

COUNTRY REPORT

Social Sciences and Humanities in

Ireland

2010 Report

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- a news service;
- annual monitoring reports for all countries covered;
- an annual synthesis report bringing together key points;
- links to relevant reports and websites

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The report covers the period from May 2009 to March 2010.

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1. Country Overview

1.1 Overview of SSH System

1.1.1 Brief Description of the structure of the SSH research system

Policies that impact on social science and humanities (SSH) research are determined at a political level by the Government. Research policies having a SSH component are formulated across a number of government ministries though the Department of Education and Skills (formerly Education and Science) is the Government ministry that has the most significant influence in terms of policy formulation and research budget given that the majority of SSH research performed in Ireland takes place within the seven universities.

The Department of Education and Skills is responsible for the two main funding sources for SSH research in Ireland, the Higher Education Authority's Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions and the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Research which provides funding for individual SSH researchers (it should be noted that under a Government decision taken in March 2010 responsibility for the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions will transfer to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation). Other government ministries that have an involvement in SSH research policy include the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation (formerly the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment), the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Department of Finance and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

As there is no national policy document dealing exclusively with SSH research, the main policy document which impacts on SSH research is the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013 (SSTI) which sets out targets for the number of SSH PhDs to be achieved by 2013 and also the optimum structure of SSH research teams. The main focus of the SSTI is on science, engineering and technology (SET); the 2013 target for the number of SET PhDs is almost three times that for SSH PhDs.

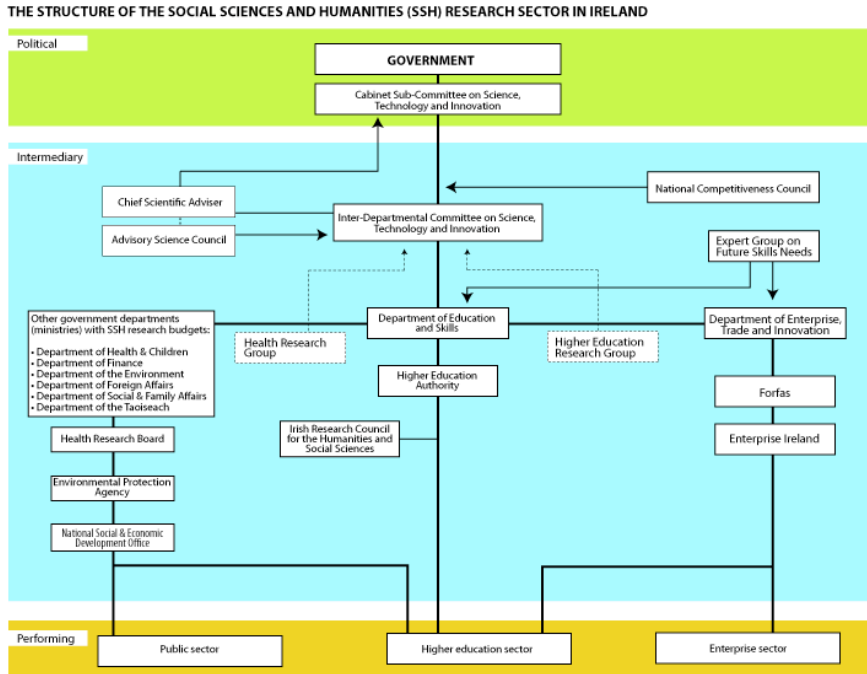
The Cabinet Sub-Committee for Science, Technology and Innovation plays a key role at a political level in terms of research policy development. The Sub-Committee is chaired by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation and it can call on the advice and expertise of the Chief Scientific Officer. At an operational level, the main research policy implementation body is the Inter-Departmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation which comprises senior officials from the ministries having a significant research budget (including the Department of Education and Skills). The Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) has a number of sub-committees reporting to it including the Higher Education Research Group which consists of agencies that fund third level research such as the Higher Education Authority and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences. The IDC has a key role to play in the implementation of the SSTI.

There are a number of policy advisory organisations that provide information and advice to the government in relation to research policy. These include the Advisory Council for Science, Technology and Innovation, the National Competitiveness Council and the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs. Forfás, the national policy advisory board for enterprise and science, undertakes a number of functions including the provision of policy advice to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation.

The HEA is the statutory planning and policy development body for higher education and research in Ireland. The HEA has wide advisory powers throughout the whole of the third-level education sector. Additionally, it is the funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and a number of designated higher education institutions.

The HEA provides financial support services to IRCHSS which funds research in the humanities, social sciences, business and law with the objective of creating new knowledge and expertise. Through its membership of the European Science Foundation, the Research Council is committed to integrating Irish research in European and international networks of expertise. Established in 2000, the IRCHSS is the National Contact Point for the Humanities and Social Sciences Framework Programme.

1.1.2 Overview of structure



1.2 Policy challenges and developments

1.2.1 Main societal challenges translated into SSH research

It is important to note at the outset that there is no national policy focusing exclusively on SSH research in Ireland. The main policy document that specifically refers to SSH research is the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013 (SSTI) which sets out targets for the number of SSH PhDs to be achieved by 2013 and for the composition of SSH research teams. The SSTI document while it highlights national thematic priorities in relation to biotechnology, ICT, energy and health does not, however, identify any SSH research thematic areas.

The Innovation Taskforce (Department of the Taoiseach, 2010) while fully endorsing the emphasis placed on science, engineering and technology (SET) in the SSTI, highlighted that in a well-functioning innovation ecosystem, science, technology,

engineering and maths (STEM) disciplines are complemented by the arts, humanities and the social sciences (AHSS) and stated that more needs to be done to enhance that complementarity. The report noted that research in law underpins the efficiency of Intellectual Property in incentivising and rewarding innovation while modern languages play an obvious role in driving international trade and cross-cultural collaboration. One of the Taskforce's recommendations was to promote the contribution of AHSS to the innovation ecosystem, and, in particular, increase synergies between different disciplines within AHSS and SET disciplines.

Recent debate in the media centres on the level of balance in recent policy documents between SET on one hand and the SSH on the other. There is a perception among some academicians that government resource allocation favours science, engineering and technology particularly in relation to research funding. They also believe that the pursuit by Irish higher education institutions of international university rankings where the criteria emphasise research and science and technology acts as a disincentive for them to invest in SSH. One senior university leader has stated that “over recent years there has been the development of a clear strategy for science and engineering, which has well understood policy goals and significant funding. It is now vital to achieve the same for the humanities and social sciences. This is both right from an intellectual point of view and important for practical reasons: issues such as the management of migration, the development of a properly understood framework of ethics, the development of proper linguistic skills, the drawing up of a proper framework for the performing arts have a major national significance and require strong and confident teams working in the humanities.”

The Government is promoting the development of structured PhD education provision in which participants will receive training in a range of skill areas such as business, creativity and innovation in addition to undertaking their doctoral research activity. This broadening of doctoral training to encompass key disciplines within the SSH domain is viewed by some observers as a recognition of the importance of the arts, social sciences and humanities in developing an innovative, knowledge-based economy through the supply of highly-trained graduates with the requisite hard and soft skills sought by industry.

1.2.2 New SSH policy developments

The Department of Education and Skills has requested that a foresight exercise of the social sciences and humanities be undertaken in Ireland following the publication in 2007 of a report by the Royal Irish Academy, *Advancing Humanities and Social Sciences Research in Ireland*, which, inter alia, called for a national SSH foresight exercise. At the request of the Minister for Education and Skills, the Higher Education (HEA) and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) have set up a process to comprehensively review the role and contribution of the humanities and social sciences to social and economic development in Ireland, current strengths and weaknesses and the actions needed to strengthen this sector of the higher-education system.

