

IZ-Arbeitsbericht Nr. 33

## **Workshop „The East European Social Sciences: Research Conditions and the Role of Information/Communication“**

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InformationsZentrum  
Sozialwissenschaften

Lennéstraße 30  
D-53113 Bonn  
Tel.: 0228/2281-0  
Fax.: 0228/2281-120  
E-Mail: iz@bonn.iz-soz.de  
Internet: <http://www.gesis.org/IZ/index.htm>

GESIS-Servicestelle Osteuropa, Abteilung Informationstransfer Osteuropa  
Schiffbauerdamm 19  
D-10117 Berlin  
Tel.: (+4930) 233611311  
Fax: (+4930) 233611310  
E-Mail: iz@berlin.iz-soz.de

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# 1 Vorbemerkungen

Mitte November 2003 (14.-15.11.2003) lud das IZ, Abteilung Informationstransfer Osteuropa, Sozialwissenschaftler aus dreizehn mittelost- und osteuropäischen Ländern<sup>1</sup> in die GESIS-Servicestelle Osteuropa zum Workshop „The East European Social Sciences: Research Conditions and the Role of Information/Communication“ ein. (Teilnehmerliste s. Anhang)

Anliegen des Workshops war es, den Informationsbedarf osteuropäischer Nutzer sowie ihr Feed-back zu Serviceleistungen der GESIS zu ermitteln. Hierzu wurden Probleme der Informationsversorgung der Sozialwissenschaftler in Osteuropa diskutiert und Möglichkeiten zur Deckung ihres Informationsbedarfes durch die GESIS-Servicestelle Osteuropa erörtert. Bestehende Serviceleistungen wurden dabei einer kritischen Prüfung unterzogen und Verbesserungsvorschläge entwickelt.

Folgende Themenkomplexe zur sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung in Osteuropa standen im Mittelpunkt der Veranstaltung:

- I. Organisatorische Rahmenbedingungen
- II. Forschungstätigkeit und Informationsbedarf
- III. Internationale Kooperation
- IV. Informationsquellen für Sozialwissenschaftler

Basis der Workshop-Diskussionen bildete ein vom IZ entwickelter Fragen-Leitfaden zu den Forschungsbedingungen und zur Informationsversorgung der osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftler („Guidelines for the Workshop“ s. Anhang). Anhand des Leitfadens haben die Teilnehmer im Vorfeld des Workshops schriftliche Statements abgegeben. Diese Länderberichte (country reports) dienten vier Rapporteurs als Grundlage Übersichtsberichten (synthesis reports).

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<sup>1</sup> Im Folgenden werden die EU-Beitrittskandidaten der 1. und 2. Runde in den mittelost- und osteuropäischen Ländern sowie die europäischen GUS-Staaten (inkl. Russland) aus pragmatischen Gründen unter der Kurzbezeichnung „Osteuropa“ subsumiert.

Im vorliegenden Arbeitsbericht werden ein Länderbericht und drei Übersichtsberichte (Themen II-IV) publiziert. Der Länderbericht von Frau Professor Anette Freyberg-Inan aus Rumänien wurde ausgewählt, da er einen umfassenden Eindruck über die Schwierigkeiten und Probleme vermittelt, denen die osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftler bei ihrer täglichen Forschungsarbeit gegenüberstehen. Obwohl die rumänische Situation sicherlich eine starke Ausprägung der Probleme bietet, werden auch in den anderen Länderberichten ähnliche Probleme angesprochen. Professor Larissa Titarenko weist in ihrem Übersichtsbericht zur individuellen Forschungssituation auf länderspezifische Unterschiede hin und stellt durch eine Clusterung der Länder nach „weiter fortgeschritten“, „weniger entwickelt“ und „spezifische Länderproblematiken“ graduelle Unterschiede in der Lage osteuropäischer Sozialwissenschaftler heraus.

### **Fazit 1: Situation der Sozialwissenschaften in Osteuropa**

Aus den Berichten und Diskussionen können folgende Aussagen verallgemeinert werden und zur Zeit als mehr oder weniger charakteristisch für alle osteuropäischen Länder betrachtet werden:

Die finanzielle Ausstattung der sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung und Lehre ist in den osteuropäischen Ländern weiterhin sehr angespannt. Die Ausgaben für die Forschung liegen unter 1% des BSP mit Ausnahme von Slowenien (1,51%) und Tschechien (1,25%).<sup>2</sup> Die Situation in Weißrussland und der Ukraine ist noch wesentlich problematischer als in Slowenien oder Polen. Diese Länder hatten bessere Startbedingungen durch zusätzliche finanzielle Unterstützungen aus den westlichen Ländern, da sie mit diesen schon vor 1990 wissenschaftliche Beziehungen unterhielten.

In einigen Ländern Osteuropas spielt die alte Forschungselite („old boys“) noch immer eine zentrale Rolle, sodass innovative Forschungen und die Zugänge zu Infrastruktur, Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten und internationalen Kooperationen für jüngere Wissenschaftler erschwert sind. Beklagt wird in einigen Ländern die extreme staatliche Kontrolle der Forschung(sgelder) und die Intransparenz der Mittelvergabe. Zusätzlich wird wie in Weissrussland die Forschungsfreiheit immer noch extrem eingeschränkt.

Die Forschungskommunikation ist selbst auf nationaler Ebene problematisch. Der Mangel an Infrastrukturen erschwert den Überblick über den nationalen

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<sup>2</sup> EU-Durchschnitt Ausgaben für F&E: 1.86% BSP (USA 2.65)

Forschungsstand. Hauptinformationsquelle ist hier die informelle Kommunikation, die vor allem auf wissenschaftlichen Tagungen stattfindet. Durch die geringen finanziellen Ressourcen ist aber auch diese Form der Wissenschaftskommunikation nur eingeschränkt möglich. Im besonders kritischen Fall Weißrusslands können häufig selbst die Reisekosten nicht aufgebracht werden, um sich auf Jahrestagungen von wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften einen Überblick über den Forschungsstand im eigenen Land zu verschaffen. Die Intransparenz der nationalen Forschung wird zusätzlich durch die Konkurrenzsituation um die knappen Ressourcen erhöht.

