LIVING TOGETHER:
MISSIONS FOR SHAPING THE FUTURE

An Agenda for the next European Research and Innovation Framework Programme from the Humanities and Social Sciences

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A joint statement from
ALLEA • HERA • ELI • ESA • EuroScience • GYA • Net4Society •
NORFACE • YAE

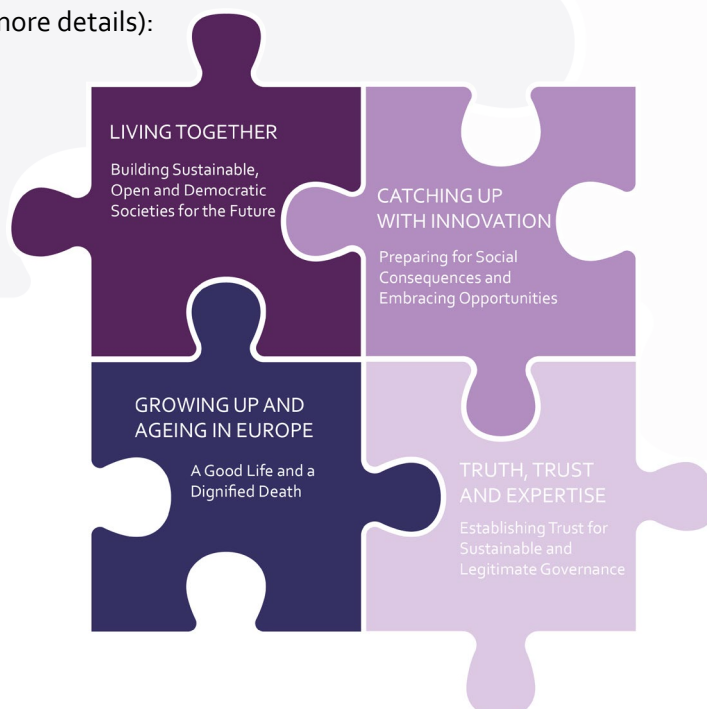# Living Together: Missions for Shaping the Future

An Agenda for the next European Research and Innovation Framework Programme from the Humanities and Social Sciences

On behalf of the researchers and societal stakeholders represented by the undersigned, we welcome the beginning discussion of the future Research and Innovation Framework Programme and put forward suggestions for collaborative research and innovation as a main line of engendering change and securing competitiveness in Framework Programme 9.[1] We are looking forward to further discuss our ideas and invite other stakeholders to support this initiative.

EUROPE IN THE 2020s: CHALLENGES AHEAD

The challenges Europe and its citizens face today and in the decades to come are not merely economic, technological and political, they are also social, cultural, legal and ethical. Challenges like rising inequalities, nationalism, radicalism and terrorism threaten inclusion, social cohesion and democratic governance all over Europe. Demographic change, migration and digitisation create constant change. These challenges call for a profound and inclusive dialogue between all actors in society.

From the perspective of the humanities and social sciences communities, these challenges require concerted efforts within and outside Europe, cutting across borders, cultures, languages, disciplines, sectors and institutions. We agree that the 2030 Agenda of the UN should serve as a framework of inspiration when targeting these challenges through the development of missions. However, we believe that the concept of 'missions' and their relationship with societal challenges deserves to be discussed and developed further. In addition, aware that these will not be the only ones needed, we propose four exemplary 'missions' targeting social and cultural transformation (see ANNEX for more details):

LIVING TOGETHER
Building Sustainable, Open and Democratic Societies for the Future

CATCHING UP WITH INNOVATION
Preparing for Social Consequences and Embracing Opportunities

GROWING UP AND AGEING IN EUROPE
A Good Life and a Dignified Death

TRUTH, TRUST AND EXPERTISE
Establishing Trust for Sustainable and Legitimate Governance

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[1] LAB – FAB –APP — Investing in the European future we want, Report of the independent High Level Group on maximising the impact of EU Research & Innovation Programmes, 2017. We refer to recommendation 5: 'Adopt a mission-oriented, impact-focused approach to address global challenges. Action: set research and innovation missions that address global challenges and mobilise researchers, innovators and other stakeholders to realise them.'