The scope of the exercise will cover all areas of the humanities, including the arts, culture, business and law. The exercise is thus wider than just SSH alone and will be covering issues such as digital media. The foresight exercise is expected to result in the identification of SSH thematic areas where Ireland should concentrate its research priorities.

2. Policy Setting System

2.1 Government policy making and coordination

2.1.1 Policy formulation and coordination

The Government is responsible for policy formulation and the Cabinet as the main decision making element in the policy formulation apparatus is primarily responsible for policy development.

As part of new policy governance structures developed in 2004, a Cabinet Sub-Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation has responsibility for matters relating to STI and whose remit also extends to research on the social sciences and humanities. The Cabinet Sub-Committee can also draw upon the expertise of the Office of the Chief Scientific Adviser.

The Government has a number of advisory organisations which can provide information and advise on a range of policy issues. The relevant advisory organisations include the National Competitiveness Council, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, the Advisory Science Council and the Management Development Council.

The implementation of government policies in relation to research and innovation is the responsibility of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation which consists of senior officials from government ministries with large research budgets. The Committee is responsible for implementing the government's strategy for science, technology and innovation (SSTI) which covers the period 2006-2013. Much of the focus of the Committee and the SSTI is on science, engineering and technology and the major thematic areas of biotechnology, ICT and sustainable energy and energy-efficient technologies.

The Department of Education and Skills is the main government department (ministry) responsible for the funding of SSH research in Ireland and it provides the funding for the two main channels of SSH research funding, the Higher Education Authority's Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities (PRTL) and Social Sciences (IRCHSS). As noted above, the Government has assigned responsibility for the PRTL to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) which is under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills plays an important role in the funding of SSH research. The HEA is the statutory planning and development body for higher education and research in Ireland. The HEA has wide advisory powers throughout the whole of the Irish third level education sector. Additionally, it is the funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and a number of designated higher education institutions. The HEA is responsible for the provision of the main institutional or core funding to the universities, institutes of technology and designated higher education institutions.

The development of a research capacity and capability in the third level sector is a key national priority and the HEA has instituted a portfolio of funding programmes to assist in the achievement of this objective, the most important of which is the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL). The objective of the PRTL is to facilitate third-level institutions with the opportunity to build infrastructure, invest in capacity and promote institutional strategies and inter-institutional collaboration. Approximately €50 million in funding for SSH research was allocated under the fourth cycle of the PRTL and the Department of Education and Skills has

indicated that cultural heritage will be one of the five areas targeted for national shared facilities development under the fifth cycle of the PRTL1.

The HEA also manages the Programme of Strategic Co-operation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes which is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The aim of the programme which has a significant SSH element is to promote innovative research across a range of subject areas in support of the mission of Irish Aid, the official development assistance programme of the Irish Government, and to develop the capacity of the higher-education sector in Ireland and abroad for developmental research.

An important funder of individual SSH research projects and, more recently, thematic-based SSH research is the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS). The IRCHSS which was established on a permanent and autonomous basis by the Minister for Education and Skills in 2000, allocates grant-aid to SSH researchers on a competitive and transparent basis through a process of international peer review. The IRCHSS seeks to promote excellence and high-level output in third-level research in the humanities and social sciences, law and business studies through an interlinked suite of research funding programmes.

The Research Council has been a member of the European Science Foundation (ESF) since 2001 and seeks through its membership of the ESF to maximise opportunities for researchers in Ireland to benefit from participation in European networks of research excellence. The IRCHSS participates in a number of ESF projects such as EUROCORES.

The IRCHSS is also the National Contact Point for the Humanities and Social Sciences Framework Programme 7 (FP7).

The IRCHSS is a member of both the Humanities and Social Sciences ERAnets (NORFACE and HERA) which bring together European research funding councils to increase co-operation in research and research policy in Europe, international benchmarking and best practice procedures and to enter into joint funding initiatives through the common pot mechanism.

The IRCHSS had a research budget of approximately €17 million in 2008.

It is important to point out that other government departments also fund SSH research but on a smaller scale. In some instances, these government departments use funding provided by the IRCHSS to undertake research projects. As an example, the Department of the Taoiseach [Prime Minister] requested that the IRCHSS manage the Project Grants Scheme in Theology and Religious Studies research scheme. The scheme, which acknowledges the importance and changing role of religion not only in Ireland but in world affairs, is intended to support research in the historical, analytical, theoretical and empirical study of projects in theology and religious studies, including the histories of religion.

The Department of Health and Children is the parent ministry of the Health Research Board which manages funding programmes and commitments worth over €100 million covering all areas of health research from biomedical, translational, clinical and practice-based research, through to SSH-related research areas such as population health and health services research. It is estimated that the Health Research Board contributed €18.5 million for SSH-related research in 2007 of which €5 million was categorised as capital funding.

The Department of Finance provides funding for the Economic and Social Research Institute which conducts research on economic and social science issues. The Central Bank which is under the aegis of the Department of Finance undertakes research in the area of monetary and economic policy.

2.1.2 SSH policy Advice

There is no single or dedicated agency with responsibility for providing SSH policy advice. There are a number of policy advisory organisations that include the provision of advice on SSH research as part of a broader set of responsibilities. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the statutory planning and development body for higher education and research in Ireland. The HEA has wide advisory powers throughout the whole of the third-level education sector. In addition, it is the funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and a number of designated higher education institutions. It provides advice to the Department of Education and Skills on a range of research policies, including SSH.

The main dedicated SSH funding organisation is the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Research (IRCHSS). The Council reports to the Department of Education and Skills on issues relating to the advancement of SSH research in Ireland. It interacts with other advisory bodies such as the Advisory Science Council and the Office of the Chief Scientific Adviser. The Council made a written submission to the Irish Council for Science, Technology and Innovation, the predecessor to the Advisory Science Council, which has convened a high-level Commission to develop an overarching framework for national policy in research and technological development. Further to the Commission's stated objective of consulting with relevant stakeholders, the IRCHSS presented a written submission in this regard in July 2002. The IRCHSS submission argued the merits of the function of the humanities, social sciences, business and legal studies in developing Ireland's knowledge society. The submission also made a case for the organisational and intellectual rationale for flexible diversity in research and research funding mechanisms. The submission strongly supported cooperation between the various agencies promoting research in Ireland and analysed the implications of the success of the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences for the formulation of research policy. The IRCHSS also made a submission to the OECD team which reviewed the higher education sector in Ireland.

The Science Advisory Council has recently prepared a number of reports which impact on SSH research including career paths for researchers and Ireland's international research relationships.

Forfás, the policy and advisory board for enterprise and science policy, also has a role in providing inputs to SSH research policy. The organisation was responsible for the publication of the new services strategy document, *Catching the Wind*, which noted the importance of developing graduates with humanities and social science skills as their range of knowledge, skills and competences are particularly valued by many service sectors. In 2007, Forfás and the Higher Education Authority jointly produced a report on Ireland's research infrastructures which included recommendations on SSH research facilities.

The Rural Economy Research Centre (RERC) within Teagasc, the agriculture and food development authority, was established to produce social science research and policy advice to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of Irish agriculture and to enhance the quality of life in rural Ireland. It undertakes research on issues such as spatial analysis, environmental policy analysis and agriculture and trade.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has responsibilities for a wide range of licensing, enforcement, monitoring and assessment activities associated with environmental protection. Its responsibilities include assessing and informing the public and policy makers of the general state of the environment. The EPA's research funding programme for the period 2007-2013 is entitled *Science, Technology, Research and Innovation for the Environment (STRIVE)*. Core research topics relating to SSH included in the STRIVE programme are socio-economics/sustainable development and waste and water resource management.