Es besteht eine starke Abhängigkeit von ausländischen Forschungsgeldern. Für die osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftler ist aus Kostengründen z.B. eine Teilnahme an internationalen Konferenzen häufig nicht denkbar, wenn dafür keine Fördermöglichkeiten gefunden werden. Eine Beteiligung an internationalen Projekten ist stark von persönlichen Kontakten der einzelnen Wissenschaftler abhängig und in vielen Fällen nur etablierten Wissenschaftlern möglich, die bereits international bekannt sind. Bei internationalen Kooperationen spielen nicht nur sprachliche und kulturelle, sondern auch finanzielle Barrieren nach wie vor eine Rolle. Die mangelnde internationale Präsenz einer Vielzahl von osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftlern sowie noch immer vorhandenen Vorbehalten gegenüber den osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaften durch westliche Kooperationspartner erschweren den Aufbau internationaler Kooperationen.

Die nach 1990 zusammengebrochene und fehlende Ost-Ost-Kooperation ist ein weiteres Kennzeichen, das als Mangel für die vergleichende Transformationsforschung beklagt wird. Ursache für den letzten Punkt sei das Fehlen von internationalen Fördermöglichkeiten für diese spezifische Ost-Ost-Kooperationen. Für die Beantragung von EU-Projektmittel war die Teilnahme eines westlichen Partners die Voraussetzung (was sich nach der EU-Osterweiterung anders gestalten könnte).

Die Auswirkungen der Osterweiterung der Europäischen Union werden als mögliche neue Hürde für die Ost-Ost-Kooperation gesehen. Die Teilnehmer aus den GUS-Staaten bemerken schon heute die eingeschränkten Möglichkeiten der Antragstellung/Teilnahme an internationalen von der EU-finanzierten Projekten, wobei dies u.a. abhängig ist von der Einführung bzw. Anpassung entsprechender EU-Standards. Nach Meinung der Workshopteilnehmer wird sich die Kluft zwischen den Nicht-Beitrittsländern Osteuropas und den Beitrittsländern von 2004 erheblich vergrößern: es ist zu erwarten, dass sich das Ansehen der Sozialwissenschaftler in den Beitrittsländern sowie die Forschungsthemen nach dem Beitritt verändern werden. Bei letzteren ist an-

zunehmen, dass sie sich zunehmend an den EU Förderprogrammen orientieren, sodass sich regionen-spezifische cross-nationale Forschungsthemen nicht entwickeln können und das Interesse an solchen Ost-Ost-Vergleichen auch bei den osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftlern selbst sinkt. Generell wird der Wettbewerb um die Fördergelder nach der EU-Erweiterung härter werden. Mit der erleichterten Mobilität innerhalb des erweiterten Europas wird die Gefahr des brain drain bei hochqualifizierten Wissenschaftlern noch größer.

Anders als bei den deutschen Sozialwissenschaften, die sich auf eine gut organisierte Infrastruktur stützen können, stellt sich die Informationslage für die Sozialwissenschaftler in Osteuropa als äußerst schwierig dar. Nicht nur dass in Osteuropa keine einheitlichen und umfassenden nationalen Informations(nachweis)systeme für sozialwissenschaftliche Ergebnisse existieren (ausgenommen für einzelne Disziplinen oder Institutionen); auch der Zugang zur internationalen Literatur ist auf Grund der knappen Finanzressourcen der Bibliotheken und Verlage äußerst beschränkt, sodass Informationen über neue Publikationen oft fehlen.

Darüber hinaus ist auch die breite Nutzung der neuen Kommunikationsmedien wie das Internet (ausgenommen der E-Mail-Zugang, der weitverbreitet ist) durch fehlende finanzielle Mitteln erheblich eingeschränkt. Betroffen hiervon sind besonders der wissenschaftliche Mittelbau bzw. Studenten gerade in den ärmsten Ländern Osteuropas wie z.B. der Ukraine, Weißrusslands oder in den Balkanländern.

## **Fazit 2: Serviceleistungen der GESIS / IZ**

Seit mehr als zehn Jahren erfasst und dokumentiert die Abteilung Informati-onstransfer Osteuropa die institutionellen Strukturen der sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung in den Transformationsgesellschaften Osteuropas, bietet Hintergrundwissen aus den osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaften und stellt deutschsprachige Literatur- und Forschungsprojektinformationen aus den eigenen Datenbanken für osteuropäische Sozialwissenschaftler zur Verfügung. Sie fördert damit die Ost-West-Kooperationen, den Informations- und Datenaustausch sowie internationale Netzwerke.

Ziel des Workshop war es, aus Sicht der osteuropäischen Kollegen selbst die Leistungsfähigkeit der Produkte und Dienstleistungen des IZ bzw. der GESIS-Servicestelle Osteuropa für den Abbau der spezifischen Probleme der osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaften einzuschätzen und bewerten zu lassen. Zentrale Frage war dabei, wie der Wissensaustausch und die Kommunikation zwi-

schen den Sozialwissenschaftlern aus Ost- und Westeuropa weiter verbessert sowie die Anbindung der Sozialwissenschaften Osteuropas an Gesamteuropa noch intensiver unterstützt werden kann.

Zusammenfassend kann festgestellt werden, dass die Workshop-Teilnehmer die IZ-Produkte und Dienstleistungen zur Unterstützung der Wissenschaftskooperation zwischen den osteuropäischen und westeuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftlern als wertvoll einschätzen. Die Relevanz und die Aktualität der angebotenen Dienste wurden hoch bewertet. Dies kann durch folgende Aussagen belegt werden:

- „We highly appreciate your efforts and consider your undertakings and services as very useful and supportive“ (Prof. A. Freyberg-Inan, Bucharest University, Faculty of Political Sciences)
- „I would like to thank you for the information and support you provide. It is very important for our scientists, especially in Belarus, to get relevant information on social sciences in Western and Eastern Europe“ (Prof. L. Titarenko, University of Belarus, Faculty of Social Sciences)
- „Transparency of institutional information: it is easy to identify potentially useful institutions and individuals with whom it is possible to cooperate“ (Prof. F. Mali, Slowenien)
- „The possibility to interactive communication: The Newsletter Social Sciences in Eastern Europe is very useful“ (Prof. F. Mali, Slowenien)

Als besonders wertvoll wurde der E-Mail-Dienst „Social Science News - Mailing Service Eastern Europe“ eingeschätzt, der regelmäßig für osteuropäische Sozialwissenschaftler Informationen über Veranstaltungen, Fördermöglichkeiten, Netzwerke etc. aus der westlichen sozialwissenschaftlichen community bereitstellt. Mit diesem Dienst hat das IZ einem Nutzerbedarf entsprochen, der vor allem für Nachwuchswissenschaftler neue internationale Beteiligungsmöglichkeiten eröffnet, die über andere Kommunikationswege schwer zu erhalten sind. Zu diesem E-Mail-Dienst erhält das IZ auch von anderen Nutzern immer wieder positive Rückmeldungen wie z.B. „I would like to thank you very much for the very important and useful information from your institution on the current events in the community. I have no doubts, that by disseminating your News among my colleagues and students we will find a lot of common professional interests and possible projects to develop.“ (Dr. Sergey Glebov, Department of International Relations, Institute of Social Sciences; Odessa National University).

