to publish a Science Position Paper to reflect upon significant achievements to date but also on how to move forward and encourage answers to the vital questions that are being asked today.

Written, edited and reviewed by leading social scientists, it contributes to the public understanding of scientific research – much of it supported by the European Science Foundation and its Member Organisations – and of the contribution that social science is making and can make in future to the solution of challenges of vital importance to the people and societies of Europe.

This Science Position Paper looks in particular at Challenges and Opportunities for the Social Sciences in Europe and examines important themes. It concludes with six main needs, so that social scientists can strengthen their contribution to the issues which will shape our future.

1. Adequate funding to train and develop the next generations of social scientists who will teach and aid the learning of one-third of Europe's students.
2. Support for the infrastructure of data collection and dissemination, and for improved access to administrative and commercial as well as academic data.
3. Support for the research networks, which are the lifeblood of social science disciplines and which promote the integration of European research.
4. Mechanisms to develop ever-closer links with cognate disciplines in the humanities and the natural and biological sciences.
5. The development of statistics and indicators of research activity, outputs and impact of research in the social sciences and humanities.
6. The willingness of policy makers to listen to the evidence and to the conclusions of social scientists as they analyse the problems of society.

THE MOCEE PROJECT

The ESF 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'.

More information on www.esf.org/research-areas/social-sciences/activities/mo-fora

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'². 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. [Download](#) the Report (*hard copies will be available at the conference*)
- 
- 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 internationalisation of social sciences in Central and Eastern Europe³?
 - The publication of a Science Position Paper 'Promoting Internationalisation of the Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe'⁴, with targeted suggestions for development. [Download](#) the Position Paper (*hard copies will be available at the conference*)
 - This 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.

² Virtasaalo, I. (2008) *Status and Developments of Social Science Research in Central and Eastern Europe*, ESF

³ 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.

⁴ Pálné Kovács, I., and Kutsar, D. (2010) *Promoting Internationalisation of the Social Sciences in Central and Eastern Europe*, ESF

FORWARD LOOKS

The flagship activity of ESF's strategic arm, Forward Looks enable Europe's scientific community, in interaction with policy makers, to develop medium to long-term views and analyses of future research developments with the aim of defining research agendas at national and European level. Forward Looks are driven by ESF's Member Organisations and, by extension, the European research community. Quality assurance mechanisms, based on peer review where appropriate, are applied at every stage of the development and delivery of a Forward Look to ensure its quality and impact.

Homepage: www.esf.org/activities/forward-looks

Duration and Budget

- Average budget of k€ 160 funded from the ESF General Budget
- Forward Looks should last 12-18 months
- ESF provides a Forward Look Coordinator

Criteria

At the heart of a Forward Look topic proposal there are five *design questions*:

1. What are the characteristics and dynamics of the field that is foresighted?
2. What is the main question or problem that makes foresight needed or appropriate?
3. Can any sort of implementation of the results be expected and, if so, who should take care of implementation?
4. What expertise is needed to discuss the developments in the field and to what extent are external perspectives needed?
5. What kind of specific interests or obstacles may be expected in the conduct of the foresight or in implementing the results?

A Forward Look is essentially a systematic and high level priority setting exercise. Although research is unpredictable, a cautiously balanced assessment of state-of-the-art with looking ahead, typically over a period of 5-10 years, may provide a guide and reference for all concerned in setting new directions and priorities for European science in the global context. ESF Forward Looks are essentially science driven, but include, as appropriate, the societal dimension as an essential element of context.



It is becoming increasingly important that the science community and funding agencies at both national and European levels are aware of the potential directions research might take in the future, especially as traditional disciplines combine to produce new and exciting multidisciplinary areas of study. Using the outputs of a Forward Look, agencies will be better able to plan their resources to meet possible future demand, including the development of new facilities and infrastructure which may take a considerable lead time before becoming operational. Foresight exercises also help the development of pan-European approaches by Member Organisations and other national agencies as well as informing European institutions such as the European Commission and ESF itself.