2.1.3 Main implementing bodies

The two main implementing bodies for SSH funding under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills are the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS). Both bodies are members of the Higher Education Research Group, a key group in relation to the implementation of the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013 and which reports to the Inter-Departmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, the Government's main STI policy-implementation and co-ordination body.

The HEA and IRCHSS are closely linked at an organisational level as the HEA which is the larger of the two bodies provides financial support services to the IRCHSS.

The Higher Education Authority was established by the Higher Education Authority Act 1971 and its principal functions include:

- to further the development of higher education; to maintain a continuous review of the demand and need for higher education;
- to assist in the co-ordination of state investment in higher education and to prepare proposals for such investment;
- to review proposals from universities and designated institutions for capital and recurrent funding; to allocate among the institutions the grants voted by the Oireachtas (Parliament);
- to promote an appreciation of the value of higher education and research, and;
- to promote the attainment of equality of opportunity in higher education and the democratisation of its structures.

The HEA's mission is to foster the development of a higher education sector which is accessible to all potential students, is recognised internationally for the high quality of teaching, learning and research and has the capacity to address the changing needs and challenges in Irish society.

The HEA provides funding to the universities and designated higher education institutions under a number of headings. The HEA-funded institutions are University College Cork, University College Dublin, National University of Ireland Galway, National University of Ireland Maynooth, Trinity College Dublin, University of Limerick, Dublin City University, Royal College of Surgeons, National College of Art and Design, Royal Irish Academy, Mater Dei, Mary Immaculate Limerick, St. Patrick's Drumcondra and St. Angela's Sligo. In accord with the Institutes of Technology Act, 2006, the HEA has taken over the responsibility for the funding the institutes of technology and the Dublin Institute of Technology from the Department of Education and Skills.

The three headings under which the HEA funds the universities, designated higher education institutions and the institutes of technology include:

- general capital funding for the provision of physical facilities (such as €1m capital works funding for the TCD Social Workers institution during 2005-2006);
- research funding programmes such as the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLTI) which offers third-level institutions an opportunity to build infrastructure, invest in capacity and facilitate institutional strategies and inter-institutional collaboration (since its inception in 1999, the PRTLTI has provided €98m in funding to the SSH). Other HEA research programmes include the North-South Programme for Collaborative Research (Strand I), the Fund for Digital Research, the Transport Research Fund, and the Programme of Strategic

Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher-Education and Research Institutes (2007–2011);

- recurrent funding (known as the core or block funding). In 2006, the HEA provided the universities and designated higher education institutions (excluding the institutes of technology) with €754 million in recurrent funding (this sum includes a grant of €228 million in lieu of university tuition fees). In addition to meeting the running expenses of the institutions the recurrent grants may also be applied for certain other purposes, including the purchase of furniture, the replacement of equipment or the carrying out of minor capital projects.

In addition to meeting the running expenses of the Institution these grants may also be applied for certain other purposes, including the purchase of furniture, the replacement of equipment or the carrying out of minor capital projects.

The Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) was established in 2000 by the Minister for Education and Skills and is a member of the European Science Foundation. Its mission is to encourage excellence and the highest standards in the humanities and social sciences; to encourage co-operation between the humanities and social sciences; to develop opportunities and policies for the promotion of research; to support research and promote interdisciplinary collaboration; to facilitate communication and research networks; to promote cross-border co-operation on the island, and to maximise research funding.

The IRCHSS currently operates a number of national research schemes from postgraduate to senior collaborative project level. The Research Council promotes international research collaboration through its role as the national agency for the Humanities and Social Sciences in FP7 and the European Research Areas NETWORKS HERA and NORFACE.

The Research Council operates a suite of interlinked research schemes. The IRCHSS Government of Ireland Post-Graduate Scholarships and Government of Ireland Post-Doctoral Fellowships fund research at pre- and post-doctoral levels. The Research Council operates three Schemes which offer research opportunities for members of the academic staff of recognised third-level institutions to undertake stated projects (Government of Ireland Senior Research Scholarships; Government of Ireland Research Fellowships; Government of Ireland Senior Research Fellowships). A Scheme operated by the Research Council known as Government of Ireland Research Projects Grants funds world-class innovative research undertaken on an extended or group project basis.

In 2008, the Research Council had a budget of €17 million.

There are a number of other State funding sources for SSH research. These include the Health Research Board (HRB) which is under the aegis of the Department of Health and Children and has responsibility for supporting and funding health research. It manages a number of health information systems and carries out health research in several nominated areas. The HRB manages funding programmes and commitments with a value of €180 million. Funding covers all areas of health research from biomedical, translational, clinical and practice-based research, including population health and health services research. It is estimated that the HRB provided €18.3 million to the higher education sector in 2007 for social sciences, humanities and arts research. The HRB supports a number of research fellows in health services research as well as a dedicated PhD Scholar's Programme in Health Services Research (the Health Services Research Institute in RCSI). The HRB also offers a number of funding schemes targeted at the health services, namely Strategic R&D Awards and projects grants in population health and health services.

Another relevant State agency in relation to SSH research is Teagasc which is the agriculture and food development authority in Ireland. Its mission is to support science-based innovation in the agri-food sector and the broader bio-economy that will underpin profitability, competitiveness and sustainability. An important unit within Teagasc is the Rural Economy Research Centre (RERC) which is its economics and social science research institute. The mission of RERC is to produce high quality social science research and policy advice to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of Irish Agriculture and to enhance the quality of life in rural Ireland, thus contributing to the achievement of Teagasc's key goals: competitiveness and innovation in agriculture, sustainable systems of agriculture and rural viability. Teagasc funds both post-graduate (Masters and PhD) and post-doctoral research positions across a range of disciplines including economists, ecologists, sociologists and geographers.

2.2 Impacting factors

2.2.1 Policy fields influencing SSH policies

The SSH sector in Ireland is characterised by the absence of a national SSH research strategy which in turn means that there are no SSH research policies or major SSH thematic research priorities.

Another feature of the SSH sector given the width and diversity of the disciplines it covers is the involvement of a number of government departments (ministries) and their agencies in the funding of SSH research. The amount of funding provided for SSH research varies enormously across government departments and there is also considerable variation in the extent to which the research funded is undertaken in-house or externally. The purpose for which this research funding is provided differs from government department and is largely dependent of the particular policy objective being pursued. However, some of this funding is to support the overall vision espoused in the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013 (SSTI) that *“Ireland by 2013 will be internationally renowned for the excellence of its research, and will be to the forefront in generating and using new knowledge for economic and social progress, within an innovation driven culture.”* Underpinning this vision are two overarching, inter-linked goals: building a sustainable system of world class research teams across all disciplines and to double Ireland's output of PhDs.

The Department of Education and Skills is a significant funder of SSH research in the third level sector. It provides funding for the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (managed by the Higher Education Authority) which invests in research infrastructure/capacity within third level institutions and for the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) which provides funding for individual SSH post-graduate researchers. The Department and its agencies have a key role in the implementation of the SSTI particularly in terms of increasing research capacity, quality and output within the third level sector where knowledge development-related research in Ireland is mainly undertaken. They also play an important role in developing the number of PhDs which is a key performance indicator of the SSTI.

The Department of Health and Children and its research co-ordinating body, the Health Research Board, has a significant involvement in SSH research particularly in the fields of population health and health services research. The Department funds research to both develop new approaches to the treatment of diseases and to improve the effectiveness of Irish health policy formulation and implementation.

A similar situation pertains to environmental-related research. The Department of the Environment, Local Government and Heritage and its environment agency, the Environmental Protection Agency, commissions knowledge development research and policy analysis research that has a SSH dimension.