Verschiedenen kritische Anmerkungen der Workshop-Teilnehmer zu den bestehenden Serviceangeboten werden als Anregungen zur Verbesserung aufgegriffen. Hierzu gehört vor allem die Erkenntnis, dass die bestehenden Datenbank-Angebote zu den osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaften transparenter gemacht werden müssen hinsichtlich ihrer Repräsentativität. Eine bessere Beschreibung bezüglich der Gewinnung der bereitgestellten Informationen und bezüglich des regionalen und disziplinären Abdeckungsgrades ist offensichtlich unerlässlich. Auch die inhaltlichen Erschließungsinstrumente (Klassifikation) bedürfen wohl tiefergehender Erläuterungen, um die Nutzerorientierung zu verbessern.

Die deutschsprachigen Informationsangebote von GESIS / IZ wurden als wertvoll eingeschätzt, ihre Nutzung durch osteuropäische Sozialwissenschaftler aber als nur bedingt möglich bewertet, wenn kein englischsprachiger Zugang angeboten wird. Außerdem wurde die Nutzung der IZ-Datenbanken nur als möglich erachtet, wenn für osteuropäische Nutzer Sonderkonditionen bei den Preisen gewährt würden. Zusätzlich wäre es wichtig, die internationale Rezeption der nachgewiesenen deutschen Forschungen erkennbar zu machen, da dies für die Relevanzbeurteilung gerade für osteuropäische Sozialwissenschaftler nötig sei, um internationale Trends zu erkennen und wichtige Anschlüsse zu suchen.

Als zukünftige Serviceleistungen wurde von den Workshop-Teilnehmern angeregt, die Vermittlung von Kooperationspartnern nicht nur aus Deutschland, sondern auch europaweit zu unterstützen. Es wurde der Bedarf artikuliert, Informationen bzw. Überblicke über sozialwissenschaftliche Netzwerke auf europäischer Ebene bereitzustellen, was als Voraussetzung für die Integration der osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftler in diese Netzwerke (Bedeutung persönlicher Kontakte/Kommunikation) angesehen wird, um das Zusammenwachsen des europäischen Forschungsraumes zu forcieren.

Das IZ hat den Workshop genutzt, um seine Planungen zur Etablierung einer Plattform für Netzwerk-Kommunikation auf europäischer Ebene zu präsentieren und ist damit auf positive Resonanz gestoßen.

Das IZ zieht aus dem Workshop das Resümee,

- dass es in den osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaften einen **hohen Bedarf** an Informationen und Informationszugängen sowohl auf jeweils nationaler als auch auf internationaler Ebene gibt

- dass internationale Kooperationen für die osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftler eine zentrale Rolle sowohl für ihre interne Forschungssituation als auch für ihre Einbindung in europäische Forschungsprozesse spielen
- dass die bestehenden Serviceangebote des IZ/ GESIS einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten, um den Informationsbedarf zu decken und die Zugänge zu internationalen Informationen zu verbessern
- dass Dienste, die gezielt die internationalen Kooperationen unterstützen, von herausragender Bedeutung sind
- dass die Vernetzung der osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaftler auf europäischer Ebene bei den Weiterentwicklungen der Serviceangebote noch stärker berücksichtigt werden soll.

Als ein nachhaltiges Ergebnis des Workshops haben sich die Teilnehmer darüber verständigt, als eine Gruppe zur Förderung des Informationsaustausches und zur Verbreitung der GESIS-Serviceangebote in den osteuropäischen Sozialwissenschaften kontinuierlich zusammenzuarbeiten. Die „Virtual Working Group Eastern Europe“ wird über eine gemeinsame Newsliste, die vom IZ betreut wird, einen ständigem Austausch zu Fragen der Informationsverbesserung betreiben.

*Prof. Dr. Annette Freyberg-Inan  
Bucharest University, Faculty of Political Sciences*

## 2 Country Report Romania

### 2.1 Organizational framework of the social science research

The questions in the GESIS-Guidelines for the Workshop are conceived so far from the Romanian reality that they are difficult to answer from a Romanian point of view. Before addressing this topic, some general observations on the situation in this country are therefore in order. To understand the situation of the social sciences in Romania in general, it is important to grasp the following realities:

- There is a huge discrepancy between official pronouncements concerning the public governance of higher education and scientific research and the perceptions of academics and researchers. In the daily lives of especially young researchers „on the ground,” the Ministry of Education is either completely irrelevant or represents a support structure for elites left over from before ‘89 (and their more contemporary cronies) which largely maintain a strangle-hold on the social science disciplines in the country and is therefore an obstacle to social science progress.
- There is in fact no national-level research planning at all. Inasmuch as it has grant money to spend, the state officially adopts its priorities from the most relevant international organizations, such as notably the EU (currently most influential in signaling priorities are PHARE and the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program), from which most of the money originates. In praxis, state support for research is distributed only through state-supported institutions (such as the Romanian Academy), which take care not to lose their privileged positions by offending the powers that be. (De facto self-censorship results.) Individual research and that conducted in other than the state-supported institutions is neither supported nor guided by the Romanian state.
- There is no transparency in public budgeting in Romania. Detailed budgets (generally as well as in the specific field of R&D and university and departmental budgets) are accessible only on the basis of special connections. The Freedom of Information Act is not enforced. Suing for access to in-

formation which institutions are legally obliged to provide is prohibitively complicated, and in effect can make it impossible to continue a career in the country. (An illustration: At the University of Bucharest Political Science Department not one of the colleagues I asked could tell me what happens with the high fees collected from the non-scholarship-supported students. To obtain such information without the good will of dean and rector, one would have to sue for access and spend years in court. Of course one could not work at this institution afterwards.)

