Global SSH

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Research Collaboration in the Social and Human Sciences between Europe, Russia, other CIS countries and China

China, Russia and countries of Eastern Europe: institutions, policies for science support and perspectives of international research cooperation with Europe

By Dr Gulnara Roll

China, Russia and other countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) are rapidly developing economies and key international research and economic cooperation partners for the EU. Knowledge about the research capacities and institutions in the mentioned countries is still largely missing in Europe. To bridge this knowledge gap for China and five eastern European countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine), participants of the GlobalSSH Action conducted an analysis of Social Sciences and Humanities institutional landscapes, policies and practices of organising research in those countries. Outcomes of the studies are presented in this newsletter.

China – a strategic partner for the EU international research cooperation on global issues

China has a special place in the international cooperation with the EU; this giant partner with the population of 1.3 billion people experienced over the past three decades a tremendous economic growth and structural change in the science and technology system. The economic turnaround during this period has been coupled with a view that science and technology should be seen as a key driver in the modernisation programme. As a result, investments in science and technology have risen fast. China is proactive in developing its international RTD cooperation with the EU and there is an increasing participation of Chinese scientists in EU programmes.

With the science system given a key role in the modernisation of China, the China research potential, but also in its social sciences and humanities, presents an increasing interest to European scientists. There are, however, considerable differences in China and Europe, in the research organisation [1]. European scientists need to learn how to work in the different from European administrative and disciplinary context.

1 See conclusions of the Svend Remoe report "SSH institutional landscapes and policies for the NIS and China Synthesis report" Prokontra AS, December 2007: http://www.globalsocialscience.org/uploads/SSH%20institutional%20landscapes%20synthesis%20SR.pdf

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GlobalSSH Data Book is published by CSDS RAS

By Dr Liudmila Pipiya

"Measuring SSH Potential. GlobalSSH Data Book"[2] was published by Centre for Science Development Studies of Russian Academy of Sciences in June 2008. The aim of the Data Book is to represent general macro-environments of the countries under observation of GlobalSSH project and to depict Social Sciences and the Humanities focus in the national systems of Science and Technology, and Higher Education in the countries selected for in-depth study of the project. The Databook was produced with the support of the GlobalSSH as well as INTAS project *"Mapping the social sciences and humanities research capacities in Europe and the NIS"* (contract nr. 05-1000006-8446).

The book consists of eight sections. The fist section describes a macro-environment situation in the following countries: China, Estonia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. The latter 11 countries are included in the group of New Independent States (NIS) arisen from the disintegration of the former Soviet Union in 1991. The data, represented in this section, have been taken from internationally available sources.

The other seven sections are focused on SSH potential indicators in the project partner countries: China, Estonia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine. The data of these sections originate from national statistical publications on Higher Education and S&T as well as from the departmental statistics of some countries and specific data bases of the appropriate statistical bodies and research organisations. For users' comfort, all tables and charts are supplied with data sources. In case of necessity and for a more detailed investigation of both SSH human resources and other HE and S&T characteristics of the countries, readers could be addressed to these data sources. The electronic version of the Data Book is available at the GlobalSSH project website: www.globalsocialscience.org

[2] Measuring SSH Potential. GlobalSSH Data Book. – Moscow: CSDS RAS, 2007. – 179 p. – ISBN 978-5-91294-008-8

