



Success stories in SSH - STEM collaboration

The contribution of Social Sciences and Humanities to Security 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 **Security research**:

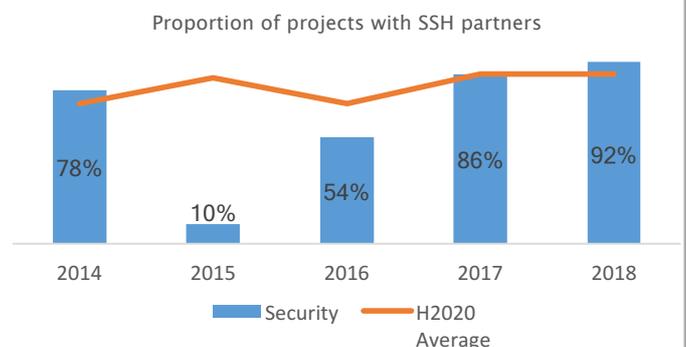
- ✓ To understand the **human factor** that leads to criminal and terrorist acts, and therefore, contributes to the prevention and mitigation of such acts
- ✓ To develop an understanding of **society's awareness of risks** and provide recommendations for the development of a culture of improved preparedness, adaptability, and resilience to risks
- ✓ For the development of **effective legal frameworks** at local, national and transnational levels

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 78% to 92% while the budget going to SSH partners decreased from 36% to 16%.

In terms of SSH expertise across the 24 funded projects in 2018, the most prevalent disciplines were Law (25%), Political Science (19%) and Sociology (13%).

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



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





PROACTIVE: a success story of collaboration between SSH - STEM researchers

Interview with Grigore M. Havârneanu, Coordinator of PROACTIVE project

Why did you decide to integrate SSH in your project ?

First, the FCT-01 call topic was requesting that project proposals address cross-cutting issues between SSH, gender, and other societal impacts. Secondly, the core partners who initiated the project ideas were persuaded that SSH was a key element missing from the existing CBRNe research.

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

The process was long, and involved a lot of dialogue and exchange of ideas. The project coordinator and some core team partners met at a **brokerage event** and found out they had a **common vision** regarding the application of SSH to fight CBRNe-related crime and terrorism. Then we used our **existing network of contacts** to finalise the research team. We also used **search tools** to find specific organisation profiles. The PROACTIVE team performs research with quantitative and qualitative SSH approaches. Considering our research scope (CBRNe terrorism), and the involvement of vulnerable citizens in the research activities, the main challenge concerns the research ethics, data privacy and compliance with very strict legal, ethical, and acceptability requirements. We manage these challenges through a dedicated and transversal work package, through the appointment of a Data Protection Officer, a Project Ethics Officer, and an External Ethics Advisory Board.

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

At the time of the proposal preparation, the PROACTIVE team was aware of the need to conduct more research that focused on the citizen (especially vulnerable groups). We were convinced that by integrating SSH in PROACTIVE, our project would become complementary to the mainstream CBRNe Research and Innovation Actions. The SSH partners have strong backgrounds and experience in Social Science research methods, **behavioural science, applied psychology, and ethics**.

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

In my experience, some researchers are not very used to working with people from other domains. This is a skill which can be trained, and EU-funded projects are excellent opportunities for such cooperation. In PROACTIVE, we tried to overcome the **cultural differences** between partners and push the SSH and STEM researchers to get out of their comfort zone. In my project coordinator role, I did my best to act as facilitator and boost the **collaborative mindset** of the consortium even at proposal phase.

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

- ✓ **For researchers:** I repeat this every time I have the opportunity: research is interdisciplinary. If we want to achieve **practical research outcomes**, which answer **real societal needs**, then researchers from various domains need to learn how to work together.
- ✓ **For the European Commission:** It was highly appreciated when the Commission decided to include more SSH and Human Factor research in the H2020 programme compared to FP7. This was an important change, which facilitated interdisciplinary projects.

PROACTIVE



Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear & Explosive (CBRNe) incidents, whether accidental or terrorist-based, can have a high impact on society. PROACTIVE aims to increase practitioner effectiveness in managing large and diverse groups of people in a CBRNe environment. The main goal of the PROACTIVE project is to enhance preparedness against and response to a CBRNe incident through a better harmonisation of procedures between various categories of practitioners, and a better understanding of the needs of vulnerable citizen groups.