These 'missions' have a strong potential to bring together researchers from many disciplines as well as political, cultural, economic and social actors and civil society in a common endeavour of ensuring that Europe is at the forefront of research, innovation and smart implementation – and hence well equipped to answer urgent societal questions. Actions should be inter- or multidisciplinary and involve organisations in the cultural, economic or social sectors: Co-creation of research questions will allow the translation of societal needs into research and innovation and facilitate the translation of research results into smart applications and societal uptake.

HOW TO FRAME 'MISSIONS'

'LAB – FAB – APP' is clear in suggesting that research investment should be targeted to make strong contributions to society and that attention should be paid to where the EU added value is greatest – in terms of the risk involved and the benefits of speed, scale and scope that can be reaped. Societal challenges are to be grouped into a number of 'missions' which should mobilise a variety of disciplines, sectors and institutions which can have an impact across a portfolio of activities. Such missions should have a 'breakthrough or transformative potential' (p. 15-16). For missions to live up to this potential and achieve societal impact, the following aspects are crucial:

Transforming lives: We think that the most significant element in the High Level Group's description of 'missions' is that they foster research which is transformative in that it generates new knowledge and understanding or that it offers a smart implementation of existing knowledge in ways which are capable of altering fundamentally the lives of people and improving their social and economic well-being. To enable innovation and change, societal and cultural dimensions need to be addressed.

Innovation is more than technology: We agree that 'innovation is more than technology' and that 'EU innovation policy must be based on a definition of innovation that acknowledges and values all forms of new knowledge' (p.12). Such innovation, including social innovation, is best understood as the way in which the varied aspects of society are transformed, be they cultural, social, governance, economic or technological. Potential impact needs to be looked for not only in products and improvements in the economy, but also in the way people are able to process innovation and lead their lives, and in the way people live together in society. Transformation can only occur when existing assumptions are challenged and critiqued, as well as when new ways of doing things or new products are produced.

Broad topics – little constraint: Given the ambitious aims of missions, it will be difficult to identify in advance the end-product to be achieved with much specificity. Frontier research and innovation will carry inherent risks and uncertainties which must be accepted and managed, rather than downplayed through a premature identification of indicators of success or failure (p. 16). It will be more fruitful to identify broad questions or fields of endeavour and to invite researchers to bring forward projects of varying sizes which have the potential to deliver results that are transformative. This would further enhance the potential of bi- and multilateral missions and initiatives.

Projects of all sizes: We suggest that bottom-up approaches are likely to produce the most innovative ideas. Therefore, we recommend that significant scope is given to researchers to come up with proposals. The function of Framework Programme 9 should be to support ideas which seem most fruitful, rather than constraining research. Such bottom-up proposals need not be large-scale

projects. Indeed, smaller-scale projects may be the best starting point in order to explore promising lines of enquiry - and provide space for riskier research, newcomers to the programme (such as early-career researchers) and unlikely geographies (more initiatives from the EU 13).

Integration: Excellence is crucial, but actions need to be developed to increase integration of all countries and regions in order to counter the research and innovation divide in the European Research Area and actively work against dis-integration. Innovation and transformation will need collaboration with regions and countries beyond EU borders: global challenges call for global perspectives.

METHODS OF COMMISSIONING AND CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

Call design: We consider that the drafting of Work Programmes for Challenges and Missions should draw on researchers in different disciplines and different methodologies as well as on experts from civil society and the culture and economics sector. The aim should be to designate broad fields of enquiry which leave substantial flexibility to accommodate the innovative, but unexpected proposal. This means that the drafts of calls for 'missions' should be far less detailed than the current calls for Societal Challenges within Horizon 2020.

