Net 4 Society

Success stories in SSH integration

SSH INTEGRATION IN SC5

"The objective of the Societal Challenge 5 'Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials' is to achieve a resource – and water – efficient and climate change resilient economy and society, the protection and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems, and a sustainable supply and use of raw materials, in order to meet the needs of a growing global population within the limits of the planet's natural resources and eco-systems."[1]

Horizon 2020, considers the socio-economic sciences and humanities (SSH) as cross-cutting and integrated in all the priorities and objectives of the Programme. The Societal Challenge 5 involves this research in order to tackle the societal challenges and to provide the most suitable impact for society. The following aspects need to be considered:

- To face climate change with its consequent risks for citizens, sociologists and psychologists can support in understanding and influencing citizens' behaviour.
- To move to a green economy, projects need to consider social and economic aspects.
- To impact on society research needs to involve policy-makers.

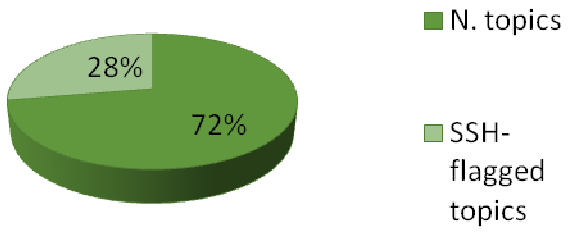
To have a good proposal cooperation with SSH researchers is crucial!

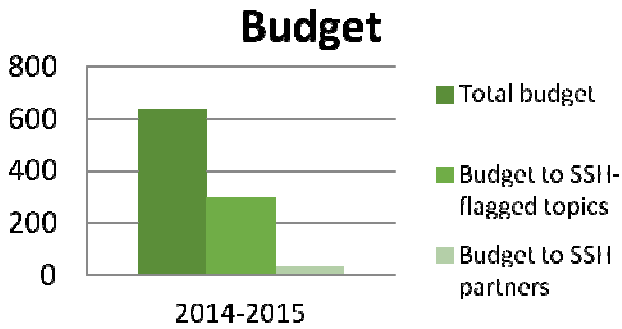
[1]Work Programme 2016-2017 Societal Challenge 5

FACTS & FIGURES

In the Work Programme 2014-2015 SC5 funded a total of 47 topics with a total budget of €635 million.

18 out of 47 topics were flagged for SSH. 58 projects were funded for a budget of €296 million out of which 32 million went to SSH partners.





Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials
WATERSPOUTT: a success story in SSH integration

Interview to Kevin McGuigan, Project Coordinator of WATERSPOUT project

WATERSPOUTT project

The project aims at providing safe drinking water to communities who rely on unsafe sources.
The consortium is carrying out a technological development programme to advance three applications based on Solar Disinfection (SODIS), which can make water safe to drink after it has been collected. In parallel, a social science programme has been structured to make sure that the technologies are adopted by the target communities in rural Africa, with the support of the local authorities and in an economically sustainable way.

Q: Why did you decide to integrate SSH in your project?

*SSH integration was explicitly required by the topic. The project would in any case involve SSH expertise **in order to ensure that the main objective of the project is reached**, namely that the technology developed in the course of the project is accepted and widely used by end-users .*

Q: How the process of SSH integration went from the proposal to the project?

***Previous contacts** of the coordinator allowed to have SSH partners involved in the consortium.*
The main challenge was to get the STEM experts realize that SSH contribution was necessary in the project. We guaranteed this through:
- ***Physical meetings** where people could exchange information;*
- *STEM and SSH researchers **work together** on field works and this ensures a close collaboration.*

All the actions carried out by the SSH partners are aimed at ensuring that the technology developed by STEM partners is accepted and used in practice by the end-users.
The SSH partners :
- *carried out **baseline studies**;*
- *analysed certain **governance issues** related to water ;*
- *organise **workshops** for local people*

Q: What was the added value of integrating SSH in your project and what the contribution from SSH partners?

Without the SSH integration the project would have not been approved and would not reach its objectives. The project would not be successful without SSH integration as only the SSH experts can ensure that the new technology is tailored to the needs of people who will use it.

Q: Which are the factors that facilitate collaboration and which the factors that hamper it?

The factors which facilitate cooperation:
- ***Good communication** between experts is necessary*
- ***Physical meetings** are important at the initial phase to avoid misunderstandings*

The factors which hamper cooperation:
- ***Language and terminology** used by STEM and SSH experts differs. Asking questions and a good communication can avoid this problem.*

Q: What would be your main recommendation for both researchers and EC?

For the researchers:
- *The **initial contact** between SSH and STEM researchers is very important*
- *Guarantying **regular meetings***

For the EC:
- ***Organisation of events where STEM and SSH experts can meet**. (organized by NCPs at local level but also big international events)*
- *Additional funding for experts from low-income countries to attend such events should be secured.*

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