



SSH Integration in Horizon Europe: Insights, Outlooks, and Resources in support of interdisciplinarity

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Policy background

“Horizon Europe shall ensure a **multidisciplinary approach** and shall foresee, where appropriate, the **integration of social sciences and humanities across all clusters and activities** developed under the Programme, **including specific calls on SSH related topics.**”

Horizon Europe Regulation, Art. 16a “Principles of the Problem”, para. 2

“The **effective integration of social sciences and humanities (SSH)** in all clusters, including all **missions and partnerships**, is a principle through the Programme cycle. **SSH** are a **key constituent of research and innovation**, especially regarding the twin green and digital transitions.”

Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2021-24

What is “SSH”?

- A **technical term** of the European Commission
- Refers to **heterogeneous** groups of actors (i.e. **researchers**) stemming from **different disciplines** within the **social sciences and humanities**
- Differing thematic specialities and methodological approaches

Why SSH Integration?

- Need for “**human centric**” focus in all research areas
- Develop **better** solutions to **complex problems** facing Europe/the world
 - **Technical solutions are not enough!**
- Develop solutions with clear **social relevance**, cost effectiveness, and marketability
- Integration of SSH disciplines in R&I projects leads to stronger **societal impact**, broader/better citizen engagement



Climate change



SSH Integration: a continued concept



- SSH as cross-cutting issue
- Inter-/multi-/transdisciplinarity as evaluation criterion

- SSH as **research principle**
- **Societal impacts** clearly mentioned in topic text as part of “expected societal impacts”
- More **explicitly evaluated** in proposal

SSH Integration in Horizon Europe



Aspects of SSH include...



human behaviour,
lifestyle, well-being



historical aspects

variations across social groups



Economic analysis/
business models



legal, institutional & political
frameworks



demographic trends, socio-
geographic aspects



social
innovation

cultural &
anthropological aspects



Why should I include SSH in my proposal?

- European Commission **explicitly calls on SSH experts** to contribute to framing the questions and issues to be tackled in Horizon Europe
- Topics are '**flagged**' for SSH by European Commission, i.e. they **point to SSH research as integral part of the expertise needed** to properly address the issue outlined in the topic
- Proposals submitted for topics 'flagged' for SSH should contain **meaningful, integrated contributions from SSH researchers**

Why should I include SSH in my proposal?

- Depending on the topic: indispensable for understanding the challenge to be addressed
- SSH perspectives can lead to new findings, approaches, and solutions
- Improved application/use of project results: complex social problems require socially acceptable solutions and products
- ★ • Better chances in evaluation (for SSH-relevant topics)

SSH Integration: Horizon Europe novelties

Horizon Europe template (RIA/IA, CSA)



- SSH more **explicitly evaluated** in proposal

Instrument	Application forms Part A	Application forms Part B
RIA	2. Participants	1.2 Methodology and 3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole
IA	2. Participants	1.2 Methodology and 3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole
CSA	2. Participants	3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole

Evaluation of SSH Integration in Horizon Europe

...There should be a sufficient number of **independent external experts** from the **field of SSH in expert committees and evaluation panels**...

Horizon Europe Regulation, 28 April 2021

Evaluation of SSH Integration in Horizon Europe

Three evaluation criteria regarding SSH aspects observed by evaluators:

Excellence

For topics indicating the need for the integration of social sciences and humanities, is the role of these disciplines properly addressed?