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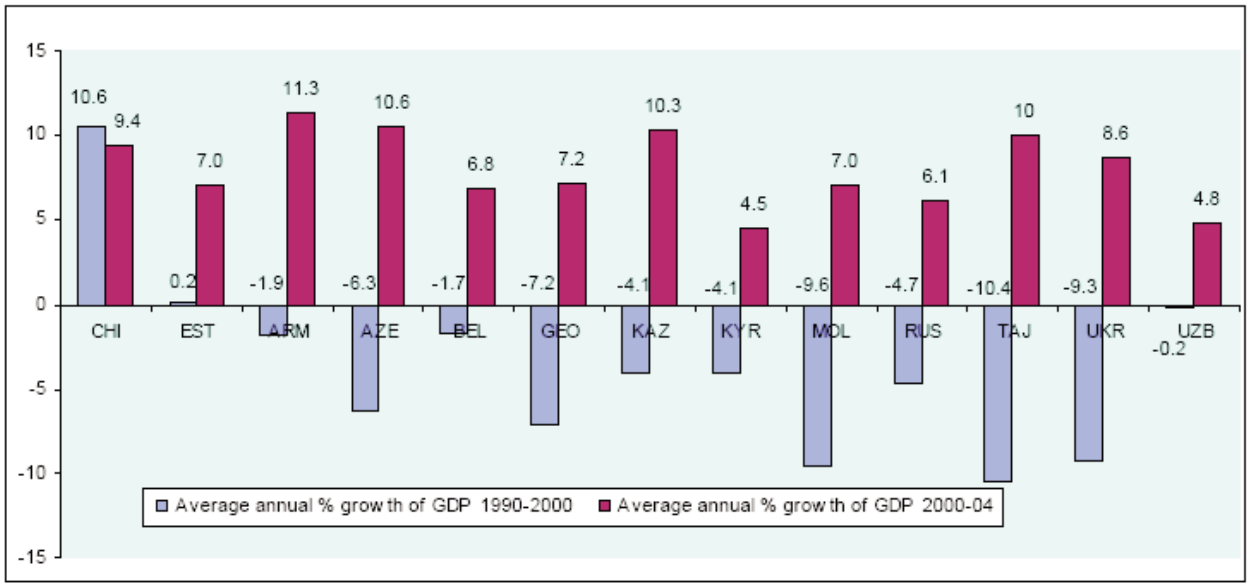
China and Eastern Europe - two different economic development trajectories

As the target countries in this study include China as well as the former Soviet states, the economic development and hence the framework conditions for the SSH systems could not be more different. China had embarked upon its dramatic rise as an economic power after Mao's death in 1976 and the rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping in 1978. The sustained support for science in China after this initiation of reforms was laid down in the four modernisations, implying that China was to modernise after the disastrous Cultural Revolution through four areas: agriculture, industry, defence, and science and technology. As Figure 1 shows, the development in the former Soviet republics was diametrically opposite.

As illustrated, all countries except China experienced a dramatic downturn of economic conditions which also had significant impacts on the science systems of these countries.

Similar to what China had experienced during the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976, the former Soviet countries, now independent or struggling to become so, saw a drastic deterioration of science resources. This resulted in stagnation or in some cases to a virtual full stop in science activities, leading to a loss of scientists in the form of two types of brain drain. Firstly, scientists, in particular within hard sciences, moved abroad as the borders were now open and they could find job opportunities that had vanished at home. Secondly, scientists, most notably within SSH, moved to other occupations in their own countries. As illustrated in the figure, growth picked up again after some 10 years of downturn, leading to a gradual rebuilding of science resources.

This means that while Chinese research organisations can already today participate on equal footing with European organisations in the European programmes, this is not the case with organisations in the Eastern European countries. On exception of elite research institutions in Russia, the rest due to the low economic support, need support in developing the research infrastructure, capacity of the research personnel before they can be equal partners to the European organisations in European research programmes.



Data source: *World Bank, World Development Indicators 2006 on-line* at http://devdata.worldbank.org/wdi2006/contents/index2.htm, accessed May, 2006

Figure 1. Average annual growth of GDP in 1990-2000 and 2000-2004. Source: Pipiya, L. 2007. Measuring SSH Potential. GlobalSSH Data Book.

Cooperation with Europe's Eastern neighbours on issues of common interest

Cooperation with Russia and countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy Region that includes Ukraine, and the three Caucasus republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia; is important for the EU politically and economically. Due to the proximity to the EU, many of developments in both Russia and countries of the ENP region have an immediate impact on the EU. Contributions of the Eastern European countries to such issues as illegal migration, inter-confessional and ethnic conflict and adaptation, energy, environmental issues, demographic pressures, have a direct effect on the research agenda that the FP7 sets out to implement.

What joins the Eastern European (EE) countries is common history, one of being part of the Former Soviet Union that ceased to exist in December 1991. That history also meant the EE countries shared common Soviet institutions for supporting S&T. In that highly centralised system, supporting research was made available via the Academy of Science and higher education –and through the all-Soviet Union ministry of education and universities; consequently, research and education were separated from each other. SSH existed under a strong ideological pressure of authorities and scientists worked in an isolation fro the scientific community in the West.