2.2.2 Influence of European Developments

The work of the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) has impacted on Irish policy in relation to research infrastructures. Irish policy-makers have long recognised the need for SSH researchers to have access to large and accessible electronic data resources and collections of research material. They also believe it is critically important that Ireland's investment in research infrastructure should take account of developments at the European level including the ESFRI process. Such an approach would help to achieve optimal decision-making as to the facilities that should be put in place on a purely national basis and the facilities where a more collective approach should be taken with other EU Member States.

In 2006, the Higher Education Authority and Forfás undertook a review of research infrastructure in Ireland in order to take stock of existing investment and to inform decision-making in relation to future rounds of Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) and related investments under SSTI. In undertaking the review, a deliberate decision was taken to involve partners from the ESFRI network in order to maximise the alignment between the national strategy and the ESFRI Roadmap. The review which was published in 2007 identified infrastructure needs in Ireland in different "fields of science" and drew attention to developments at European level and globally where there was potential to meet Irish needs through international partnerships and collective actions. The report reviewed SSH research infrastructures and made recommendations on space provision, data management and archiving facilities. The report was a key guiding document for current and forthcoming cycles of the PRTL which since its establishment in 1998 has provided in excess of €600 million to third level institutions, largely for support of new research infrastructure. The Programme has contributed to-date approximately €98 million in funding to the social sciences and humanities.

Additionally, the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) has prioritised two infrastructures from the ESFRI Roadmap (the European Social Survey and a digital research facility for the arts and humanities). These were prioritised on the basis of alignment with IRCHSS objectives and potential reach to the research community in Ireland.

The Royal Irish Academy's report on the SSH in Ireland, *Advancing Humanities and Social Research in Ireland*, noted the policy context provided by the European Union (EU), in particular by the Lisbon Agenda which seeks to make the EU 'the most dynamic and competitive knowledge based economy in the world by 2010' through increased expenditure in R&D across key domains including business, higher education and government. The Barcelona European Council set a target of spending 3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on R&D by 2010. The Irish target for R&D investment is 2.5% of GDP for 2013. The RIA report also identified that other related policy guidelines for Member States were provided by the Bologna declaration regarding higher education, and the EU Council Resolution on Lifelong Learning.

Initial data on Irish involvement in FP-funded SSH research projects suggest that there has been little change between FP5 and FP6 either in terms of project co-ordinators or participants. The data indicate that there were three Irish project co-ordinators in FP6 (FP5: 4) and 28 participants (FP5: 30). The FP7 data report that

there were 11 Irish participants in Priority 7 Networks of Excellence and Integrated projects.

2.2.3 Relevance of European SSH research

1. There are a number of ERA-NETs that have a SSH focus in which Ireland has an involvement. These include HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area) and NORFACE (New Opportunities for Research Funding Co-operation in Europe: A Strategy for Social Sciences). The Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) is the Irish co-ordinating body for both of these networks which provide Irish SSH researchers with opportunities to participate in European and international research networks and policy forums. The IRCHSS is also a member of the European Science Foundation (ESF) which offers opportunities for Irish researchers to associate with researchers outside Ireland.
2. European research developments have risen in profile in terms of the SSH research community in Ireland for a number of reasons. Firstly, there has been a policy decision on behalf of the Irish Government to encourage researchers to access a larger share of EU research funding under the Framework Programmes. The Government has set a target of €400 million for Irish researchers to achieve in FP7; this partly recognises that there may be restrictions on the availability on national research funding in the future. As a consequence of this policy decision, a revised State support infrastructure has been put in place to facilitate a more co-ordinated approach by Irish researchers in accessing FP7 funding. The IRCHSS is the National Contact Point (NCP) for SSH-related priorities under the EU Framework Programme. Thirdly, FP7 has given a larger prominence to SSH research issues and has allocated a larger budget to SSH research.
3. A recent study by the Advisory Science Council, Ireland's International Engagement in Science, Technology and Innovation, reviewed Ireland's international STI engagements across a broad range of sectors including the social sciences, the environment and education. The report found that responsibility for these international engagements were distributed across at least ten government departments (ministries) and/or their agencies. The report made a number of recommendations, particularly in terms of developing a strategic focus for Ireland's international STI linkages. The report was relatively silent on the issue of SSH international engagement though it highlighted how the development of a long-term planning process for infrastructure needs of UK science had helped identify the UK's priorities for international infrastructure projects. The Large Facilities Roadmap which resulted from this process covers all academic disciplines funded by the Research Councils including social sciences and the humanities.

2.2.4 Impact of evaluations

There has been no systemic review of the SSH system in Ireland though it should be noted that a foresight exercise of the social sciences and humanities in Ireland is currently being undertaken at the request of the Department of Education and Skills. The objective of the SSH foresight project is to comprehensively review the role and contribution of the humanities and social sciences to social and economic development in Ireland, current strengths and weaknesses and the actions needed to strengthen this sector of the higher-education system.

The last major systemic review of the Irish higher education system took place in 2004 and was carried out by the OECD. The review addressed a number of issues including governance, lifelong learning, research and innovation and the international dimension. The review made a number of recommendations relating to the structure and future direction of the Irish third level sector. The OECD review recommended that the responsibilities and programmes of the Irish Councils for the Humanities and Social Science (IRCHSS) and for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET) should be subsumed under an expanded Science Foundation Ireland.

In 2003, an independent peer group evaluation was undertaken of IRCHSS. A three-person team carried out interviews with IRCHSS council members and staff, awardees and relevant personnel involved in science policy and in the academic community. The evaluation team noted that the IRCHSS had performed a mammoth task in developing, from scratch and with minimal staffing, a national mechanism for the stimulation of fundamental research in the humanities and social sciences in Ireland. They stated that success of the IRCHSS in promoting a new and productive research climate could be observed by taking account of the response to its calls for proposals. The evaluators made a number of recommendations including the establishment of the IRCHSS on independent statutory footing, the need for better co-ordination of research funding and the possibility of developing more collective and inter-disciplinary research programmes.

The IRCHSS evaluation team comprised Professor Wim Blockmans, University of Leiden/Wassenaar (chairman), Professor Gretty Mirdal, University of Copenhagen and Professor Ruth Mohrmann, University of Münster.

There have been a number of reviews of aspects of Ireland's research system of which SSH is a sub-set. In 2007, the Higher Education Authority and Forfás issued a report of Ireland's research infrastructure in the third level sector, "Research Infrastructure In Ireland — Building For Tomorrow." The report noted in relation to SSH and the arts that there were deficiencies in space provision and data management, and stressed the need for archiving facilities to be developed in way that promotes collaboration in research and excellence in scholarship. A report by the Advisory Science Council (ASC) in 2008 on developing career paths for researchers, *Towards a Framework for Researcher Careers*, recommended a framework for developing professional careers in higher education institutions which seeks to ensure that researchers are mobile between all sectors and internationally, have an appropriate academic career structure and are taught the skills needed to work in enterprise. The ASC report said this was necessary to ensure that the contribution of all researchers and all research fields, including humanities and social sciences, was optimised. The report also stated it was crucial for economic and social prosperity that research in the fields of humanities and social sciences be promoted and encouraged and recommended that funding for these fields of research should be increased.