Emerging priorities: Given the uncertainty about the future and the rapid development of technology, fields of research identified for 'missions' should not cover the whole of the 2021-2027 period, but should initially be shorter, with the possibility of continuation where they prove fruitful.

Project design: Projects submitted should be broad enough to include, where appropriate, participatory actions (co-design) by non-researchers. For example, research on migrants or elderly people might involve those groups in shaping the design of projects and in selecting the materials to be included as part of the research. It is in these ways that 'citizen-led science' is best understood. Such processes of co-creation of knowledge ensure better acceptance and implementation in society and the economy.

Evaluation: The evaluation of proposals should include representatives of a range of disciplines, including the humanities and social sciences. The diversity of social science and humanities subjects (like the diversity of biological sciences) requires a range of expert evaluators to be involved to reflect the diversity of disciplines (and the emerging new fields generated through inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration). Ethics Reviews need informed experts.

Project size: There should be greater flexibility in choosing the size of a project. The permitted size of bids should be smaller than in Horizon 2020. It may be prudent to give smaller amounts of initial funding until proof of concept stage is reached or potential social or conceptual impact is envisaged. This calls for follow-up funding for promising ideas.

Monitoring: Review criteria should recognise that research/science accept a diversity of good solutions and a complexity of contexts in which solutions achieve results. New indicators for societal and cultural impact need to be developed and used. Assessing the performance of missions cannot simply be in terms of success (man on the moon) or failure (no man on the moon).

CONCLUSION

In order to tackle the global challenges of the decades to come and enable European citizens and societies to deal with innovation and transformation, Europe needs to deepen synergies between all actors. This can be only achieved in a joint endeavour – by all member states and strategic non-EU partners as well as by intensified inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation. In order to understand the human factor in its entirety, it is crucial to look at different perspectives and use the potential of the humanities and social sciences in enabling innovation and reflection. Humanities and Social Sciences are crucial for knowledge societies of the 21st century and indispensable for shaping the future! The four cutting edge research missions provided here are by no way meant to be exclusive. They do, however, set excellent examples for advancing the added research value in fields that will be decisive for the future of Europe and the world.

ANNEX: SOCIETAL CHALLENGES AND POTENTIAL MISSIONS

We articulate here in more detail the 'missions' listed in the beginning. Our suggestion is to develop these further, while leaving room for other 'missions' in the future:

Living Together: Building Sustainable, Open and Democratic Societies for the Future

What are the kinds of societies that will exist within Europe in the future and for which we now need to prepare? What kind of societies do we want to live in and prepare for future generations? In order to answer these questions, we need a dialogue on the values which are to guide actions and decisions and foster historical and cultural understanding. Among others, we need to reflect on fostering inclusion, cohesion and resilience. We need to look at power, institutions, political participation, and new actors in civil society. Democracy as a governance structure and an anthropological and social philosophy is rooted in historical traditions and structure. It consists of economic, juridical, cultural and political norms, values, behaviour and institutions. As a way of life, it paves the way we are living together. To be able to tackle future development, we need to study and discuss how and why our democracies in Europe developed; investigate appropriate foundations and ingredients of democracy to make our societies more sustainable, open and resilient; widen our knowledge on the social and cultural dynamics and effects of (democratic) governance structures; take into account the relation of Europe to the world; and, finally, inform on possible and necessary facets of needed democratic reforms by studying theories and diverse conditions for the implementation of (democratic) governance.

» Education: Enabling cohesive and integrative societies and foster reflectivity and innovation.

» The future of cities and rural spaces in terms of work, residence and leisure: Designing common spaces for new ways of living.

» Individuality vs. solidarity: Finding an adequate balance for modern societies.

» Rising inequalities: Investigating political causes and consequences of inequality. Different dimensions of inequality (gender, ethnicity, education, economic).

» Cultural conceptions of Self and Other: Understanding identity, learning reflexivity and building solidarity, learning from past experiences. Knowing one's own past and social application of historical studies.