Mostly non-ideological fields of study received development during the Soviet time – archaeology, ethnography, linguistics, based on quantitative methods sociology and economics, etc. Sociology based on qualitative methods or political sciences remained for decades methodologically handicapped. With the absence of access to libraries and other research infrastructure on one hand, and of a sound and evolving system that motivated scientists to study foreign languages or publish internationally on the other, the result was a situation where majority of SSH scientists in the EE countries use research methodologies different from the ones of the West. Those scientists would have limited experience in publishing in the international peer-reviewed journals. The language barrier was another impediment to the international S&T cooperation with European scientists. The situation is gradually changing – the cooperation with scientists in the West, in fact much more with the scientists in the US rather than with scientists in Europe, is being established.

There are dramatic differences between the EE countries in terms of their research capacities as well as in their policies and institutional arrangements for the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities. The EE countries today differ considerably from each other in terms of their political orientations, economic development levels and institutional landscapes of their S&T. As of August 2008, Georgia has ended its membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Therefore, there is no one political institution that would include all the 12 countries of the former Soviet Union. There is only one purely geographical definition of the group – Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Cooperation with each country has to be developed on the bilateral level; at the moment a regional approach to all those countries will not work anymore.

To demonstrate differences in the development of institutional landscapes in Eastern European countries, we use a scenario approach developed in 2005 by the University of Manchester PREST Centre for the EECA countries[3].

The presented below scenarios are based on the updated data of years 2002 – 2007; it also includes Russia that was not in a focus of the PREST study.

Of the countries under analysis in the GlobalSSH Action (Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), it could be said that Russia clearly follows the scenario of "islands of excellence". Rapid economic growth, high oil revenues and availability of the national science priorities, made it possible to provide support to RTD development. Another side of the coin though is that the government support is mostly provided to elite research institutions in Moscow and St. Petersburg; therefore, only these strong, elite institutions are able to apply for international support. Consequently, it is only through elite status and such funding that the islands of excellence appear. Little attention to supporting regional institutions leaves the peripheral universities in a difficult financial situation; this results in a decline of their already limited research capacities in Russian regions. Bureaucracy, overlapping and unclear responsibilities of different agencies dealing with the S&T support (which often change their status due to government system restructuring) and a renewed ideological pressure to scientists limit possibilities for the development of the strong SSH capacity for the international cooperation in Russia aside from the "islands of excellence".

There is a potential in the future that Georgia would also follow the "island of excellence" scenario – a transparent institutional structure for the support of the S&T that is being built by the Georgian government would allow it to develop the necessary scientific future capacity. Due to its small size, however, Georgia does not have resources to develop all directions of science, so it will need to establish priorities. This is the reason for the "islands of

[2] *See description of the approach at http://prest.mbs.ac.uk/prest/scope/*

excellence"scenario. One of the risks of the development of an effective RTD system is possible political instabilities due to internal or otherwise external factors. Undoubtedly the damage made to the Georgian economy by the Russian troops during the August 2008 Georgia – Russia military conflict will have a very serious negative impact also to the RTD capacity of Georgia.

Ukraine is between the two scenarios "islands of excellence" and "an expense we cannot afford", although being more close to the scenario of the "islands of excellence". Ukraine is the second largest EECA country and is also a neighbour to the EU, so the cooperation on topics of common interest with Ukraine is very important for Europe. Thanks to the political changes in Ukraine the ideological function of science has been seriously weakened, which gives more intellectual freedom to scientists. With the breakdown of the Soviet Union, Ukraine inherited a comparatively large part of the research infrastructure, although mostly in natural sciences (but also some in SSH) – a number of Pan – Soviet Union research institutes had their headquarters in Russia and Ukraine. After gaining independence Ukrainian government adopted many new laws aimed toward supporting S&T development on the governmental level. However, the laws adopted have often not been coordinated between themselves; texts of laws are not always specific enough and this leaves lots of room to interpretation, resulting in non-implementation and bureaucratic manoeuvres. The reform of the S&T institutions was left half-way due to the domestic funding to research being extremely limited; many institutions that existed during the Soviet time were preserved while new structures were established as well. This effectively has created even more contradictions in the RTD management system.

Armenia and especially Azerbaijan have fallen into the "An expense we cannot afford" scenario. If the support to science and higher education will not be re-established in those countries to the level of the governments' priorities, there is a risk that these countries will be left behind in the development of the international scientific cooperation. Then current forms of cooperation will be possible only on the individual researcher – to researcher level on the topics of the "pockets" of excellence such as Iranian studies in Azerbaijan or Armenian studies or migration in Armenia.