2.3 Important policy documents

The main policy document impacting on SSH research is the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013 (SSTI) which outlines a whole-of-government strategy for science, technology and innovation in Ireland:

Government of Ireland (2006): Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013 (downloadable from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation: www.entemp.ie)

Other important policy documents include:

- Forfas (2008): *Catching the Wave* (downloadable from: www.forfas.ie);
- Science Advisory Council (2008): *Ireland's International Engagement in Science, Technology and Innovation* (downloadable from: www.sciencecouncil.ie);
- Science Advisory Council (2008): *Towards a Framework for Researcher Careers* (downloadable from: www.sciencecouncil.ie);
- Higher Education Authority and Forfas (2006): *Research Infrastructure In Ireland — Building For Tomorrow* (downloadable from the Forfas web site: www.forfas.ie);
- Department of the Taoiseach [Prime Minister] (2007): *Towards 2016 – Ten-Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015* (downloadable from the Department of the Taoiseach: www.taoiseach.ie);
- Government of Ireland (2008): *Building Ireland's Smart Economy* (downloadable from the Department of the Taoiseach: www.taoiseach.ie);
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2007): *Ireland – National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012* (downloadable from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government: www.environ.ie);
- Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (2007): *Tomorrow's Skills: Towards a National Skills Strategy* (downloadable from the Expert Group's web site: www.skillsireland.ie);
- Innovation Taskforce (2010), *Innovation Ireland* (downloadable from the Department of the Taoiseach: www.taoiseach.ie).

2.4 Thematic priorities at national level

There has been no identification of SSH priorities at a national level. This omission may be addressed by the current foresight exercise which is being undertaken by the Higher Education Authority with the support of the Irish Council for Social Sciences and the Humanities (IRCHSS). The foresight exercise is covering SSH and the arts.

The IRCHSS is the main funder of SSH research in Ireland (approximately €14 million per annum) and operates on a bottom-up model e.g. applicants approach the IRCHSS with research topics. The IRCHSS funds research at a number of levels: doctoral, post-doc and senior researchers. As many of the applicants for IRCHSS are PhD level they are unlikely to be significantly influenced by thematic priorities at a national level even if they were articulated by policy-makers.

A number of SSH projects involving multi-disciplinary teams across different third level colleges have been funded by the Programme for Research in Third Level (PRTL). The PRTL is an important funding programme that seeks to strengthen infrastructure provision and the development of human capital. Applicants for PRTL funding must demonstrate that their project reflects their institutions' strategic priorities that are likely to embody national priorities. Examples of SSH research projects that have been funded under the fourth cycle of PRTL include the Humanities Serving Irish Society initiative (€28.9 million), the National Programme of Research on Knowledge, Innovation, Society and Space (KISS) (€22.1 million) and the Irish Social Science Data Archive (€0.8 million).

The Humanities Serving Irish Society (HSIS) initiative involves the building a national platform for the coordination and dissemination of humanities research, teaching and training. The Royal Irish Academy is the lead institution in the HSIS initiative which comprises six universities and two Institutes of Technology.

KISS is a national collaborative programme between Dublin City University, National University of Ireland Galway, National University of Ireland Maynooth, University College Cork and University of Limerick. KISS comprises an all-island programme of fundamental, applied, and comparative research and graduate training on Knowledge, Innovation, Society and Space. It links together significant and complementary centres of social science and humanities expertise across all institutions involved. The proposed partnership is a scaling-up of existing successful collaborations (e.g. PRTL, Atlantic Alliance) across disciplines and institutions.

The Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA) will be managed jointly by University College Dublin and the Economic and Social Research Institute, with the collaboration and support of the Central Statistics Office. ISSDA holds an ever-increasing quantity of machine-readable data from surveys and official statistics (such as the Census) and makes them readily available to users in the academic, public and commercial sectors. PRTL support will expand and coordinate data acquisition and management and build on the Irish Social Science Data Archive and will directly address structural concerns raised in the Forfás/HEA review on infrastructures, with the database filling a long-recognised need in Ireland.

The fifth cycle of PRTL announced in January 2009 with funding of €300 million covering the period 2009-2013 includes cultural heritage as one of its five priority areas for the development of national shared facilities.

2.5 Important research programmes

Programme 1

Title: Government of Ireland Post Graduate Scholarships

Start date: 1999

Planned end date (years): There is no scheduled completion date

Total budget expenditure 1999 – 2008: €28 million

Authority issuing the programme: Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Research (IRCHSS)

Organisation implementing the programme: IRCHSS

Target group: This Scheme offer opportunities to graduates to pursue the following post-graduate degrees in the humanities and social sciences, at a recognised higher education institution in Ireland:

- a masters degree by research
- a doctoral degree by research
- an integrated masters/doctoral programme leading to the award of a Doctorate

Programme 2

Title: Government of Ireland Postdoctoral fellowships

Start date: 2000

Planned end date (years): There is no scheduled completion date.

Total budget expenditure 1999 – 2008: €12 million

Authority issuing the programme: IRCHSS

Organisation implementing the programme: IRCHSS

Target group: This Scheme offers research opportunities for postdoctoral scholars who wish to affiliate with a recognised higher education institution in Ireland to pursue research in the humanities and social sciences

- a) who have been awarded their doctoral degree within the five-year period before end of year of the call;
- b) who, by the end of the call year, have been certified as having fulfilled all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including a viva, where such is required.

Programme 3

Title: Government of Ireland Senior Research Scholarships; Research fellowships and senior research fellowships

Start date: 2001

Planned end date (years): 2008

Total budget expenditure 1999 – 2008: €8 million

Authority issuing the programme: IRCHSS

Organisation implementing the programme: IRCHSS

Target group: These schemes offer research opportunities for members of the academic staff of a recognised higher education institution in Ireland, whose services to their institutions are of a research and teaching nature, and to peruse research in the area of humanities and social sciences.

In 2009 the research fellowship and senior research fellowship schemes were developed in a projects based scheme, called senior research projects. The senior scholarship scheme has not been open for applications since 2004.

Programme 4

Title: Government of Ireland Research Project Grants

Start date: 2003

Planned end date (years): There is no scheduled completion date

Total budget expenditure 1999 – 2008: €19 million

Authority issuing the programme: IRCHSS

Organisation implementing the programme: IRCHSS

Target group: These schemes offer research opportunities for members of the academic staff of a recognised higher education institution in Ireland, whose services to their institutions are of a research and teaching nature, to peruse research projects in the area of humanities and social sciences. Since 2003 the IRCHSS has offered projects based awards in a number of formats, from small-scale awards €6,500 - €50,000, to major projects awards up to €300,000. The IRCHSS has run both open and thematic project schemes, and has supported the participations of Irish research in international collaborative research projects (NORFACE, HERA, ESF).

Programme 5

Title: Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions

Start date: 1999

Planned end date (years): 2013

Total budget expenditure 1999 – 2008: €865m of which €152.4m is for SSH

Authority issuing the programme: Higher Education Authority (HEA)

Organisation implementing the programme: HEA

Target group: The Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) was established in 1999 and provides integrated financial support for institutional strategies, programmes and infrastructure in key areas of research spread across all disciplines. The programme supports research in humanities, science, technology and the social sciences, including business and law. The PRTL is targeted at institutions with the aim of creating collaborations across universities and institutes of technologies. Responsibility for funding the PRTL will transfer from the Department of Education and Science to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation.

3. Funding System

3.1 Overview of funding flows

This diagram provides an indication of the main funding flows for SSH research in Ireland. It is important to note that it includes funding for individual research projects and funding for infrastructure (e.g. research facilities) to support research in the social sciences and humanities.

Definitive data on funding flows for research on the social sciences and the humanities in Ireland is problematic. These difficulties relate not only to the lack of available data but also to the fact that there are differences in the definition of what constitutes SSH research among the agencies that collect data on research expenditures.