Impact

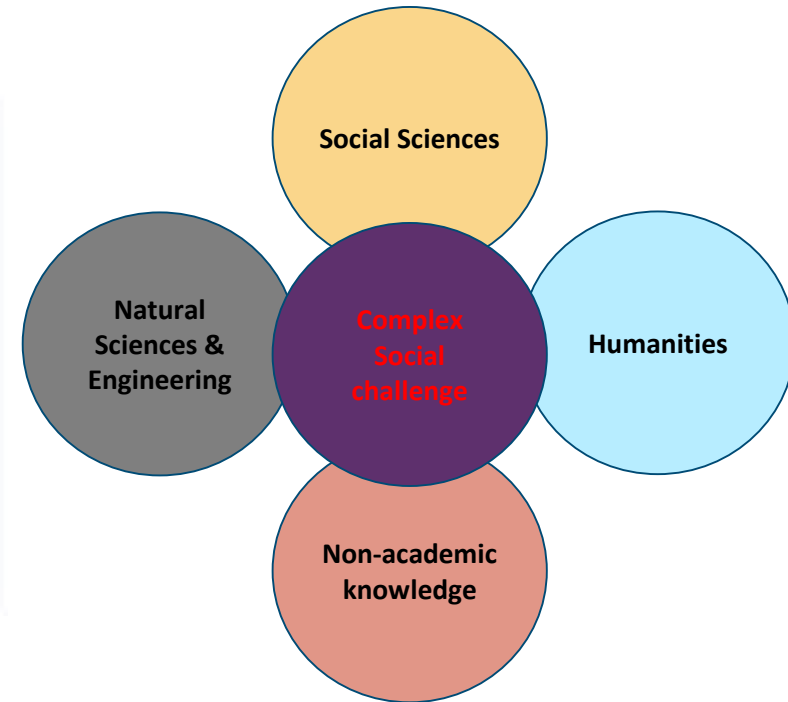
Are the proposed dissemination, exploitation and communication measures suitable?

Implementation

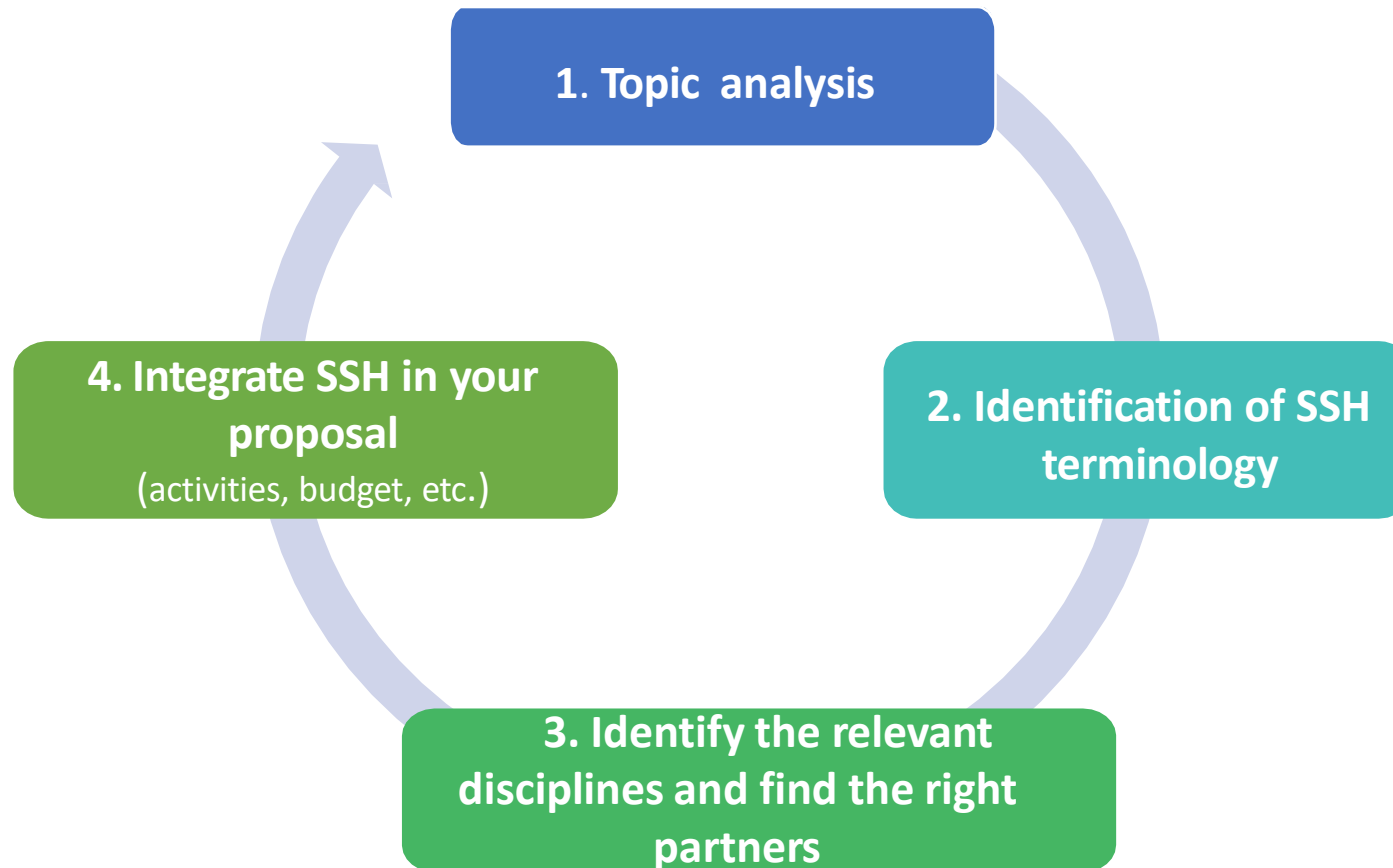
Does the consortium match the project's objectives, and bring together the necessary disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge?