Reports on SSH policies and institutions in China, Russia and other Eastern European countries produced

GlobalSSH Action project partners prepared national reports on science policy and institutions in the target countries (See the reports at the Action website). Based on the national reports, two synthesis reports have been produced. Dr. Svend Remøe prepared a synthesis report *"SSH institutional landscapes and policies for the NIS and China"* where he applied for the synthesis a historical approach explaining the process of the institutionalization of the SSH in China, Russia and other Eastern European states. Prepared by Dr. Gulnara Roll synthesis report *"China, Russia and countries of Eastern Europe: Institutions, policies for science support and perspectives of international research cooperation with the European Union in Social Sciences and Humanities"* is focused on the current policies and processes of the SSH institutionalisation in the respective countries in a wider international context of their interaction with the European Union. Below are conclusions of the two synthesis reports.

Conclusions of a synthesis report "SSH institutional landscapes and policies for the NIS and China"[4]

By Dr. Svend Remøe[5]

An overall assessment of the target countries in terms of capabilities in the SSH certainly gives a low-key but mixed impression. The development from a Soviet based system has been different in the countries in question.
However, the general conclusion is that neither the capabilities for SSH nor the policy or institutional conditions to development them are up to potential. In fact, there remain a number of challenges to be solved:

- The democratic deficit in all of these countries represents a significant barrier to the development of SSH. This is of course not equally important in all fields. For example, many fields in the humanities have relatively good support. But still, the lack of freedom in some of these countries, including direct political control in some cases, renders the SSH in a development gap.
- Concurrently, there is a severe lack of funding for SSH. This concerns in particular many of the fields of social sciences. Much of the meagre funding is distributed directly to institutions like the academies to

[4] *Remøe, S. "SSH institutional landscapes and policies for the NIS and China Synthesis report" Prokontra AS, December 2007: http://www.globalsocialscience.org/uploads/SSH%20institutional%20landscapes%20synthesis%20SR.pdf*

[5] *Dr. Svend Remøe was with GlobalSSH until April 2008, since then he works for the EC DG Research*

cover running costs, and is not sufficient for initiating significant research activities. Again the picture is mixed, but even in those cases where science and technology recently have received a boost, the SSH is not given adequate attention and priority.

· The traditional institutions still dominating the landscape of S/T in general and SSH in particular are often outdated and mediocre in terms of management.

They are hierarchical and lock in significant resources in partly irrelevant or unproductive research. Evaluation and assessment practices are not transparent and lack a link to strategic policy making and capacity development.

· The increasing competitive arrangements have significant positive effects. But on the downside there is a tendency to growing perverse incentives due to a over-reliance on quantitative indicators, leading in many cases to a drive towards publications an a lack of attention to quality

· The socio-economic situation is in many cases difficult, leaving SSH scholars with very low salary levels and poor recruitment to academic life. The brain drain or waste problem still persists, and broad support for young scientists, women or other horizontal measures is uneven.

Still the recent development has some positive components relating mostly to the increasing integration that many of the target countries experience towards the so-called West. The most notable items in this context are:

· There has been increasing foreign funding, not least for SSH. A variety of international and national foreign institutions make up a very necessary and useful financial contribution to scientific activities in most of the countries. In addition, these funds have positive impacts on funding arrangements and the organisation of research in the receiving countries. This includes evaluation as well as a broader drive towards programme and project funding.

· There has been a parallel drive towards the setting up of new research centres, reducing the traditional monopoly of the Academies and leading to a more variable and competitive institutional environment.

· In some cases there is increasing attention to the role of science by the governments. This also has an impact on the standing of the SSH. In a country like China, this has had an impact in particular on the fields of economics and political science. In other countries, semi-scientific activities like polls and surveys are growing. Still it should be stated that SSH in general is in low demand and suffering from this lack of "demand pull".

· Through bilateral and multilateral arrangements, international collaboration has intensified, giving rise to new networks and funding opportunities.

In sum, the institutional landscapes in the target countries can be characterised by still being in the shadow of the Soviet legacy and to some extent in a lock-in situation of low resources and poor policy support. The increasing international integration points to a positive development that should be further enhanced. However, some key reforms should be given due attention to leverage the potential of SSH in the target countries. This concerns in particular reform of the academies into a more flexible and competitive structure, as well as institutionalising the constructive role that could be played by the SSH through more strategic, multi-disciplinary programme funding.

Conclusions of a synthesis report "China, Russia and countries of Eastern Europe: Institutional landscapes of Social Sciences and Humanities and perspectives for the international research cooperation with the European Union"

By Dr Gulnara Roll

Given the diversity of policies and institutions in EECA countries, it is important that the EU develops a tailored approach to the international cooperation with each third country. This is well understood in the European Union.