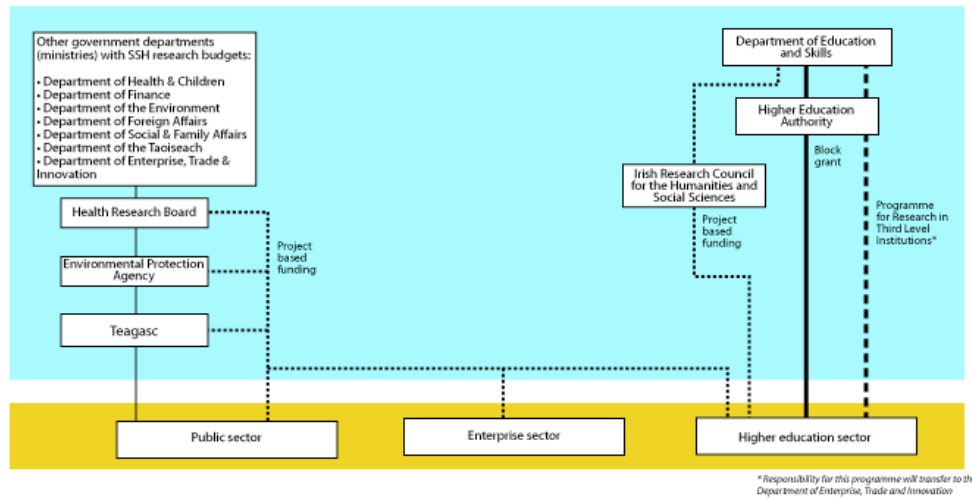
The Department (ministry) of Education and Skills is the main funder of SSH research carried out within the third level sector. It provides funding for the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) which is the main source of SSH project-based funding i.e. funding for specific research projects carried out in the social sciences and the humanities either by individual researchers or groups of researchers.

The Department of Education and Skills is also the source of funding for the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLTI) which is administered by the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The PRTLTI is a capital infrastructural funding programme and provides funding for third level institutions to invest in new facilities. In recent years, the PRTLTI has been an important source of funding for investments made in SSH infrastructure. As noted above, responsibility for the PRTLTI will transfer from the Department of Education and Skills to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation.

The HEA is also responsible for the disbursement of core or block funding to the third level institutions on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. This funding is intended to cover the operating costs, of which a large component is salaries of academic staff. Some of the core or block funding is accounted for by SSH research.

In addition to the funding provided by the Department of Education and Skills, other ministries and agencies under their aegis also fund research in the social sciences and the humanities but on a smaller scale.

FUNDING OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES (SSH) RESEARCH SECTOR IN IRELAND



3.2 National public SSH research funding

3.2.1 Overview of funding importance

The main source of funding for SSH research is the Department of Education and Skills and it is channelled to the higher education sector via two of its agencies, the Higher Education Authority and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Research.

The Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) provides project-based funding to individual SSH researchers within the third level sector. In 2008, the IRCHSS had a budget of €17 million for SSH research.

The Higher Education Authority is responsible for the allocation of the block or core grant to the higher education sector and research by Forfas has indicated that this source of funding represents a substantial proportion of SSH research funds for the higher education institutions (mainly the seven universities). It is estimated that approximately €17 million of the SSH research carried out by the higher education sector was funded by the core or block grant. The total value of block or core funds that funds research was estimated in 2008 at €242 million.

Additionally, funding for SSH research is provided by a variety of other government ministries such as the Department of Health and Children (via the Health Research Board) and the Department of the Agriculture and Food (via Teagasc, the agricultural research authority). The Health Research Board and Teagasc were estimated to have provided €20 million for SSH research in 2008 which was undertaken by researchers in the State-funded, higher education and enterprise sectors.

3.2.2 Institutional funding

A key source of SSH research funding is the unified teaching and research budget, otherwise known as the block grant. Effectively, this has been principally a teaching and pay budget. The research element is difficult to measure as the grant is not divided into sub-heads. The inadequacy of this allocation resulted in many excellent (and especially, younger) researchers pursuing careers abroad. Lack of support for business, law, social sciences and humanities departments was especially

noticeable, effectively curbing the evolution of graduate schools as well as extended research projects and opportunities that are common in the rest of Europe.

The largest agency funding R&D projects is the Higher Education Authority (HEA) which in 2008 was estimated to fund programmes to the value of €284 million, 85% (€242 million) of which is funding through the HEA block grant and 8% (€24 million) is funding allocated through the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions. Total HEA research funding in 2008 is anticipated to account for 34% of total Government spend on R&D.

Data produced by Forfás, the national policy advisory organisation for enterprise and science, indicate that the block grant is an extremely important source of funding for SSH research carried out within the third level sector; in 2006, it accounted for 62% of social science research funding and 73% of humanities research funding.

3.2.3 Individual funding

The Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) is the main provider of research funding for individual SSH researchers. The funding provided by the IRCHSS is different from that of the PRTL in that it focuses on the researcher himself/herself, whether working as an individual, or in small teams on project-based research across disciplines and/or institutions. The effect of the various support measures which are managed by the IRCHSS has been to ensure that talented researchers who, until now, have been obliged to go overseas, or to work in isolation, are enabled to remain in Ireland and to contribute to the development of the kind of critical mass which is intrinsic to government policy, as well as to ensure the continued consolidation of a third-level system that is modern, underpinned by excellence and quality, and informed by cutting-edge research and dissemination.

The IRCHSS provided funding of €17 million in 2008 for SSH research; this compares with €26.3 million in research funding provided by its sister organisation, the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology.

3.2.4 Programme Funding

An important programme funding for SSH research infrastructure investment is the Higher Education Authority's Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) which was inaugurated in 1999. The PRTL encourages third-level institutions to compete for funding in accordance with their own strategic objectives and strengths and where relevant, supports inter-institutional and interdisciplinary co-operation. By also promoting an innovative partnership of public and private investment, the process ensures that the state gets value for money and within that context, rewards excellence and originality for their own sake. Through its cycles of capital investment, the PRTL has also led to the development of an infrastructure for learning and research within the third-level system. As a result, it has impacted dramatically on the third-level system as well as greatly enhancing the capacity of the sector to provide the skills and research bases that are vital to innovation.

Total PRTL funding to-date (four cycles) amounts to €865 million and €300 million is planned for the fifth cycle covering the period 2009-2013. The amount of PRTL funding allocated to SSH research under the fourth cycle is estimated at €52 million and €98 million for the combined Cycles 1-4.

Another form of programme funding research is mission-oriented. In this context, researchers respond to proposals to investigate strategic areas identified by the Government. The most recent example of this sort of initiative has been the

Technology Foresight Ireland Report (April 1999) which led to the establishment of Science Foundation Ireland in 2000 to promote biotechnology and information and communications technology. Funding for SSH-related research provided by the Health Research Board and the Environmental Protection Agency may also be included under this rubric.

3.3 Private research funding

There is no published data on the extent of SSH research that is either carried out and/or funded by the private sector. The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA), see the Foundation funding section, is being jointly funded by Irish Life, a major assurance company.

3.4 Foundations/not-for-profit funding

Foundations/not-for-profit funding has played a prominent role in the development of research activity within the higher education sector. Atlantic Philanthropies, the foundation established by the Irish American billionaire, Chuck Feeney, was an earlier contributor to the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions which is regarded as having kick-started significant research activity in Irish higher education institutions.

Atlantic Philanthropies and Irish Life, a major private sector life assurance company, are funders of the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) which is being undertaken by a cross-institutional, multi-disciplinary team of experts from Dundalk Institute of Technology, the Economic and Social Research Institute, the National University of Ireland Galway, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork and University College Dublin.