» Connectivity and communication: Enabling uses of technology which promote sociability and prevent undesired results of new media communication.

» Migration: Examining and enabling the cultural, social and economic contribution of migrants. Dealing with reactions against migration. Preventing negative impacts on the country of origin (decreasing medical personnel, for ex.). Investigating constitutional cultures and participation in societies with citizens of multiple origins.

» Fragile histories and reconciliation: Documenting, analysing and developing instruments to

deal with conflicting historical memories and societal memory in a digital era. New forms of remembering the diversity of historical experiences.

» Religions, belief systems and societies: Understanding cultural, social and political dynamics. Relating memory cultures and politics, fostering interreligious dialogue.

» Superdiversity: Exploring the role of languages in shaping diversity, integration and inclusion; interpreting and translating cultures and cultural experiences.

» The arts and society: Using literary models to enhance social cohesion. Literature and art as a laboratory of the future. Developing strategies to foster social access to art history and critique and increase participation and cohesion as well as creative potentials.

» Social and cultural dimensions of climate change: Fostering reflective and responsible behaviour cultures, changing patterns of use and consumption and envisaging environmental futures.

» Living democracy: Cultures, structures and dynamics of governance in Europe.

» Democratic culture: Designing and sustaining opportunities for open debates, truthful and just treatment of citizens.

» Power, values and governance: Historical development of democracies and social, economic and cultural foundations.

Catching up with Innovation: Preparing for Social Consequences and Embracing Opportunities

Technical innovations and scientific breakthroughs entail unforeseen social, cultural, political, ethical and legal consequences that generate new challenges for societies. Today's moving into Industry 4.0 (and related technologies) will not only reshape how things are made but will have direct impacts on everyday life, work and the economic landscapes. This will ultimately affect the social and political make-up of society. To be able to cope with future developments and create a future information society, we need to go beyond technology and innovation. We need to develop a research-based strategy that includes reflection on the ethical, legal, social, educational and cultural consequences of the digital revolution. Only thus will we be prepared to utilise the new opportunities engendered by technological innovation and tackle the challenges for culture, education and cohesion.

CATCHING UP WITH INNOVATION

» Remapping innovation: Identifying the cultural and social roots of ingenuity. Building creative environments and fostering conditions for social and technological innovation and preparedness for change.

» Life-long learning in a digital age: Adapting educational contents to the reorganization of educational landscapes and long-term strategies.

» Digital technologies: Exploring new ways to understand and guide transformations in culture, society, and work. What are the societal responses to new developments?

» The future of work: Addressing the social and cultural challenges resulting from automation: predicting trends and assessing their consequences for workplace communication and job-markets, identifying legal and societal challenges resulting from automation.

» Understanding the cultural and social genome of production, design and technology, robots and man-machine relations reconsidered in ethnical, cultural and social terms.

» Tracing cultural and social aspects of modern biology and medical transformation: Assessing the new industries and technological platforms from the point of view of societies and cultural identities.

» Cultural heritage in innovative societies: Working with art, museums, libraries, creative industries and cultural cohesion; the Internet of 'past things' and their knowledge architectures and infrastructures.

» Energy production and energy needs: Considering the societal dimension of changing environments and technologies.

» Shift in economic equilibria: Analysing the social and cultural aspects of the restructuring of the geographic spread of economies and the changes in local and global needs and infrastructures; consequences for imports, exports and the balance of global economic power.

» Smart Europe – a reflective society: Thinking about technology and innovation in a post-industrial age: culture, society, agency, production, and statehood.

Growing up and Ageing in Europe: A Good Life and a Dignified Death

Europe's societies are being enriched by people living longer and contributing actively to the development of society often outside the world of paid employment. Their actions and choices contribute to inter-generational well-being and to the distribution of resources and opportunities in society. At the same time, older people often have need for technology and health care to cope with their declining physical and mental conditions. To counter isolation, vulnerability and exclusion and to build up resilience requires a new culture of interaction and solidarity amongst the generations.