The EU international research cooperation policy that is outlined the EC 2007 Green Paper stresses that the international research cooperation shall *"address common problems that are faced by third country/region partners and Europe on the basis of mutual interest and mutual benefit"*. Overall, the EU international RTD cooperation policy could be considered successful as the statistics of the third countries' participation in the EU projects shows an increase. However, there is room for making the EU cooperation policies more effective.

Firstly, due to the very institutional nature of the EU, not only the cooperation within the EU but also beyond its borders is organised mostly through construction of for-

mal institutions - signing agreements and cooperative programmes, etc. The formal institutional cooperation with third countries is very important as it ensures long-term stability in the relations with governments of third countries. However, what was largely forgotten in this rapidly expanding cooperation process is that the cooperation takes place with transition countries where formal institutions are still unstable and changing frequently – ministries and other agencies are being established and then dissolved as a new government is elected and comes into power. Also often overlooked is that the process of the democratization is still ongoing and the wide involvement of scientists through formal structures is not something which is taking place in reality. Instability of the formal institutions is also connected to the limited financial support to both science and science administration in EECA countries.

Even when cooperative rules are adopted, their implementation is often a big challenge in transition countries as recently established agencies and organisations do not always have sufficient human resources and expertise for implementation of taken commitments. It is often taken for granted that administrative tasks can be easily implemented by an agency in Moldova and Armenia with the same ease they are implemented in Germany or France. Countries need support in developing their research and research administration capacities. The support could be provided through better coordination of the EU RTD policy with the EU development cooperation policies or European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument. In fact, this proposal is mentioned in the EC Green Paper; as yet, however, there are no concrete examples of such coordination efforts.

EU shall provide much more support directly to research communities: to joint research teams comprising scientists both from Europe and third countries, and for the creation and development of research networks. Mobility of scientists, especially of young scientists, is a key instrument to support the establishment of such international research networks. Hosting EE scientists at Institutes of Advanced Studies, at doctoral and postdoctoral programmes in Western universities are some examples of possible instruments for the mobility.

Secondly, as also implementation of this (GlobalSSH) international cooperation project demonstrated, the intra – European models of the international research cooperation according to the common Europe disciplinary divisions and traditions of communication do not quite work in cooperative projects where scientists from third countries are involved. The practice of the international research cooperation has shown the process of developing such cooperation between the research communities in the East and West is slow and sometimes frustrating. Scientists in the transitioning countries often do not have sufficient information about opportunities to participate in FPs' activities, nor do they have practical experiences with preparation of FP project applications. European scientists consider the cooperation amongst different academic traditions and cultures in research a major difficulty, especially reflected in publishing, language differences, and minimal experience of Eastern European scientists in managing projects and reporting on them. Also obstacles are economic problems of social scientists in the CIS countries where those scientists received very small salaries and have had to be involved in other activities, such as consulting or small business to make the ends meet, which have not allow those scientists to concentrate on science.

Innovative forms of involving third countries' scientists should be adopted; those forms should involve extensive personal communication, slower pace and longer term span of implementing such international projects, provisions of academic literature, methodology meetings and summer schools as well as other forms of the academic mobility.

About The State of Science in Azerbaijan

By Prof Siyavush Azakov (Institute of Physics, ANAS)

If we want to understand the Azerbaijani science ranking in world, we should look at ourselves from the common position of global science. Here are some numbers, which were collected by American Institute of Scientific Information in Philadelphia. Azerbaijan is ranked 87 of 145 countries by number of publications, while by number of citations it is ranked 128. Azerbaijan's dismal rate of publication, holding almost last position among 145 countries by number of average citations per one article, demonstrates simply that, at present, an obvious provincialisation and degradation of our science is taking place.

Many scientists and whole institutes have been preoccupied with the question of survival for more than 15 years. But today, survival doesn´t solve any problems - it only aggravates their salvation tomorrow. Concentrating all these years on problems of survival and not taking care of development, we have become insignificant and are decelerating into final and irreversible decay. This decay is not very noticeable from outside, as Candidate dissertations and theses for a Doctor's degree are being defended, their amount is even growing. There is also no decline in amount of academicians and corresponding members in Azerbaijan National Academy of Science (ANAS). But this work has no bearing on contemporary progressive and competitive science. There are left only shreds of names, titles and statuses, but they no longer have real scientific content at all.

