THE ROLE OF SPECIALISTS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES IN THE TOPICS OF CLUSTER 5

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Policy Background—HE Regulation

The Programme should support R&I activities in the field of social sciences and humanities (SSH). This entails **advancing scientific knowledge in that domain** and **making use of insights and progress from SSH to increase economic and societal impact of the Programme**.

Horizon Europe Regulation, Para. 14, L 170/3

Horizon Europe shall ensure a **multidisciplinary approach** and shall foresee, where appropriate, the **integration of social sciences and humanities across all clusters and activities** developed under the Programme, **including specific calls on SSH related topics**."

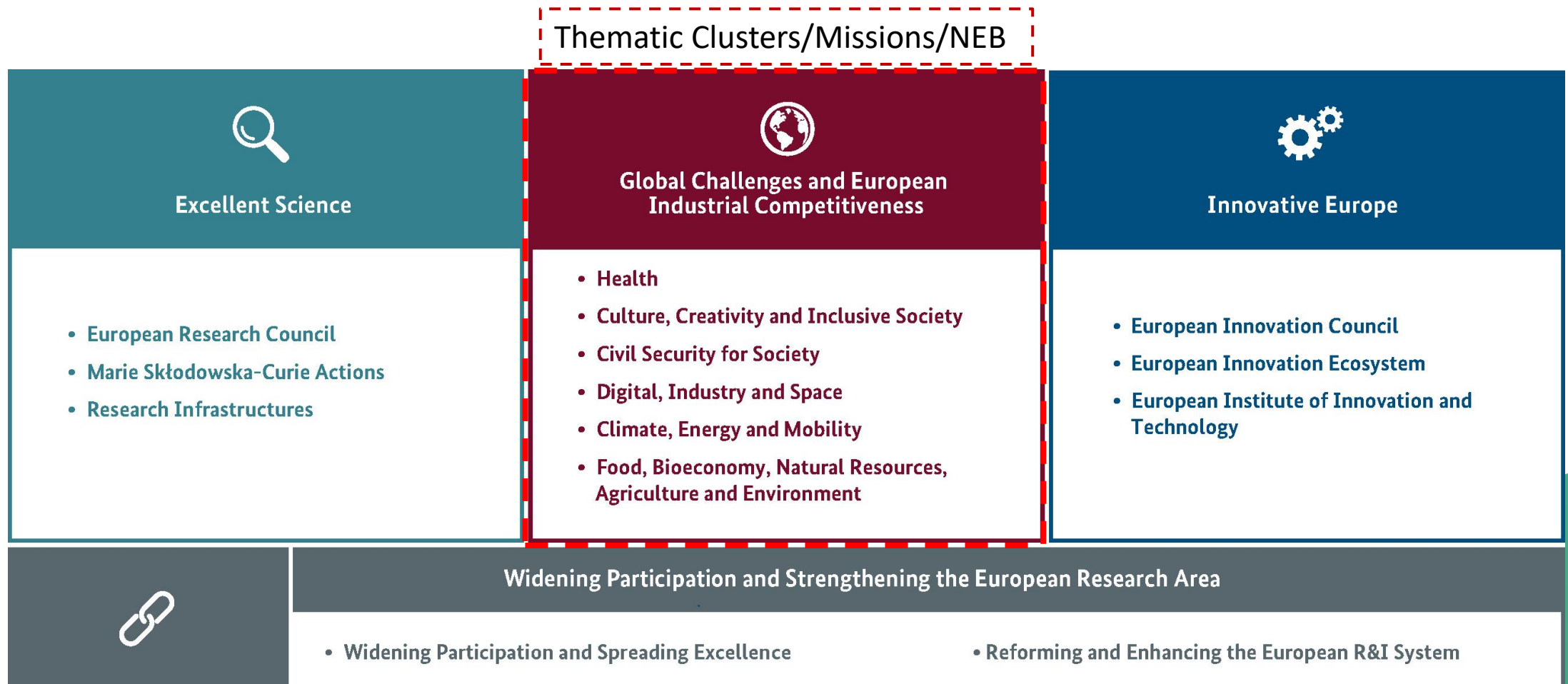*Horizon Europe Regulation, Art. 7 "Principles of the Problem", para. 2*

Policy Background—Strategic Plan

Knowledge from social sciences and humanities (SSH), including arts, **is particularly important to explore different meanings and dimensions that global challenges bring with them and to foster reflexivity over the methods through which they are enquired**. SSH is fundamental for paving the way to interdisciplinary collaborations**, with knowledge of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), while maintaining a human-centric focus. **Original approaches need to be tested to support the uptake of interdisciplinary skills for the future**, from basic education that fosters critical knowledge and an open mindset to vocational training for the (re-) and (up-) skilling of the workforce.