For topics flagged as SSH relevant, does the consortium include expertise in social sciences and humanities?

The SSH Integration process



A 4-step process



Step 1: Topic analysis (SSH-flagged topics)

1. Topic analysis

- Two types of flagged topics: **dedicated** and **relevant**

Dedicated (SSH-focused research; Cluster 2):

- Finding a solution relies on knowledge and input from SSH researchers and practitioners
- Consortia submitting proposals will mainly consist of partners from various SSH disciplines

Relevant (topics with SSH components; other Clusters*):

- Multidisciplinary topics where finding a solution requires knowledge and input from both SSH and STEM
- Consortia submitting proposals will need to include both STEM and SSH partners

Step 1: How to know a topic is SSH-flagged



1. Topic analysis

Ask yourself two key questions:

- Are both SSH **terminology** and SSH-oriented research questions included in the scope section of the topic?
- Will the **consortium** require SSH partners to adequately and comprehensively address the issue at stake?

Flagging of SSH topics in Horizon Europe



UPDATE: Usage of a standard sentence for all SSH-flagged topics (scope section), starting with **WP 2023-24**

“This topic requires the effective contribution of SSH disciplines and the involvement of SSH experts, institutions as well as the inclusion of relevant SSH expertise, in order to produce meaningful and significant effects enhancing the societal impact of the related research activities.”

Flagging of SSH topics in Horizon Europe

Number of flagged topics in Work Programme 2021-22:

2021: 134

2022: **152** (planned)

Step 2: Identification of SSH terminology

Expected outcome

HORIZON-CL3-2022-FCT-01-05: Effective fight against corruption

Projects' results are expected to contribute to some or all of the following outcomes:

- Security practitioners and policy-makers are provided with improved and complete intelligence picture of corruption, such as modus operandi, both offline and online, including cross-border dimension, new trends, its social and economic impact, its role in enabling other types of crime, as well as its close links with money laundering;
- A comprehensive risk analysis is provided to security practitioners and policy makers on the new opportunities offered by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of corruptive practices, cross-border dimension, its social and economic impact and sectors at high risk;
- European Police Authorities, Border Guards and Financial Supervisory Authorities benefit from better, modern and validated tools (including the lawful court-proof collection of crime evidence) and training materials to tackle criminal activities related to corruption and improve resilience for corruption acts;
- Improved strategies of cooperation between European Police and Border Guards Authorities in fighting corruption and dismantling related criminal networks;
- Improved policy-making related to the fight against corruption.

Scope

Corruption, a criminal category that ranges from bribery of public officials via sports to abuse of power and money laundering of proceeds from crime, is a strong enabler for crime and terrorism, and, as such, it constitutes a threat to security. By creating business uncertainty, slowing processes, and imposing additional costs, it has a negative impact on economic growth. Although the nature and scope of corruption may differ from one Member State to another, it harms the whole Europe by lowering investment levels, hampering the fair operation of the Internal Market and reducing public finances. The points where innovative solutions can help are threefold. **Firstly, there is a need to estimate the impact of corruption. It refers to social impact, factors that promote or hinder it, impact on vulnerable groups, economic, as well as fiscal and development costs.** Secondly, the role of corruption as an enabler of other crimes deserves analysis as well. Namely, corruption, increasingly facilitated by online services, is a fertile ground for organised criminal activities (human trafficking, smuggling...) and terrorism. For some criminal activities, corruption is an integral part of their modus operandi. Thus, relations with other types of crime should be explored too. Money laundering, closely linked to corruption, deserves special attention. Thirdly, innovative societal and technological solutions for prevention, detection and investigation of this type of crime are needed, including also the collection of cross-border court-proof evidence.