- „Planning control“ is exerted through old-boy networks which control access to positions, data, and publication outlets. Research planning and supervision at the institutional level (such as in individual university departments) is ad hoc and not transparent. The general perception is that all state-administered opportunities (grants, internships, etc.) are distributed on the basis of connections and/or bribes. Even if this perception may not be 100% correct, it discourages individuals without „connections“ from applying. The results are lack of progress in the reform of the social sciences as well as brain drain.

It is to some extent useful to make a distinction between two research environments in Romania: the state and the non-state environment. Within the state-controlled environment, transparency is minimal, the perception of the risk of corrupt practices is very high, evaluation criteria are unclear, and the available resources are usually small. (Note, however, that the *academic* benefits for researchers from hard-to-obtain access to certain archives or important individuals, for example, can be very high.) Exceptions are those cases where external funds, such as EU funds, are administered through Romanian state authorities, such as in the case of the regional development funds (which have a research component), which are administered through the Romanian Ministry of European Integration (an institution currently beset with serious corruption allegations). Since external founders have only recently begun to trust Romanian administrative capacity, it is not possible to say with any certainty whether state practice has improved in these cases. However, the perception of local researchers is that the risk of corrupt practices is still high even if the money comes from abroad, and that the supervision and control exerted by far-away external funders is likely to be insufficient and ineffective. Stronger supervision of the distribution and implementation of their support by external funders is generally highly advisable.

As for the non-state research environment, the relevant relationships usually exist between the individual researcher (or in some cases a small group of researchers or an institution such as a think tank) and the funding institution

(such as the Soros Foundation, World Bank, or German Marshall Fund). Such research support is usually obtained solely on the initiative of the local researchers, who receive no state and usually no institutional support in their efforts. Such non-state-administered and usually foreign-funded support is extremely important for the new generation of Romanian social scientists, who would otherwise have to tailor their research and findings to the predilections of their superiors in their respective institutions. To be very clear on this point: Academic freedom in Romania presently still depends to an important extent on the influence of externally funded actors, such as INGOs, IGOs, and foreign governments. A problem in this area is that competition for such support is not quite open and free. The flow of information about opportunities is deliberately disturbed by some actors (an example is the National School for Political and Administrative Sciences' practice of informing primarily their own students about opportunities for study at the College d'Europe, for which the institution theoretically functions as the official information point in the country). It is advisable that external supporters pay more attention to how information about the opportunities they provide is propagated inside Romania. Moreover, grant-providing institutions should also be aware that private research institutes and think tanks, in an effort to stay financially afloat, compete to specialize in attracting grants, creating a situation in which researchers with more substantive knowledge and background on and genuine interest in a subject can lose out to institutions which basically exist to collect grant money.

The fact that there is no research planning at the national level in Romania has been independently confirmed to me in interviews with researchers in Political Science, Sociology, and History. Each institution (universities, departments, research institutes) has its own research plan (if they have one at all), and the communication between these institutions is very poor. There are no national research structures in the social sciences apart from the National Institute for Statistics and certain parts of the Romanian Academy, a traditionalist institution of grey eminences, controlled by the Ministry of Education, with no relevance for young social scientists, with the possible exception of historians and those studying matters to do with Romanian culture or language.

Within the executive, the ministry primarily responsible for social science research is the Ministry of Education, Research, and Youth (<http://www.mct.ro/web/2/default.htm> AND <http://www.edu.ro/> - confusingly, there are two separate websites). In late 1994, the National University Research Council (<http://www.cnccs.ro/>) was created. A member of the European Science Foundation since 2003, the National University Research

Council (NURC) is a consultative body at the national level, carrying out activities as stipulated in the Education Act no.84/1995 (repeatedly amended since) and pursuant to Government Ordinance no.57/2002 concerning scientific research. The NURC is the main Romanian state funding organisation for university and postgraduate research programs. Under Education Law no.84/1995 (republished in Romania's Official Gazette, *Monitorul Oficial* no. 606/10.12.1999), the funds allotted for scientific research by the budget of the Ministry of Education and Research must be entirely distributed through a competition organised by the NURC, as grants for scientific research projects. The funds committed by NURC are meant as complementary funding to the basic financing for universities. Generally, the NURC sees its mission as allotting these special funds for research (which are very modest) in such a way as to support top-quality research punctually rather than distribute money more widely. The funds are allotted as small and medium research grants for 1 to 3 years, based on theoretically open competition and an annual scientific and financial evaluation. The application and evaluation process generally unfolds as follows: In November of every year the NURC receives the proposals for grants from the academic community. In December, meetings are held by commissions tasked with appointing the experts that will evaluate the applications (three experts for each grant). In January-February the evaluation at expert level is conducted. In March, the final evaluation of the projects at the level of speciality committees is completed, after which the committees present their proposals to the council. On April 1st the proposals of the specialist committees are discussed and voted on by the Council. The list of approved grants must be co-signed by the Minister of Education and Research.

There are three categories of grants advertised through the NURC. The first are the National Programs: NURC administers its own grants as described above. Grants allotted in the context of the so-called National Plan for Research, Development, and Innovation (*Planul Național de Cercetare, Dezvoltare și Inovare*) are administered through the Ministry of Education Directorate-General for Policy, Research Strategies, and the National Plan. The second category are Bilateral Programs. The only such program currently advertised is one by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). This fellowship program is meant to be a stimulant for excelling young Romanian researchers to stay active in science in their home country while becoming involved in an international network. This program looks to be well-conceived and useful. It is to be wished for that such forms of support be extended by other bilateral and multilateral partners as well, to combat brain drain and give young researchers in Romania a chance to make their own way in transforming the practice of social sciences in the country. The third cate-

gory of grants are those offered through International Programs. The only program advertised in this category is the EU's 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program. It is an indicator of the degree of centralization (and state control) of the distribution of even external funds in Romania that *all* 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Program National Contact Points in Romania which are relevant for the social sciences are actually inside the Ministry of Education (except for one, dealing with the theme of the „Knowledge Society“, which is located in the Romanian Academy, which might be considered an arm of the Ministry.)