Effectively integrating SSH into <u>all clusters</u>, including **all missions and partnerships, is a **key principle** of the Programme.

Horizon Europe Strategic Plan, 2025-2027

SSH Integration in Horizon Europe

Thematic Clusters/Missions/NEB

Excellent Science

- European Research Council
- Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
- Research Infrastructures

Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness

- Health
- Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry and Space
- Climate, Energy and Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

Innovative Europe

- European Innovation Council
- European Innovation Ecosystem
- European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area

- Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence
- Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I System

SSH Integration—a term defined

- A **technical, policy term** of the European Commission/OECD referring to the doing of **inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary** <u>**research**</u>

- Research consortia made up of groups researchers stemming from the **Social Sciences and Humanities ("SSH") and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)** disciplines

- Differing **thematic specialties** and **methodological approaches**

Why SSH Integration?

◗ Need for **"human centric"** focus in all research areas

◗ To **better assess and address** complex issues facing European society

◗ To develop **better solutions to complex problems** facing Europe/the world

◗ **Technical solutions are not enough!**

◗ Develop solutions with **clear social relevance**, cost effectiveness, and marketability

◗ Integration of SSH disciplines in R&I projects leads to **stronger societal impact, broader/better citizen engagement**

◗ The SSH are **not add-ons (!),** their **expertise** should be **on equal footing** as that of STEM partners, and **incorporated** in the **development of a project's design/research questions & agenda** from the **very beginning** of a project

Interpretative bridges for societal impact

Incorporating SSH research perspectives and methods can play a pivotal role in ensuring that technological tools and innovations produced by the hard sciences and engineering are:

- <u>Comprehensively</u> **analysed for their implications** on society, social/cultural groups, etc.

- Critically assessed, so that a **positive place/fit** in the **existing/changing social order is identified** → not taking "things for granted"

- **Adequately designed** to adapt to social needs/values

SSH experts can offer **interpretations of the conditions** under which technology can act favourable to support human needs and/or realistically generate vast positive impacts

Generation of original knowledge

Furthermore, incorporating SSH research perspectives and methods can help projects to:

- Generate new knowledge, based on **introducing questioning of established modes of thinking/practice** (i.e. doing things)
- This knowledge is **epistemologically original and unique** from that which individual disciplines can deliver

Integrating SSH is about the **content** of the research itself!

Source: Margo Bezzi (modified)

SSH Disciplines—an overview

Social Sciences

Social and behavioural sciences: economics, economic history, political science, sociology, demography, anthropology (except physical anthropology), ethnology, futurology, psychology, geography (except physical geography), peace and conflict studies, human rights.

Education science: curriculum development in non-vocational and vocational subjects, educational policy and assessment, educational research.

Journalism and information: journalism, library and museum sciences, documentation techniques, archival sciences.

Business and administration: retailing, marketing, sales, public relations, real estate, finance, banking, insurance, investment analysis, accounting, auditing, management, public and institutional administration.

Law: law, jurisprudence, history of law.

Humanities and Arts

Humanities: religion and theology, foreign languages and cultures, living or dead languages and their literature, area studies, native languages, current or vernacular language and its literature, interpretation and translation, linguistics, comparative literature, history, archaeology, philosophy, ethics.

Arts: fine arts, performing arts, graphic and audio-visual arts, design, crafts.

