Net 4 Society

Success stories
in SSH – STEM collaboration

The contribution of Social Sciences and Humanities to transport research

As a cross-cutting issue of broad relevance, Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) research was not only fully integrated into each of the priorities of **Horizon 2020,** but the effective integration of Social Sciences and Humanities will also be a principle through the programme cycle in **Horizon Europe** including clusters, missions, and partnerships.

Integrating the socio-economic dimension of grand societal problems into the design, development and implementation of research itself, and of new technologies, can help find solutions to societal issues and enhance the impact of such activities for society.

SSH can provide essential contributions to **Transport research**:
- ✓ **To influence citizens' behaviour** to use resource-efficient forms of transport, which respect the environment
- ✓ To make mobility not only more environmental friendly, but also **more user friendly**
- ✓ To understand if technologies or new systems of transportation will become successful, **by analysing users' habits and attitudes**
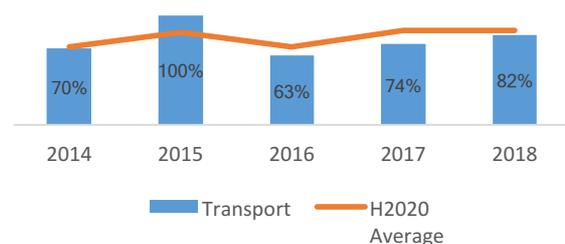
FACTS & FIGURES

Collaboration between SSH and STEM researchers in H2020 has been gradually increasing in the period 2014–18: the proportion of projects funded under SSH-flagged topics with at least one SSH partner increased from 70% to 82% while the budget going to SSH partners went from 9% to 19%.

In terms of SSH expertise across the 33 funded projects in 2018, the most prevalent disciplines were Political Science (18%), Business/Marketing (14%) Psychology (14%).

Source: Monitoring reports (2014-18) on Integration of Social Sciences and Humanities in Horizon 2020 (EC)

Proportion of projects with SSH partners

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
70%	100%	63%	74%	82%

■ Transport   — H2020 Average

SSH: Social Science and Humanities
STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

HiReach: a success story of collaboration between SSH and STEM researchers

Interview with: Simone Bosetti, Project Coordinator HiReach

Why did you decide to integrate SSH in your project ?

The H2020 call topic was flagged as relevant for SSH. Besides this formal requirement, its scope called for an SSH approach, and both the technical proposal and the project team was built around this need.

How did the process of SSH integration go from proposal writing to project implementation?

To some extent, none of the project partners had an SSH-only connotation. When building the project consortium, an effort was put in toward involving the right departments/teams/researchers within each organisation. Previous contacts and a **long track-record of previous cooperation** among some of the partners were fundamental in this respect.

About the main challenges, as often happens, whenever a large multidisciplinary team of researchers with different backgrounds is involved, **strong coordination and conciliation efforts of different perspectives and attitudes** were constantly needed at both overall project and work package level.

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

Without SSH in the multidisciplinary team, the project just would not have been feasible. The contribution of the SSH partners was relevant during all the steps of the project. In the first step, aimed at the analysis of needs, capabilities and behaviour of social groups vulnerable to exclusion, sociologists and psychologists were fundamental in organising the focus group workshops held to gain first-hand **knowledge and understanding of the specificities of the different targeted users' groups.** At a later stage, economists, business developers (together with computer scientists and engineers) were involved in assessing the existing inclusive mobility solutions, and in designing innovative ones.

Which are the factors that facilitate collaboration between different disciplines and which are the factors that hamper it?

✓ Facilitating factors: The humbleness in understanding and accepting different perspectives and contributions in the project tasks.
✓ Obstacles: The lack of communication and coordination.

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

✓ For researchers: To never lose sight of the final goal, overall objectives for the project, and to adapt and be flexible in the ways of achieving them.
✓ For the European Commission: Multidisciplinary teams and a good balance of SSH and STEM should be required, and positively evaluated when awarding the H2020 projects.

HiReach

HiReach builds on the potential of bundling and mixing dispersed, special and non-coordinated/optimised trip requests and needs from different vulnerable user groups to favour inclusive and participative mobility rather than exclusive/special and geographically-limited mobility.HiReach fosters social innovation processes through an in-depth (micro)analysis of capabilities and attitudes of different social groups and their direct involvement as co-users and co-owners of the proposed solutions.
https://hireach-project.eu/