The NURC also operates some other initiatives. What they all have in common is that researchers on the ground generally have not heard of them, which suggests either that they are Potemkin Villages or that the benefits to be acquired through these initiatives are distributed within a closed circle of individuals and institutions. The National Centre for Science Policy and Scientometrics (CENAP POSS) was founded in late 1999 as a distinct department of the NURC. Its mission is to conduct scientometric studies to quantitatively assess the results of research and technology development in Romania. (Findings are not made available on the website.) The NURC also runs a process of granting institutions the status of „scientific research centres of excellence“ (a document describing the methodology of identification, evaluation and recognition of this status is available on the website). A program which evidently suffers from an implementation deficit is the „Programme for the Reform of Higher Education and University Research“ co-financed by the Romanian Government and the World Bank. This program aims to help develop the institutional and funding framework required for the development of managerial capacity in higher education, the development of university education in college and lifetime education, and the development of postgraduate education and university research. Within this program, a Multi-User Research Centre (MURC) Award scheme has been providing research grants since 1997. Three such competitions have been organised to date, awarding a number of 52 initiation grants that in turn led to 34 so-called major grants. The main purpose of the MURC Program is to set up complex research facilities that include high-tech and software infrastructures that usually involve high acquisition costs and that are to be used intensively on an access-sharing basis. According to the official mission, the management of a MURC must provide access to the resources available transparently and primarily to young researchers, and thus ensure maximal intensive use of these resources, both in terms of the time allocated to specific projects carried out by various users, and in terms of the quality of researchers that use the facilities. It is characteristic of the gap between official claims and the perception of ordinary researchers that not one social scientist (including those affiliated with research institutes which

might qualify for a MURC award) I spoke to had ever even heard of this scheme, and that there was overwhelming scepticism that it was actually operating in any way close to the way officially envisioned.

Aside from the NURC, other executive branches of relevance for the social sciences in Romania are the Ministry of Education, Research, and Youth as a whole (including its Directorate-General for Evaluation, Prognosis, and Development - <http://www.edu.ro/dgepd.htm>), the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs (<http://www.ministerulculturii.ro/page.html>), which has responsibility for libraries, the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (<http://www.mcti.ro/mcti.html>), and the Ministry of Public Information (<http://www.publicinfo.ro/>). As far as legislative involvement is concerned, the relevant parliamentary commissions are, in the lower house (Camera Deputaților), the Commission for Education, Science, Youth, and Sport and in the upper house (Senat), the Commission for Education and Science.

To return to the general picture, there is no national institution that gives money for social science research per se. The state, does, however, provide modest funds to select institutions officially tasked with „doing research“. A recently established example in political science is the Institute for Political Research in Bucharest, which is directed by the dean of the Political Science Department of the University of Bucharest. The Institutes of the Romanian Academy receive money approximately in the same way. However, due to this institution's traditionalist orientation, not all social sciences are represented here. (For example, there is no Political Science Institute within the Romanian Academy.) Individual research is not directly funded by the state, but only benefits if conducted within such a privileged institute. Due to the limited resources of the country as a whole (and the fact that the constitutionally mandated 3% of the annual budget have not in fact generally been granted to the education sector), obtaining funding sometimes means only being able to use copying machines or computers provided by such an institution. Books may also be subsidized, either via an institute (for example, *Studia Politică* is the state-supported journal of the Institute for Political Research in Bucharest), or directly by state institutions (the Ministry of Culture and the Romanian Cultural Foundation are the most important players here). But research as such is not directly supported. State support is generally small and the criteria for selection are not always clear. One interview partner related the perception that the members of the book subsidies commission generally just place their own books on the list. Again, there is much suspicion of foul play, interest-mongering, and political bias.

Which universities, departments, and research institutes have more influence in steering research trends in the country depends on the discipline. I will present my own field, Political Science, as an example. As in many other fields, national direction emanates primarily from the capital Bucharest. Here we have the Political Science Department of the University of Bucharest, and we have the National School for Political and Administrative Sciences (the former training grounds of the *nomenklatura*), which are engaged in verbal and personal conflicts but not in productive competition. Each has its own affiliated research institutes. The think tank Romanian Academic Society (SAR) and a number of somewhat less well-known think tanks (such as the Center for Comparative Research and Political Analysis) also play a role in creating and disseminating political scientific research and political commentary. The only other university in the country which really competes with the research output and status of the Bucharest institutions is Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca. The university, including its political science department, has benefited very much from good international connections. (However, academic life there suffers from sometimes unreasonable demands for ethnic segregation and/or affirmative action to presumably benefit the Hungarian minority.) In third place at present I would list the University of the West in Timișoara, where the political science department has developed a specialization in European Studies. It is a small but comparatively vibrant department headed by a well-respected dean, Gabriela Colțescu. Political Science is also taught and studied with some results at the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iași and at the University of Oradea. There, Political Science is a department within the Law School and courses, following pre-World War II tradition, cover mainly international relations and constitutional law. Some private universities also have political science departments. Political Science at the „Christian University Dimitrie Cantemir“ (present in 6 Romanian cities), for example, specializes in public communication.

The state-owned social science research institutions generally suffer from a lack of resources. Private ones are generally better funded. Financing is here obtained almost exclusively through foreign institutions, ranging from the German Marshall Fund via USAID, the World Bank, and Freedom House, to the American Cultural Centre. The World Bank, Soros Foundation, and European Commission cover quite a large part of research funding in Romania. (Statistics to provide a break-down of funding sources are not available.) For example, the World Bank has recently been giving grants directly to Romanian professors. The total grant amount is 84 million USD. The biggest single amount granted to professors (at the University of Bucharest Sociology Faculty) is some 600,000 USD. (Approval committees for World Bank grants are

composed of academics automatically selected by means of a computer-based method. World Bank internal specialists then check how the grants were distributed.) Criteria that increase the chances for approval of applications to international organizations are usually related to the trendiness of the project in the eyes of the organization. For example, to obtain money from the EC it would make sense to research child care policy, Roma issues, sensitive international questions relating Romania to her neighbors, or decentralization.

## **Illustrations from Different Fields of Social Science**

### **History**

There are two main types of institutions of control over history research: The Romanian Academy through its history institutes in Bucharest, Cluj, and Iași, and the departments of history in the main state universities. Usually, funds are distributed for a certain type of research or in the context of grant competitions with a restricted topic and restricted conditions for participation. Some projects started more than twenty years ago (like „Foreign Travellers through Romanian Principalities“ at the Iorga Institute in Bucharest) are still continued, and many young researchers are asked to become involved in these kinds of outdated projects. Generally, the interests of the director of the institute also direct the research. Usually the management decides on the research program and a coordinator is designated for every project. The coordinator is an experienced historian, and he (almost inevitably male) creates a team of younger researchers who are asked to work on that specific project. The coordinator has to submit regular reports to the management. The main criterion for a positive evaluation of the project will be the quantity of material (research output) produced. The funds for the institutes of the Romanian Academy come from the Ministry of Culture. All applications for publicly administered grants are routed through the Romanian Academy and have to be approved by the board of the Academy. Non-governmental research institutes must compete for private grants.