Therefore, activities proposed within this topic should address both societal and technological dimensions of corruption in a balanced way, taking care of the applicable legislation and fundamental rights. The international dimension should be analysed as well, hence both Police and Border Guards Authorities should be involved in the consortia, in order to tackle effectively all aspects of this crime. Due to the specific scope of this topic, international cooperation is encouraged. Coordination with successful proposals under topic HORIZON-CL3-2021-FCT-01-08, HORIZON-CL3-2021-FCT-01-09, HORIZON-CL3-2021-FCT-01-10, HORIZON-CL3-2022-FCT-01-06 and HORIZON-CL3-2022-FCT-01-07 should be envisaged so as to avoid duplication and to exploit complementarities as well as opportunities for increased impact. **This topic requires the effective contribution of SSH disciplines and the involvement of SSH experts, institutions as well as the inclusion of relevant SSH expertise, in order to produce**

CLUSTER 3 CIVIL SECURITY FOR SOCIETY CALL: Fighting Crime and Terrorism 2022

SSH terminology used: social/societal impact; vulnerable groups; economic/fiscal; societal and technical dimensions of corruption; effective contribution of SSH disciplines, involvement of SSH experts/institutions, inclusion of relevant SSH expertise

Topic is **relevant**, calls for collaboration between STEM and SSH disciplines: **“societal and technical dimensions of corruption” should be addressed in a balanced way**

SSH terminology in Cluster 3 in WP 2021-22

- Human interaction(s)/human behaviour
- Societal capabilities
- Cultural aspects of disinformation
- Public crisis management
- European multicultural dimension
- Social ownership
- Social innovation
- Vulnerable groups
- Cultural goods
- Evidence-based policymaking
- Evidence-based research
- Cross-cultural validated risk assessment
- Training curricula
- Societal dimension
- Ethics
- Human judgment
- Organisational culture(s)
- Methods of reasoning

SSH throughout EU Missions

- The **majority** of missions have an **SSH dimension**
- Missions highly focused on **generating social transformations/ societal impact**
- Tied to six EU policy priorities
- New European Bauhaus (NEB) mission (CSA, closes 25 January 2022): lighthouse demonstrator (pilot projects) in support of NEB initiative
 - Sustainability, inclusion, aesthetics—main features
 - Participation of social sciences, heritage studies, arts expressly requested in topic
 - Multidisciplinary approach required; co-design also expected (esp. citizen participation)

Step 3: Identify relevant disciplines

2. Identification of SSH terminology



3. Identify the relevant disciplines and find the right partners

SSH terminology used:
social/societal impact;
vulnerable groups;
economic/fiscal; societal and
technical dimensions of
corruption; effective
contribution of SSH disciplines,
involvement of SSH
experts/institutions, inclusion of
relevant SSH expertise