Whereas the accumulation of resources over a lifetime enables some older people to be significant consumers in the economy, others have to rely on public social systems to make ends meet. Europe needs to engage with its developing demographic profile, viewed as a set of opportunities, rather than as problems or potential burdens on the state or on families. This has a range of implications some of which are:

» Experiencing old age as a positive period of contribution to society: life as more than life expectancy. Fostering narratives of living well in old ages, including views into history and different regions.

» Demographics: Preparing societies in terms of diversity of age, culture, religion, ethnicity and as regards to sexuality and gender. What opportunities and challenges does this represent, e.g. in the provision of public education?

» Working towards inclusive societies: Cultures of integration and cohesion between generations and the inter-generational effects of demographic change and old age.

» Assessing knowledge and values in a multi-generational society.

» Understanding historical and interregional diversity of predominant conceptions of intergenerational solidarity and of aging in general.

» Understanding the role of cultural conceptions of health, personality and society.

» Analysing cultural conceptions of the afterlife. Life, death and ethical questions.

» Reflecting on youth and youthfulness as a specific cultural, social and economic pattern and fixation.

» Older people as dynamic actors: Involving old people in shaping aspirations of a good life and death.

» Health: Providing physical and psychological health treatment, including the prevention of common types of illness.

» Care: Considering dimensions of regional and global developments, legal and ethical aspects, gender.

» Investigating the physiology of ageing and improving the science of extending lifespan and activity in older people.

» Changing patterns of economic participation and consumption within ageing societies.

Truth, Trust and Expertise: Establishing and Securing Trust as a Basis for Sustainable and Legitimate Governance

TRUTH, TRUST AND EXPERTISE

Entering a 'post-truth era', (European) societies are increasingly facing the challenge to (re-)establish trust as a basis for sustainable and legitimate governance. Trust is a key prerequisite for a just and cooperative society. The loss of a basic level of trust might lead to a dismissal of social institutions grounded in evidence-based policies (including government policies, journalism and legal procedures). This threatens the democratic foundation of the Union and calls for social as well as technological innovations. Creative ways of investigating the potentials and dangers of digitalisation, new patterns of communication, the relationship between trust, inequalities, legitimacy and democratic quality have to be explored. Examining and carefully developing participatory practices (e.g. public science) to encourage civic engagement and further develop Open Science is crucial in (re-)establishing trust and resilient democratic societies.

» What is trust and how does it develop culturally and socially? What role for scientific and academic expertise in knowledge societies?

» Truth and expert judgement in science: how is truth built up in scientific communities, the place of doubt, conjecture and the limits of knowledge?

» Expertise in times of fake news: Which instruments and strategies make expertise decisive in knowledge retrieval?

» Examining trust in the 'expert': expert judgement in life, lifestyle and medical decisions; experts as authority figures; communicating uncertainty.

» Listening to the voice of the client in a world of experts.

» Questioning authority in government and the role of experts in advice and decision-making.

» Understanding truth as a construct in society, culture and science: Loss of faith in truth, politics and science and the changing role of media.

» Securing trustworthiness and assessing its impact on society. Can accountability and transparency measures strengthen trust? How do we measure trustworthiness?

» Increasing critical thinking.

» Evaluating potentials and consequences of creative commons.

» Establishing and securing coherent standards of Research Integrity.

» Assessing the impact of open science on scientific results and thus trust therein.

» Better (not more) communication of scientific evidence and public engagement.

» Understanding the relationship of surveillance, trust and living harmoniously together.

LIST OF SIGNATORIES

ALLEA (All European Academies)

HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area)

ELI (European Law Institute)

ESA (European Sociological Association)

EuroScience

Global Young Academy

Net4Society

Norface (New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Cooperation in Europe)

YAE (Young Academy of Europe)