There are guidelines for applications for projects supported by the Ministry of Culture, but not much detail is required (applications are far less demanding than those to the Soros Higher Education Support Program, for example). Usually around 20% are approved. The main criteria for acceptance are the people involved and their personal connections.

### **Journalism**

Journalists in Romania tend to write essays, rather than conduct research studies. The books published in the field of journalism in the last years show that

small research projects were conducted in their preparation; still they contain many pages dedicated to personal ideas and interpretation. (Many publications in other social sciences, such as political science, are of a similarly essayistic nature.) Research projects are conducted mostly by singular persons, especially PhD candidates; there are few collective works. Research grants for journalists are available from the Soros Foundation, World Bank, PHARE, and European Union institutions. In order to obtain a grant one has to work on one of a restricted number of topics which are deemed worthy of support by the funders, for example, minorities in the mass media, the local press, or human rights. Journalists complain that, in some cases, good proposal writing skills seem more important for success than good ideas. Application formalities are very complex and it can take several days just to fill out the requisite forms correctly. The state does not seem to support research in the field of journalism at all.

## **2.2 Research work (personal approach) and the role of available or missing information/communication infrastructure**

I will first relate my own perspective and then give word to my interview partners from all the social science disciplines. To gain an overview of already existing international projects in my field I would have to search via the internet and communicate with colleagues whom I know to work in the same general area. To gain an overview of existing Romanian projects in the field, the Internet would not be very helpful, because many efforts would not have an Internet presence. I would have to work almost exclusively with my personal connections to find out who is doing what where. I can also collect clues through certain regular publications, such as *Revista 22* or *Dilemma*, on which analyst is currently interested in what, and I can visit the websites of think tanks to find out what is being done there. However, even if colleagues organized in a think tank or other research institute work on the same topic, they will be unlikely to wish to cooperate with a newcomer unless there is something tangible „in it for them“ and sometimes not even then. Basically, if I were looking for co-operators in a project I would use my personal networks.

When it comes to access to empirical data, students and junior researchers who do not enjoy the tutelage of influential senior researchers will be reduced to using the internet to find free-access data sets or use their international connections to gain access. Senior researchers and their protégées will restrict access to domestically created datasets. According to students, their access to

empirical data is 100% internet-dependent. (The Internet penetration rate in Romania overall for this year has been estimated at 14%, according to Ministry of Communication and Information Technology Secretary of State Adriana Ticau, up from 3% in 1998 and 10% in 2002.)

To find out what libraries in Romania stock it is generally necessary to visit them physically. Frequently, material can only be viewed inside the library and not borrowed. University and departmental libraries generally lack up-to-date material as well as material published outside Romania. Up-to-date international state of the art literature is basically unavailable in any social science field. The British Council, the French Institute, and the Goethe-Institut in Bucharest fulfil vital roles in supplying much-needed current literature on at least some themes (such as, notably, the EU, on which the British Council in Bucharest has the single most useful collection). When it comes to Romanian literature, it is generally available in the major libraries as well as through the better bookstores.

Access to whatever limited library material there is often still traditional. While main libraries, especially in the cities, have begun to implement digital access, at this point access even to the main university library in Bucharest – the Central University Library – is basically traditional. It provides digital access to legislation, but does not allow books to leave the building. Internet access at libraries is becoming more and more usual. Still, in some locations libraries do not provide Internet access, in which cases it must be obtained privately or in Internet cafes. Some research institutions have acquired some Internet access to publications databases (such as the Invisible College in Bucharest, which has bought access to J-STOR). Libraries generally do not provide such services.

As for scientific communication, most disciplines have their own associations and publication networks. Such associations usually organise retreats every year. They hold annual conferences and occasional workshops or other meetings. Most disciplines also have professional journals. However, neither the meetings nor the journals serve to unite the disciplines. There is much infighting: Some people will always attend the meetings – others never. Some people will support one journal as the legitimate voice of their discipline – others another. Professional organizations are generally not very well organized or active. Younger social sciences (gender studies, Roma studies, etc.) fare better in this respect, as they are populated by younger and more dynamic academics and students. They are much more active in networking and organizing meetings of all kinds, as well as in searching for new and frequently original publication outlets. In political science, a positive development is the creation

by young academics of the Romanian Association for Political Science in 1998, which has, however, unfortunately been scorned by many more established scholars.

In the following, I will summarize the feedback I have received on this set of topics from my interview partners. Students are generally dependent on their teachers to gain access to material beyond the very poor resources their libraries have to offer. To be on good terms with professors helps in getting them to share information and material. Visiting professors can make a vital difference: One student in political science relates that, in the preparation of his BA thesis, he was given, by a Civic Education Project visiting professor, a CD-ROM containing the latest articles on the subject which had appeared in several political science magazines – this single irregular resource became crucial for his research.

### **Illustration 1: Sociology**

Research for students and young researchers basically involves running from library to library, trying to get access to databases, searching on the Internet, and contacting institutions or/and researchers that deal with the problem in question. They have trouble gaining access both to relevant material and to relevant people. Senior researchers generally have better access to the main sources of information. (An example is the National Commission for Statistics, which is „unreachable from below a certain level.“) Access to libraries is free but the information supplied is poor. There is a huge need for new literature in Romania. Most of the information resources are out of date. When it comes to scientific communication, most of the time communication occurs mainly within an institution, not across institutions. Team publications and conferences are slowly becoming a way of networking.

### **Illustration 2: History**

Historians predictably tend to use largely archival sources for research. Depending on the subject matter, they may work with a mixture of foreign and national archives. As collections of secondary sources, Romanian libraries are not very useful if the information is not connected with national history. The main way of getting an overview of specific projects in history research is through the Internet - both e-lists and special web-pages. Students need a recommendation from their professor in order to gain access to empirical data. For junior researchers the situation depends on their institutional affiliation. Those who work in universities or institutes of the Romanian Academy have no major problems in accessing empirical data. As for senior scholars, the im-

pression of younger scholars is that finding empirical data is not something they worry much about anymore. As mentioned above, the main libraries (Central University Libraries in Bucharest, Iași, and Cluj) provide Internet search capabilities and some digital access. However, the library of the History Department of the University of Bucharest, for example, still provides only traditional access and no Internet search capabilities (the same is true for the library of the Political Science Department). Access is restricted to people affiliated with the university and research institutes. Still more difficult to obtain is access to the special libraries, such as the library of the Romanian Academy. One has to demonstrate the importance for one's research of the collection owned by the library and then hope to receive a permit for a restricted period of time. Historians' main method of scientific communication is traditional-style conferences.