sociology

psychology

forensics

economics

philosophy

anthropology

law

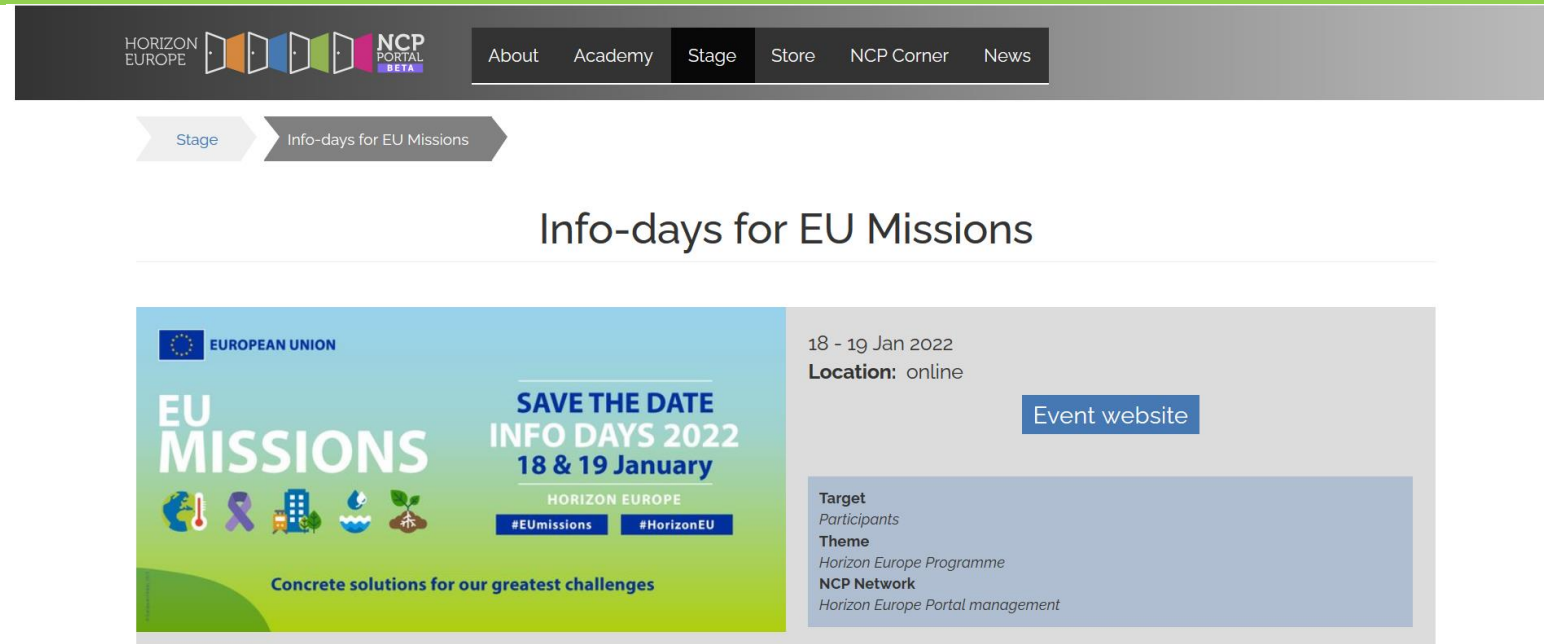
CSOs

3. Identify the relevant disciplines
and find the right partners

Step 3: Find the right partners

Visit the B2HE portal/websites of the NCP thematic cluster networks* and take part in planned brokerage events

3. Identify the relevant disciplines and find the right partners



The screenshot shows the Horizon Europe NCP Portal website. The header includes the Horizon Europe logo and navigation links: About, Academy, Stage, Store, NCP Corner, and News. Below the header, there are two tabs: 'Stage' and 'Info-days for EU Missions'. The main content area is titled 'Info-days for EU Missions' and features a large banner for the event. The banner includes the European Union flag, the text 'EU MISSIONS', and 'SAVE THE DATE INFO DAYS 2022 18 & 19 January'. It also mentions 'HORIZON EUROPE' and includes hashtags #EUMissions and #HorizonEU. A button labeled 'Event website' is visible. To the right of the banner, the event details are listed: '18 - 19 Jan 2022', 'Location: online', and a list of target participants, themes, and the NCP network.

Info-days for EU Missions

18 - 19 Jan 2022
Location: online

[Event website](#)

Target Participants
Theme
Horizon Europe Programme
NCP Network
Horizon Europe Portal management

*Thematic NCP networks due to begin in 2022

Step 4: Integrate SSH in your proposal

4. Integrate SSH in your proposal
(activities, budget, etc.)

You need to integrate SSH in all the **parts**

Excellence

Impact

Implementation

Work Packages Description Please be sure that the distribution of **WPs**, **tasks** and **activities** is proper among all partners and the SSH integration is guaranteed also in the **abstract**, and **deliverables**