Aggressive dissemination of all possible „international academies of energetic information sciences" and „doctors of Philosophy of parapsychology" is proving that the decay process is going on successfully and has for a long time already, while political will for carrying out vital structural reforms in organisation of Azerbaijani science is still absent.

Of course any reforms have to be sooner or later carried out within the limits of the scant science budget, which state is able to allot. Only scientific society itself can reform Azerbaijani science. How far is it able to go in bringing vitally important reforms, within the limits of a very scant budget? – it is an important question, which yet does not have a clear answer.

In Azerbajan science is being done mainly in the Academy of Science (ANAS). Surely, ANAS does not form the entire Azerbaijani scientific landscape, but for the time being it is probably the best remnant of the past still left. Nevertheless, in its present state ANAS has practically turned into marginal organisation. Now in ANAS, the system dictates that scientists can do nothing at all and come to institute only to get their salary. And, while the salary is not that big, they get it almost for doing nothing. There is also no system for accountability and estimating work of scientists.

Reforms in Azerbaijan science would have been less hurtful in case had they been carried out purposefully and gradually over last 15 years. Moreover, in 5-10 years there will be no need for such reform because of absence of their object - significant science. In Azerbaijan an overwhelming portion of financing science goes by way of so called "estimate financing", which means that money is given very easily. To get money scientists just have to write annual reports, which are just formalities, as no one usually reads them.

The criterion is well known for determining the efficiency of basic scientific research: quantity and quality of publications in international peer reviewed scientific journals, prestigiousness of which is measured by such a well-known parameter in the world as impact factor. At the world level, a scientist is judged by his list of publications in case he is pretending to working place or applying for scientific grant. At the same time in ANAS Institutes, taking into account the quantity and quality of scientific publications by attestation is seen just as personal initiative of some Institutes authorities.

What has this situation lead to during last 15 years? The absence of any priorities in financing and distribution of these scant means, which the State has been allotting for science drawing on principle „everybody should get something". ANAS has practically turned into social security department. This is due primarily to the fact that there no longer are those scientists left who are fanatically devoted to meaningful scientific work, but instead are those who either could afford it (in case they have source of additional income) or were there by default as they were not able to find better paying occupational spheres. Many scientists either left to start business, went abroad, or chose professions that has little common with science.

The fact that Azerbaijani scientists are devotedly and unselfishly engaged in science for miserable salary and in spite of all this are achieving great results, is myth!

More or less successful research is carried out only by those scientists, who have access to additional financial resources. Among them may be grants, but there are not

many of them. Sometimes one of the additional sources may be temporary work in foreign research centres. Firstly, it enables working with such equipment, which is very often inaccessible in our centres, and secondly, it is an opportunity to earn living. This in many respects saves some of Azerbaijani scientists (their amount is extremely low). But this cannot be considered as a norm.

I belong to those scientists, who consider the main problem of organisation of science not so much lack of money, but more so its inefficient method of distribution. Principle estimate financing of Academy of Science as well as absence of any reforms during last 15 years was justified by preserving the scientific environment. In reality, though, exactly the opposite result was achieved – then scientific environment has degraded to a significant extent and has practically ceased to exist.

Reforms in science must be based on two initial preconditions. Firstly, the average provision of resources to scientists must become not just some percent higher, but it must be increased several times. Only in this case will it be possible to reach a turning-point in this situation, otherwise degradation will be going on. Secondly, the State is not able to increase financing of science that much, as there are also army, education, health, social security and many other things, which beside scientific research also are of great value for society. Hence it follows, that it is necessary to carry out considerable staff reduction in ANAS. There is one important question in relation to this – how should staff reduction be carried out and what concrete mechanism should be used to make this painful process as effective and considerate as possible. At this point arises the question of criterions? We are talking not about curtailment of science, but about its proper reforming, about deliverance from its ballast, of which we have a lot.

As part of the reform of science administration, it is also necessary to introduce systems for estimating work of scientists and support of mobility of scientists, as well as other measures.

Standing in front of Azerbaijani science is a simple question: do we want to see our country in the future developed and educated, or degrading and collapsing?

Global SSH focuses its activities in the following areas:

1. Mapping and assessing SSH capabilities in seven Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan; and China. This includes studies of the institutional landscape (including institutional innovation and change) and the research policies that structure advances in SSH research in the region.

2. Investigating the internationalisation of social sciences, the research infrastructures for internationalised social sciences and the experiences and capacities in transnational SSH research in the EU, Russia, other CIS countries and China.