The Moore Institute for Research in the Humanities and Social Studies located in the National University of Ireland Galway was the recipient of a donation of €0.34 million from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The donation takes the form of a research enhancement grant to the Institute to assist researchers on three of the Institute's current projects to internationalise their efforts. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant will provide support over a four-year period (2008-2012) to three strands of the research agenda, '*Texts, Contexts, Cultures at the Moore Institute*,' already being funded by the Higher Education Authority under its Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions, Cycle 4.

Founded in 1962, the Irish American Cultural Institute (IACI) is the leading Irish American cultural organisation. The IACI is a federally recognised, not-for-profit national organisation devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America. The IACI funds a number of research projects including a visiting fellowship in Irish studies at the National University of Ireland Galway.

3.5 European and international funding

A report by the Royal Irish Academy on the SSH research sector in Ireland noted that participation in international research collaborations by Irish researchers, particularly at EU level, remains low. The capacity of the SSH research community to engage in international research collaborations was compromised by very limited funding to support SSH researchers' participation in travel and exchange programmes (often the first step to forming international R&D collaborations) and a

lack of targeted administrative and management supports to assist in the preparation and management of transnational funding proposals. The report also made the point that the Irish SSH share of higher-education research expenditure drawn from EU and foreign sources was falling. The RIA report showed that EU and international funding accounted for 8% of funding for SSH research carried out in the Irish higher education sector in 2004. The report suggested that one reason for the low level of take up of international research funds was that HSS researchers chose to prioritise applications for domestic rather than EU funding schemes given the significant growth in domestic and national level funding sources. Additionally, the report suggested that there was some evidence that the high level of administration involved in the application requirements and the complexity of the EU collaboration mechanisms may have acted as barriers to HSS researchers' participation.

4. Performing System

4.1 Overview of the performers

The higher education sector is the main performer of HSS research in Ireland and a significant proportion of this is accounted for by the seven universities (University College Cork, University College Dublin, National University of Ireland Galway, National University of Ireland Maynooth, the university of Dublin [Trinity College Dublin], the University of Limerick and Dublin City University).

Funding for HSS within the higher education sector is provided by a number of agencies, most notably the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) which provides funding to individual HSS researchers. The Higher Education Authority provides funding for HSS research infrastructures.

The universities and the Institutes for Technology also play an important role as HSS education performers. The numbers of HSS full-time undergraduate students has been increasing though the rate of increase has been slower than the rate of increase in overall full-time undergraduate students.

A number of publicly-funded organisations that are involved in HSS research; these include the Central Bank, the Department of Education and Skills and the Economic and Social Research Institute. The Science Budget report for 2007/2008 estimates that publicly funded bodies spent €16.7 million on SSH research in 2008.

There are a number of private sector enterprises engaged in HSS research and include the main financial institutions as well as the large accounting and consultancy service providers.

4.2 Higher Education Institutions

4.2.1 HEIs as education performers

Within the Irish publicly funded higher education sector, there are seven universities, fourteen institutes of technology and seven other colleges or institutions which are funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), statutory planning and policy development body for higher education and research in Ireland. In addition, there are approximately 44 other public sector and private sector higher education colleges which provide a wide range of educational courses that are accredited by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council.

Recurrent funding provided to the third level sector by the HEA in 2008 amounted to €1.3 billion. This excludes separately provided programmes of funding for capital, for research and development and from the Strategic Innovation Fund.

Data provided by Eurostat in terms of the Irish tertiary population indicate that student numbers rose from 160,600 in 2000 to 186,000 in 2006, an increase of 16.1%.

Ireland	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Students in tertiary education (000s)	160.6	166.6	176.3	181.6	188.3	186.6	186.6

Source: Eurostat

Statistics published by the Higher Education Authority indicate that overall enrolment in Irish publicly funded universities increased by 10.4% from 93,774 students in the academic year 2003-2004 to 103,551 students in the academic year 2007-2008. The numbers enrolling in the Institutes of Technology declined in the same period by 4.9% (the numbers enrolled in the 2003-2004 academic year stood at 70,205 but that number fell to 66,754 in the 2007-2008 academic year).

The number of full-time undergraduate SSH students in Irish universities and six other higher education institutions rose from 32,190 in the 2004-2005 academic year to 33,958 in the 2007-2008 academic year, an increase of 1,768 or 5.5%. The total number of full-time undergraduate students increased from 65,320 in the 2004-2005 academic year to 70,464 in the 2007-2008 academic year, an increase of 5,144 or 7.9%. Thus, while the number of SSH full-time undergraduate students in SSH has been growing, the rate of increase is lower than that of the total number of full-time undergraduate students. As a consequence, SSH undergraduate students as a percentage of all full-time students declined from 49.3% in 2004-2005 to 48.2% in 2007-2008. It should be noted that these figures relate only to students at the seven universities and six other higher education institutions.

Student type	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
SSH students	32,190	32,475	32,498	33,958
All students	65,320	66,834	68,038	70,464
SSH students as a % of all students	49.3%	48.6%	47.8%	48.2%

Source: Higher Education Authority

Statistics published by the HEA indicate that in the 2007-2008 academic year, the number of full-time post-graduate enrolments in the social sciences amounted to 4,267 of which 726 were PhDs. The equivalent data for the humanities (which includes arts) was 2,804 of which 960 were PhDs.

Data published by the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) shows that between 1998 and 2004 the number of researchers in higher education rose by 71—from 2,425 full-time equivalent (FTEs) researchers in 1998 to 4,151 in 2004. While the number of SSH researchers (FTEs) grew from 843 in 1998 to 1,215 in 2004—an increase of 42%—this growth failed to keep pace with the overall rate of increase across all fields of science. At the same time, the SSH share of total higher-education researchers (FTEs) fell from 35% in 1998 to 29% in 2004.

The RIA has also indicated that changes are also evident in the composition of the SSH higher-education researcher population with strong growth in the numbers occupying contract-lecturer, postdoctoral and research-assistant posts. The increase in contract lecturers was particularly significant—from zero in 2000 to 196 in 2004. Academic staff in the SSH accounted for 42 per cent of the total number of higher-education researchers (FTEs) in 2004, a drop from 57 per cent of FTEs recorded in the 1998 Higher Education Research and Development survey. This decline is in part a reflection of the increase in human resources in other scientific areas within the broad higher-education sector as result of new research-funding initiatives since 2000, particularly in the science and technology sectors.

4.2.2 HEIs as research performers

It is estimated that 90% of the SSH research carried out in the Irish higher education sector takes place within the seven universities:

- University College Cork (www.ucc.ie)
- University College Dublin (www.ucd.ie)
- National University of Ireland Galway (www.nuigalway.ie)
- National University of Ireland Maynooth (www.nuim.ie)
- The University of Dublin (Trinity College Dublin) (www.tcd.ie)
- The University of Limerick (www.ul.ie)
- Dublin City University (www.dcu.ie)

The other higher education institutions that perform SSH research include the Royal Irish Academy, the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin Institute of Technology and the network of 14 Institutes of Technology.

The representative body for the university is the Irish University Association (www.iua.ie) while the representative body for the institutes of technology is the Institutes of Technology Ireland (www.ioti.ie).

Data produced by Forfás indicate that total expenditure on research in the higher education sector increased from €492 million in 2004 to €601.4 million, an increase of 22.2%. The Forfás data show that expenditure on SSH research in the third level sector increased at a slightly lower rate: from €120 million in 2004 to €145 million in 2006, an increase of 20.8%. Research expenditure on the social sciences increased from €82 million in 2004 to €102 million in 2006, an increase of 24.4%. Research expenditure on the humanities was markedly lower at €38 million in 2004; this expenditure only increased by 13.2% in 2006 to reach €43 million.