You need to integrate SSH researcher/institutions in your **consortium**

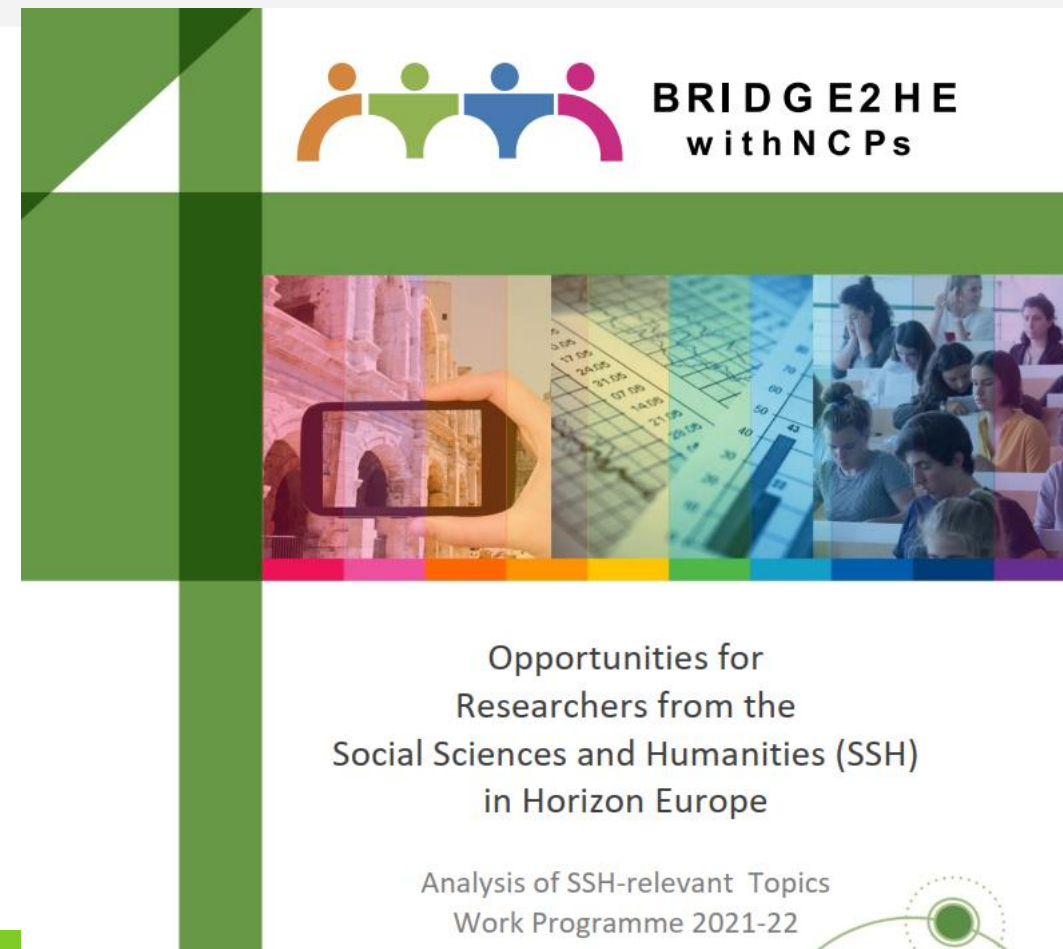
You need to cover all the disciplines identified in the topic including the right partners

Budget

You need to assign **ADEQUATE** budget to both STEM and SSH partners

Resources: SSH Opportunities Document

- Overview of funding opportunities for SSH-research in Horizon Europe Programme
 - Goes **beyond** European Commission flagged topics
 - **3 categories: dedicated** topics, **relevant** topics, topics with **minor SSH relevance**
 - For **WP 2021-22, focus on 2022 calls/topics**
-  <https://www.horizoneuropencppportal.eu/store/opportunities-researchers-ssh-he>



Resources: Factsheets on STEM-SSH collaboration

- Successfully funded EU projects (H2020)
- Describe experiences, best practice examples, insights and tips on initiating and implementing interdisciplinarity
- Generated by Net4Society



The contribution of Social Sciences and Humanities to health 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 **Health research**:

- ✓ To understand the **social relationships, interpersonal processes and cultural factors** that lead people to

Resources: SSH Integration Monitoring Report

- **5 reports** produced by DG RTD; 5th report published December 2020
- **Aims:** Presents data on the participation of SSH researchers in Horizon 2020; identifies areas in need of adjustment in the SSH Integration process
- **Findings:** steady (but slow) improvement in process implementation over time
 - SSH researchers increasingly represented in project consortia
- Data analysis conducted by Net4Society partner APRE (IT); APRE to do analysis for 6th report



Resources: SHAPE-ID Toolkit

- Various tips, guidelines, examples on how to carry out interdisciplinary research
- Designed for use by:
 - Researchers
 - Research organizations
 - Research funders/policymakers
 - Societal partners (e.g. artists/creative practitioners, CSOs, NGOs, non-profits)
- <https://www.shapeidtoolkit.eu/>

Learn more using the SHAPE-ID Toolkit:



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