3. Placing the above mentioned areas in historical context by synthesising what we know about the rise and transformation of the social and human sciences, in Europe and beyond, as these were related to the emergence of modern states and universities.

4. Identifying common agendas for future transnational research and formulating policy recommendations for setting up priorities in the SSH and the designing of future research programmes within the context of the enlarged ERA, supporting the mobilisation of scientific co-operation between the EU-CIS and the EU-China research communities.

This Special Support Action is supported by the European Community under the Sixth Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration (FP6) Thematic Area 'Citizens and governance in a Knowledge-based society' Call FP6-2004-CITIZENS-6 --8.3.3 - Promoting international research and policy cooperation in social sciences and humanities. Action contract Nr. is 028997.

Additional support to the Action is provided by INTAS under INTAS Thematic Call in Social and Human Sciences 2005 through a research project "Mapping the social sciences and humanities research capacities in Europe and the NIS", contract reference Nr. is 05-1000006-8446.

The region in focus – Events and News

INTAS project final workshop "Mapping the SSH research capacities in Europe and the NIS"

The workshop was held in Tartu, Estonia, on 16 June 2008. More information on the INTAS project conclusions read in the next newsletter.

INTAS project partners Prof. Siyavush Azakov (Azerbaijan), Koba Turmanidze (Georgia), and Prof. Gevork Poghosyan (Armenia).

Creating an effective model of science administration to Georgia

The NTacis/2006/123052 project "Creating an effective model of science administration: review of EU best practices and elaboration of policy recommendations with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia" was a joint collaboration between the Georgian Ministry of Education and Science (MES), Georgian National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Archimedes Foundation (Estonia) financed by the European Commission Delegation to Georgia. The project lasted for 11 months, from July 2006 to June 2007.

The overall objective of the project was to assist the MES and NSF to define a clear strategy and transparent policy for the modernisation of the overall R&D policy system in Georgia and to formulate recommendations to improve Georgian legislative framework towards EU standards.

Within the project the following reports were prepared and are available at the website www.archimedes.ee/teadus/index.php?leht=103:

· Georgian Research and Development Policy Recommendations
· European Union and International Best Practice in Research and Development
· Georgian Research and Development Policy Assessment
· R&D Policy Assessment Report
· Reports of Georgian Experts

Contact: Dr. Madis Saluveer
Estonian Scientific Competence Council
madis.saluveer@archimedes.ee

Strategy Workshop for Policy Makers: Scenarios for a Co-ordinated Approach to Sustainable S/T Co-operation with the Eastern Neighbours of the EU 15 May 2008, Kyiv, Ukraine

The Strategy Workshop of the project **"Scenarios for a co-ordinated approach to sustainable S/T co-operation with the Eastern Neighbours of the EU (SCOPE-EAST)"** was the continuation of a policy makers forum organised within the framework of the SCOPE-EAST conference in Moscow in December 2007, in order to discuss questions related to the framework conditions of S&T cooperation with Russia and Ukraine.

The policy makers forum within the SCOPE-EAST conference launched a discussion on crucial policy issues regarding EU-Russia and EU-Ukraine S/T cooperation involving stakeholders from the EU Member States and Associated Countries, Russia, Ukraine and the European Commission.

This Strategy Workshop was dedicated to particular discussion and development of recommendations:

· thematic and strategic input for future approaches to assure optimal coordination of bilateral activities of the Member States, Associated Candidate States, Russia, Ukraine and other East European countries

· contributions to foster coherence between national cooperation strategies and the EU R&D cooperation policy

· possible scenarios and instruments to establish co-operation in R&D as a major pillar for implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

See more information at the project website scope-east.net

IncoNet EECA-meeting for Coordinators of projects targeting Eastern European and Central Asian countries 18 June 2008, Bonn, Germany

The International Bureau of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research c/o German Aerospace Center (DLR) hosted a "Meeting of coordinators of projects targeting Eastern European and Central Asian countries". Attendees included 18 project coordinators from nine countries (Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Romania, Russia, Sweden, and Turkey) met in Bonn and exchanged experiences about research cooperation with EECA countries.

