Europe – The Challenge?

- Europe currently suffers from a vanishing confidence in democratic orders, economic crises, social inequality, migration processes, nationalism and populism, demographic change, new digital realities, and fake news.
- Europe faces diverging ideas on its future direction and role in the world.
- Europe depends on a more effective exchange between researchers, policy makers and citizens on the role of research on societies.
- Europe needs a stronger SSH community lobbying for the intrinsic value of its research topics and outputs.

Horizon Europe – The Solution?

- The draft proposal for Horizon Europe does not fully address citizens’ concerns.
- Research on democracy must develop knowledge-based solutions to foster democratic orders, and improve the functioning of institutions and communication structures.
- Research on social transformations needs to address the conditions of inequality properly to design new forms of social protection, and to guarantee economic growth.
- As the core basis for both social and democratic stability, Horizon Europe must include educational research both as a new area of intervention and as a mission.

What Research on Societies needs for maximizing impact:

- Funding lines bringing together new interdisciplinary consortia.
- Funding lines fostering the cooperation of ongoing projects.
- Funding tools like Proof of Concept in all programme parts.
- Project lifetimes appropriate to the expected social impact.
- A diversified definition of impact and a clear focus on European added value.
- Participation of all relevant disciplines in research proposals as a key evaluation criterion.

Research on Societies

must be a future corner stone of European Research Funding. When creating the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon Europe, the European Commission must consider that Europe can meet today’s biggest challenges – such as social inequality and demographic change, migration pressure, rising nationalism, populism, terrorist threats, economic crises, and thus an overall waning confidence in democracy – with predominantly technology-driven approaches. To maximize the impact of collaborative research in Horizon Europe, it needs an adequate budget for research on an “Inclusive Society”, a solid and monitored integration of SSH in all parts of the programme, and a better support for the development of interdisciplinary consortia. The new research agenda must rely on an open exchange between policy makers, researchers, and citizens. The portfolio of funding instruments must be adapted to current needs and must enable researchers to develop innovative toolkits and to create impact especially through intensive citizen participation.

The Working Group ROSE stands for a strong SSH contribution to this agenda and to a democratic, social and educated Europe that take citizens’ concerns properly into account.

ROSE – The Group

ROSE is a working group of EU liaison officers. Our main objectives are to contribute to the creation of the new framework programme for research and innovation Horizon Europe, and to sustainably strengthen the role of research on societies in the European Research Area. We strongly encourage scientists and colleagues to join and support us.

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Key words:
- research on societies for SSH
- lobbying cooperation on equal terms
- democratic change
- reduced inequalities
- well-educated citizens