SSH research in Cluster 5

"Accelerate the twin digital and green transitions in light of climate neutrality in order to increase European competitiveness"

(Driving logic behind Cluster 5, Introduction Cluster 5 2025 Work Programme, paraphrased)

Many aspects of the research called for in Cluster 5 directly requires SSH disciplinary expertise, as this expertise is "pivotal to understanding" the societal transformation the EU strives for, specifically in relation to:

- **shifts in governance and institutions**

- **socio-cultural factors and knowledge systems needed for just & sustainable transitions**

- **Understanding technological change related to stakeholders and regions**

Identifiable in two main forms:

- **SSH-flagged topics**

- **Societal Readiness pilot topics** (with specific SR expected outcome)

HORIZON-CL5-2025-06-D1-06: Fostering <u>equity</u> and <u>justice</u> in climate <u>policies</u> – Societal Readiness Pilot (RIA)

Expected Outcome(s) (projects results expected to contribute to **all**):

- Climate policies are made more **inclusive and equitable**, facilitating **acceptance** across **political** and **societal** stakeholders with **various socio-economic** and development status, both within the EU and globally, enabling high ambition climate action and helping to deliver on the European Green Deal's commitment to "leave no one behind";

- There is an **improved consensus between the Global North and the Global South** within the UNFCCC process, unlocking a greater momentum in the implementation of the Paris Agreement;

- The evidence base underpinning IPCC assessments is strengthened, diversified, and made more inclusive, facilitating consensus and government approval processes;

- **Social science perspectives** on **justice and equity** are better incorporated into **policy narratives**, scenarios, and models, improving their **societal relevance** and ensuring that climate action strategies are more reflective of the **needs, values and concerns of diverse societal groups**, **building trust** in results and outcomes, and increasing their uptake potential.

HORIZON-CL5-2025-06-D1-06: Fostering equity and justice in climate policies – Societal Readiness Pilot (RIA)

Scope (excerpt):

- Actions should advance more comprehensive and interdisciplinary understanding of climate justice in the context of the European and global mitigation and adaptation policies, promoting awareness, consistency and co-production approaches. They should **take into consideration socio-economic, territorial and development disparities** that exist between and within **countries, regions and across various segments of the population**.

- Actions should address **multiple dimensions of justice**, diverse spatial and temporal scales **(e.g., intergenerational justice)**, and **explore** the role of **a broad range of social, political, economic, and cultural contexts and factors**…both **collective** (such as **values, power structures, institutional and legal frameworks, political economy**, development models, climate elites) and **individual** (such as **age, gender, and intersectionality**) **features**. Building on the resulting insights, actions are expected to **develop recommendations** on how to design, implement and evaluate just climate transitions, including definition of specific indicators, standards, and criteria to better **operationalise the justice concept** in adaptation and mitigation pathways…

HORIZON-CL5-2025-06-D1-06: Fostering equity and justice in climate policies – Societal Readiness Pilot

Outcomes:

"…**facilitating acceptance across political and societal stakeholders** with various **socio-economic and development status**, both within the EU and globally…"

- SSH disciplines which study instances and forms of social "acceptance": Psychology (e.g. behavioural psychology, cognitive psychology); Sociology; Social and Cultural Anthropology; Cultural Studies
- SSH disciplines looking at "socio-economic" &"development" related issues: Economics (micro); Social Geography; Anthropology; Area Studies

"…Social science perspectives on **justice and equity** are better incorporated into policy narratives,…"

- SSH disciplines looking at "justice and equity" and "policy" issues: Communications; Political Science; Law; Anthropology (of Law); Sociology (of Law), History

"…reflective of the **needs, values and concerns** of **diverse societal groups**…"

- SSH disciplines which investigate "needs, values, concern" of groups: Ethnography, Anthropology, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Economics (micro), Psychology

"…explore the role of a broad range of **social, political, economic, and cultural contexts and factors**…**legal frameworks**…**age, gender**, and **intersectionality**…"

- SSH disciplines covering aspects of "social/political/economic/cultural factors": Sociology, Anthropology/Ethnography, Area Studies, Social Geography, Political Science; issues of "gender/intersectionality": Gender studies, Anthropology, Literature

SSH Opportunities Document

"Opportunities for Researchers from the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities (SSH) in Horizon Europe"

- **Overview** of SSH funding chances in Horizon Europe Programme (all Clusters & some other programming areas, incl. Missions)

- Goes **beyond** European Commission flagged topics published in F&T Portal
  - **Highlighted SSH keywords** ("SSH aspects" of a topic)

- Available for download at: SSH Opportunities Document 2025 | Cluster 2 | Horizon Europe NCP Portal (you will find it as a PDF file under "Documents" at the bottom of the page)

Net4Society

Opportunities for Researchers from the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) in Horizon Europe

Analysis of SSH-relevant Topics in Work Programme 2025