The analysis of the HERD data reveals that of the €92 million research on social sciences within the higher education sector in 2006, €20.6 million originated from direct Government sources such as the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions, €7.6 million came from the EU, €7.0 million came from other direct sources such as businesses while the balance of €56.8 million came from indirect sources such as the core or block grant. The social sciences thus receive only 22.3% of funding from direct government sources, while 61.7% is allocated via indirect government sources. 15.8% is distributed through the two remaining sources (EU and other direct funding).

The source of research funding data for the humanities show that €5.5 million came from direct government sources, €0.5 million came from the EU, €4.7 million from other direct sources and €28.8 million from indirect sources. Therefore, the humanities sources 13.9% of its funding through direct government sources and 72.9% through indirect sources. The remaining 13.1% of R&D funding is obtained via other and own and EU direct funding.

The Forfás HERD data can be broken down into smaller sub-categories which allow more detailed examination of HERD spending.

(1) Social sciences: The vast majority of HERD funding for this category is channelled into the sub-fields of economics and business (30.4%) and the educational sciences (25.2%). Psychology and sociology both account for around 9% of the total figure, and the remaining research funds are distributed for activities performed in a variety of the social science fields.

The overall funding allocation for social science research has steadily increased since 1998. Funding rose from €38.6 million in 1998 to reach €82.3 million by 2004.

Between 2004 and 2006 spending on social science research performed in the higher education sector rose by 22.1% to stand at €100.5 million.

(2) Humanities: Within this category, language and literature departments are responsible for a large majority of the research spending performance, (62.7%). History and archaeology is the next largest area at 21.7%, while philosophy, the arts and other humanities make up the remainder.

Spending on R&D for research in humanities rose moderately during the period 1998 to 2000. From 2000 to 2004 the field of study saw quite substantial increases in its funding, rising from €21.1 million in 2000 to €38.2 million by 2004. However since 2004 spending growth has eased, increasing by €4.6 million under the old field of science, and €4.3 million under the new field of science.

4.3 Public Research Organisations

There are a number of public research organisations that are involved in SSH research. Data is, however, very limited on these organisations' SSH budget and number of researchers.

The main public sector organisations involved in SSH research include:

The Economic and Social Research Institute

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) is a not-for-profit organisation under the aegis of the Department of Finance. ESRI's current research activities include the areas of macroeconomics, international economics, equality, health, education, labour market, social cohesion, taxation, welfare and pensions. ESRI research staff undertake commissioned studies, surveys and data analysis on behalf of a wide range of Irish and international organisations. The ESRI's research and development budget was estimated at €7.9 million in 2008.

The Central Bank

The Central Bank of Ireland, which came into being in 1943, was re-structured and re-named as the Central Bank and Financial Services Authority of Ireland. The Central Bank undertakes research in relation to economic intelligence and forecasting, inflation and competitiveness, monetary issues, economic modeling, public finances, structural issues, housing market, productivity and growth. Its research budget in 2008 was estimated at €1.4 million.

FAS

FAS, the national training and employment agency, is under the aegis of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation. The organisation's planning and research department carries out work in relation to labour market research and analysis, skills forecasting, surveys and evaluation and policy advice and analysis. Its research and development budget was estimated at just under €1 million in 2008.

Teagasc

Employing 200 research scientists and 300 research technicians, Teagasc, the agriculture and food development authority, is Ireland's largest public research organisation. Its estimated research and development budget in 2008 was €130 million. An important unit within Teagasc is the Rural Economy Research Centre (RERC) which is its economics and social science research institute. The mission of RERC is to produce high quality social science research and policy advice to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of Irish Agriculture and to enhance the quality of life in rural Ireland, thus contributing to the achievement of Teagasc's key goals: competitiveness and innovation in agriculture, sustainable systems of agriculture and rural viability.

The National Economic and Social Council

The functions of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) is to analyse and report to the Taoiseach [Prime Minister] on strategic issues relating to the efficient development of the economic and the achievement of social justice. The NESC conducts research and studies in a wide range of economic and social policy areas. In 2008, it had a staff of 7 and a research and development budget of €1.6 million.

The Central Statistics Office

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) is responsible for the collection, processing and dissemination of official statistics and is an independent office under the aegis of the Department of the Taoiseach [Prime Minister]. The CSO has a staff of approximately 800 employees and its technical services budget amounted to €51.1 million in 2008.

4.4 Private research performers

Data on private sector SSH research performers is extremely limited. The main performers in terms of individual companies and sectors include the following:

Intel

Intel which has a large manufacturing presence in Ireland is a partner in the Technology Research for Independent Living (TRIL) project which is a coordinated collection of research projects addressing the physical, cognitive and social consequences of ageing, all informed by ethnographic research and supported by a shared pool of knowledge and engineering resources. Intel personnel in association with researchers from a number of Irish universities are undertaking research on technology solutions which support independent ageing, ideally in a home environment. The total amount of funding for the TRIL project is estimated at €30 million of which Intel is contributing €15 million.

IBM

IBM Ireland employs 3,600 full time personnel, fulfilling a diverse range of international mandates across all IBM's businesses. IBM has made a number of R&D investments in Ireland that relate to the social science and humanities. One such investment is the establishment of the IBM Institute for Business Value (IBV) in Dublin which joins IBM's network of worldwide IBV centres in Australia, China, Netherlands and the United States. IBM's Global IBV network is comprised of consultants conducting and publishing business research and analysis across 17 industries and five disciplines: human capital management, financial management, corporate strategy, supply chain management and customer relationship management. Additionally, IBM Ireland is currently co-funding with the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences a project on technologies and platforms for historical research.

Banking, stockbroking and financial services sector

Leading companies in the banking, stockbroking and financial services sector regularly publish research work in relation to economic and financial issues. The major stockbroking companies such as Davy, Goodbody Stockbrokers and NCB all undertake research on Irish and international trends in economic, financial and monetary policy.

The large accountancy companies such as KPMG and PriceWaterhouseCoopers also publish the results of research undertaken on taxation issues.

Economic, management and marketing consultants

There are a variety of consultancy enterprises that carry out research across a range of SSH disciplines. These include DKM Economic Consultants and Indecon International Economic Consultants (economics) and TNSmrb, RedC and Amara (consumer research).

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) carries out research in relation to public administration.

Other sectors

Private sector performers of SSH research in other sectors include the Care Alliance Ireland (social policy, family carers) and the Sociological Association of Ireland (social policy).

4.5 Research performance*4.5.1 Scientific publications*

Data produced by Thomson Scientific indicates that total scientific publications in Ireland increased from 2.854 in 2000 to 4.685 in 2006 (a percentage increase of 8.6%) of which social science-related publications amounted to 285 in 2000 and 340 in 2006 (a percentage increase of 3%).

A sub-group of the Higher Education Research Group which comprises the main funding agencies such as the Higher Education Authority and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences is examining the issue of performance indicators for researchers in third level institutions with particular reference to publications and citations.

4.5.2 International Cooperation

There are no known international co-operation agreements between Ireland and non-European countries that predominantly deal with SSH. Ireland has research and development co-operation agreements with China, India and the US but these mainly concern the hard sciences.

4.5.3 Main prizes

The Royal Irish Academy (RIA), is an all-Ireland, independent, academic body that promotes study and excellence in the sciences, humanities and social sciences. It is one of Ireland's premier learned societies and cultural institutions and currently has over 400 members, elected in recognition of their academic achievements. Election to RIA Membership is a public recognition of academic excellence and is the highest academic honour in Ireland. The criterion for election to Membership is a significant contribution to scholarly research as shown in the candidate's published academic work. Presently, twenty Members are elected each year, equally divided between the sciences and humanities. Membership is open only to those resident in Ireland. The RIA is funded by the Department of Education and Skills through the Higher Education Authority.