### **Illustration 3: Journalism**

It is very difficult to gain access to data on the media, as their officials refuse to deliver crucial information to scholars and students (e.g. the number of employees, women and men, working in every department; selection techniques; job descriptions and routines). There are some young scholars-cum-professional-journalists who have not lost their interest in academic studies; they are publishing essays or (rather short) studies on various topics, generally trying to develop a global perspective on the media, and not (at least not only) on the Romanian media. (Being employed by Romanian state TV stations, newspapers, or magazines, a critical approach to sensitive topics could prejudice their positions.) The general idea among those persons is that the Romanian media are repeating some faux-pas of the Western media (such as yellow journalism) and are at the same time missing or being passed by modern developments (globalization and the idea of „global news“; changes of technologies and techniques; new dangers or opportunities for journalists; reporting on conflicts; the relationship between modern forms of propaganda and the independence of the media; etc.). Unfortunately, the publications which could host such writings are very few. At the same time, there are (almost) no fellowships or academic programs for young professionals in the media interested in developing a research-academic career (and not only in getting trained as journalists). To have access to international literature (including press, i.e. newspapers or magazines, both for the general public and for the academic community) is still a problem; the books are not cheap (one might cost the entire monthly salary of a journalism professor); on the other hand, Internet access is improving day by day.

### Illustration 4: Gender Studies

Gender Studies and generally gender related issues have only recently (a few years after the fall of communism) become of interest for the Romanian society. *The Catalogue of Non-Governmental Organizations*, edited by the Soros Foundation in 1994, included 1,034 active NGOs in Romania, of which approximately 500 began operation in 1990. 11 percent of these organizations were involved in human rights and twenty-five had women's issues as their main concern. Nearly four million people were estimated to be active in NGOs, of which 46 percent were women. Another catalogue, published in 1997, estimated 3,050 NGOs active in Romania, of which approximately sixty were devoted to women's issues. Most of these organizations are funded, temporarily or permanently, by international organizations, which impose their agendas and decide what programs should be implemented, when and how. Romanian NGOs had to adapt to the requirements imposed by the foreign financiers and to learn and use a language and, implicitly, concepts that have not always been appropriate for the Romanian reality. The outcome was that their endeavors had a very low resonance and Romanian women did not recognize their problems and concerns in the discourse of women's organization but extremely rarely and on isolated and restricted issues. Therefore, women's NGOs in Romania have not been successful and did not manage to really bring to the fore women's issues as an important set of concerns for policy-makers (nor for women in general). Thus, „feminist“ activism has so far proved to be a failure in Romania.

However, not the same can be said about feminism in academia. An MA program in Gender Studies was created in 1998 at SNSPA, an Interdisciplinary Group for Gender Studies was founded in 2000 within the Institute of Anthropology at the University Babeş-Bolyai in Cluj (as projected the Group should become an MA in 2003/2004), and some courses on gender studies have been taught (starting in 1993) at the BA level in several universities in Romania. Among the faculties that introduced courses on Gender Studies are the following: Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication Studies (the course „Feminist Media Studies“ in 1996, „Gender and Communication“ in 2003), Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Letters at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Sociology at the University of Bucharest, etc.

There are active research centers in Gender Studies, such as AnA (Societatea de Analize Feministe - [www.anasaf.ro](http://www.anasaf.ro)) and Filia (Centrul de Dezvoltare Curriculară și Studii de Gen - [www.filia.ro](http://www.filia.ro)). These are the only places where one can find books and journals on Gender Studies, but their libraries are not even

by far as richly equipped as the one at the Central European University (CEU), for example. (At Filia, which is the best equipped, there are two only book-shelves.) There are also some NGOs which are active but not very visible, like the Centre Partnership for Equality ([www.gender.ro](http://www.gender.ro)), which is actually the former Women's Program of the Open Society Foundation.

Several publishing houses have started to print books (both translations and Romanian research) on Gender Studies: Univers – Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*, Polirom, which even initiated a special collection on Gender Studies (coordinated by Mihaela Miroiu of SNSPA) – Andrea Dworkin's *Letters from a War Zone*, Gloria Steinem's *Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*, Moira Gaten's *Feminism and Philosophy*, Mary Lyndon Shanley's and Uma Narayan's *Reconstructing Political Theory: Feminist Perspectives*, and Romanian authored books: Mihaela Miroiu, *Convenio*, Adina Brădeanu, Otilia Dragomir (ed.), Daniela Roventă-Frumusani, and Romina Surugiu, *Women, Words and Images: Feminist Perspectives*, Mihaela Miroiu and Otilia Dragomir (eds.), *Feminist Lexicon*, Laura Grunberg, *(R)Evolutions in Feminist Sociology*, and several others.

However, these „places“ where feminism and Gender Studies are present are isolated (like islands; Romanian feminism is said to be „insular“), and it is very unfortunate that even in this small and activist field researchers do not really communicate with each other. Young women who want to pursue this line of study can at least obtain an MA in Gender Studies (either in Romania or at the CEU), but they can not go much further when they come back, since there are extremely few places where they can obtain a PhD in Gender Studies (the only possibility right now is to work under Mihaela Miroiu to obtain a PhD at SNSPA not in Gender Studies per se but using a Gender Studies approach), for example, or where they can apply their preparation.

As for programs and projects for women, there have been a few, supported by Western organizations, but this Western support seems to have decreased dramatically for a few years now. Concerning the prospective effects of EU enlargement on women's situation it should be said that most of the laws on equal opportunities, domestic violence (an issue with regard to which Romanian women have had to live in the Stone Age), sexual harassment, parental leave, etc. were passed, or at least discussed, due to the pressures and the requirements of EU accession.

Some conclusions: 1.) Romanian feminism is mainly academic; there is no such thing as activist feminism. 2.) Gender Studies research is done sporadically, mainly financially supported by Western NGOs and organizations (sup-

port that has substantially decreased during the last few years). 3.) Most research and published books and studies are theoretical. 4.) Laws on equal opportunities are strongly influenced by EU requirements and are mostly not really put into practice.