The overall goal of the event was to start a discussion of important questions regarding thematic and/or regional synergies between several co-ordination initiatives and to identify possible benefits arising from the IncoNet EECA project for other activities concerning R&D cooperation with EECA countries. The meeting was organised within the EU FP7 INCONET EECA Action – a partnership between the countries of the European Union and Eastern Europe/ Central Asia (EECA) that was established with an aim to support and facilitate a bi-regional EU – EECA S&T policy dialogue and, in the case of Russia and the Ukraine, a complementary bilateral S&T policy dialogue involving stakeholders from policy making, science community and industry.

See more about the INCONET EECA Action at www.inco-eeca.net

International Conference "Science & Education Policies in Central and Eastern Europe, Balkans, Caucasus and Baltic States" 18-21 September 2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

The Academy of Sciences of Moldova in cooperation with the UNESCO Moscow Office and the Ministry of Education of Moldova will organise an international conference "Science & Education Policies in Central and Eastern Europe, Balkans, Caucasus and Baltic States". It will bring together key decision makers in national science and education policies from thirty Central and Eastern European countries, including representatives of Academies of Sciences, ministers of science and education, international funding agencies and professional organisations.

Major topics of discussions at the conference are:

· Strengthening research in higher education;
· Developing a knowledge-based economy;
· Strengthening international impact of national research and education programs;
· Stemming and reversing brain drain.

The event will provide an opportunity for top policy makers to develop and enhance collaborations with their counterparts from across the region.

For more information, please contact organisers at email intcol@asm.md and mrda@mrda.md or consult a website www.international.asm.md

Estonian Science Foundation and Russian Humanities Foundation opened a bilateral grants' programme

Estonian Science Foundation and Russian Humanities Foundation opened a bilateral programme for joint projects on society and culture. The deadline for applications is October 30th, 2008 and the applications should be submitted in the same time to Estonian Science Foundation in English and to Russian Humanities Foundation in Russian. According to the agreement the projects that last 2 years will be financed.

See more information at www.etf.ee and www.rfh.ru

GlobalSSH: team

Project Consortium

Action Coordination

The Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study
Prof. Björn Wittrock
bjorn.wittrock@swedishcollegium.se
www.swedishcollegium.se

Subcontractor
KnowWhy Ltd.
Dr. Michael Kuhn
knowwhy.mk@hotmail.com

Partners

InspirIT OÜ
Mr. Margus Roll
Margus.Roll@inspirit.ee
www.inspirit.ee

Center for Science Development Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences
Dr. Liudmila Pipiya
l-pipiya@isisep.ru

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Prof. Huang Ping
huangping@cass.org.cn
www.cass.net.cn

Institute for Advanced Studies
Dr. Alexander Chvorostov
alex.chv@ihs.ac.at
www.ihs.ac.at

Centre for Scientific and Technological Potential and Science History Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Department of System Studies of S&T Potential
Dr. Igor Yegorov
igeg@voliacable.com

Caucasus Research Resources Center–Georgia
Mr. Koba Turmanidze
koba@crrc.ge
www.crrc.ge

Kingston University
Prof. Peter Scott
p.scott@lineone.net
www.kingston.ac.uk

Prokontra AS (until April 2008)
Dr. Svend Otto Remoe
remoee@online.no

European University Institute Department of Political and Social Sciences
Prof. Peter Wagner
peter.wagner@soc.unitn.it
www.iue.it

Centre de sociologie européenne Ecole des hautes etudes en sciences sociales
Prof. Johan Heilbron
heilbron@msh-paris.fr
www.ehess.fr/centres/cse

The International Association for the Promotion of Co-operation with Scientists from the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union – INTAS
Ms. Martine Bonin
Martine.Bonin@intas.be
www.intas.be

Institute for Science and Technology Studies University of Bielefeld
Prof. Peter Weingart
weingart@uni-bielefeld.de
www.uni-bielefeld.de/iwt

University of Tartu, Institute of Government and Policy
Dr. Gulnara Roll
gulnara.roll@ut.ee
www.ut.ee

Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law, Armenian National Academy of Sciences
Prof. Gevork Poghosyan
gevork@sci.am
www.asa.am

Institute of Physics, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences
Prof. Siyavush Azakov
azakov_s@hotmail.com

European University in St. Petersburg
Prof. Daniel Alexandrov
d_alexandrov@eu.spb.ru
www.eu.spb.ru

Vilnius Law and Business College
Prof. Vidas Peckys
vidas@pda.lt

GlobalSSH project newsletter editors; **Dr. Gulnara Roll,** *Gulnara.Roll@ut.ee;* **Ms. Piret Uus,** *Piret.Uus@ut.ee*
Institute of Government and Policy, University of Tartu, Estonia