## 2.3 General Problems

A major general problem in the social sciences in Romania is the great difficulty of access to recent international research. Internet databases of publications are expensive, rare and difficult to gain access to; especially students or young researchers have little access to them. Traditional libraries survive through donations and generally have small and outdated collections. When it comes to accessing data, it is the more difficult the more junior the researcher is. Access depends on connections, and „senior researchers“ have more connections, often due to their political pasts. The control of data access by these essentially political networks carries the added threat of introducing biases into social science research.

A second general problem is the lack of communication and cooperation among researchers in the country. This lack is apparent at several levels. First, there is practically no constructive communication between the various schools and institutions (such as the Political Science and Philosophy Faculties of the University of Bucharest, SAR, and the Invisible College). Second, there are destructive rivalries even within institutions, which leads not only to a lack of academic control, absence of joint projects, suspicion, and the impossibility of sharing data, but also to repercussions for the „traitors“ (denial of access to institutional funds, delayed promotion, etc.). The result is lower output (partnership would contribute to research on a greater scale), less money, and unfair reciprocal assessment. (It is generally unwise to trust what Romania-based institutions for research and higher education and their managements have to say about each other.)

A final general problem, and not the least important in terms of the proportions of its repercussions, is the legacy of the structure and nature of the social sciences before 1989. Especially affected is the field of political science. As there was effectively no political science in the country at all before 1989, all but the youngest of professors generally come from other backgrounds (to mention some of the most visible contemporary political scientists in the country, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi was a medical doctor and Daniel Barbu was an art historian; many professors of political philosophy at the Philosophy Department of the University of Bucharest have a background in epistemology and/or logic). Very common are backgrounds in sociology and law. Due

to this lack of disciplinary tradition and expertise, it is not unfair to say that amateurism and blatant mistakes tend to affect political science research and teaching.

## 2.4 International Cooperation

The impact of international cooperation within the social sciences in general is absolutely crucial, especially where universities limit the access of researchers to foreign publications, or, as is usually the case, do not have subscriptions at all to such publications. International cooperation is generally the best way for Romania-based researchers to update their knowledge. International projects are important because of the exchange of information, experiences, methods, etc. that takes place in their context. They also tend to improve the researcher's bird's eye view over the topic under consideration. The consensus among my interview partners was that without international cooperation it is impossible to progress in social science research in Romania; one cannot have a broader perspective of the field and cannot become familiar with contemporary debates.

Cooperation with colleagues from western countries is generally judged to be very beneficial. As one interview respondent put it, „the eye of an ‚outsider‘ is always welcome for methodological purposes.“ Vital information, such as about new publications in the field, trends, opportunities, etc. is transmitted to Romania in this way. But such cooperation also usually brings less esoteric benefits, such as funds, status within the domestic social scientific communities, and vital connections which can benefit research and career.

Usually involvement in an international project is a result of personal contacts. The main difficulty for Romanian scholars is that they are not usually as flexible (in terms of their schedule and finances especially) as the western partners, due to the fact that they usually do not have the support of their faculties. Also, frequently enough, they are in the end unable to participate in international meetings to which they are invited in the context of cooperation projects due to the lack of external funds. (Even if the personal funds Romanian researchers are expected to expend are very small by western European standards, they are usually prohibitive for the Romanian participant.) Lack of access to recent publications can also be a problem in efforts to do one's part in international cooperative efforts. Often it can be of enormous help just to be sent photocopies by colleagues who do have such access. Of course delays in the work are inevitable under such circumstances. Positive effects which have come from cooperation projects in which my interview partners have

been involved have been mainly access to recent information and the acquisition of a comparative perspective on the topics studied.

The main criteria for participation in an international project are institutional affiliation, proficiency in English, and a CV with publications in the field.

As for the impact of EU-enlargement, it is perceived to be significant. Funds are coming in and being distributed based on accession preparation criteria, and researchers are perceived to have to re-direct themselves towards topics of interest in the context of EU enlargement.

(Young) researchers usually receive no support in order to facilitate their participation in international projects. The ones who do participate have usually had to muster enormous initiative of their own. In the best cases, they are provided with information about opportunities.

Known Western organizations that support research cooperation are the Soros Foundation (which is, however, not really western European) and the EU's Erasmus and Tempo programs. Several of my interview partners have profited from Soros support in one form or another.

International partners are often identified at international events. Cooperation with researchers from the region is acknowledged as important, but links between eastern universities generally remain very weak. East-east cooperation is perceived to be very important especially in the field of history and of course in the field of international relations. In order to develop comparative perspectives, to share information, and to initiate common projects a communication system should be in place between universities and research institutes in the region. However, there is no such system. Researchers identify their partners through personal contacts at conferences or through Internet pages and e-lists. Usually contact is maintained by e-mail. In other fields, such as journalism, where the need for regional cooperation seems less obvious, there generally is none. For example, in the Journalism Department of the University of Bucharest, there are no east-east or west-east research activities for the time being. Some Western researchers have approached some topics involving the situation of and conditions faced by the Romanian media, but they discuss mainly the pre-1989 situation and their work is therefore of little interest to contemporary Romanian journalists.

In general, it should be said that interest in cooperation with western researchers and institutions is much higher than interest in cooperation with individuals and institutions from the region and CEE as a whole. As a rule, uni-

versity departments and research institutions focus on developing relationships with Western European and American counterparts.

As far as the risks of international cooperation are concerned, what is frequently felt „on the ground“ in Romania is a narrowing of research topics to those that are important for the main actors in the international arena. After all, the main political actors in the international arena often constitute the main source of funding for social science research as well. There are certain trends in the social sciences today that risk to remain inert due to this „vicious circle“ of cooperation.

The Western researchers who come to Romania and cooperate with locals seldom have institutional connections; they are usually invited by some Romanian acquaintance, and in turn invite Romanian professors individually. (An example is the promising transnational Eurelite Project to establish databases on the ruling elite in all participating countries. In Romania, Laurențiu ř Stefan heads this project. He does not run the project through the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Bucharest, of which he is a member but which is not supportive, but instead chooses his own faithful team. Conversely, when the influential émigré Vladimir Tismăneanu comes to Romania (generally invited by Dan Pavel), he is invited to the Invisible College and to The Romanian Institute for Recent History, but not to the Faculty of Political Science, because he is affiliated with the „other side“ in the rivalry with its dean, Barbu. The cooperation between the Free University of Brussels and the Political Science Faculty is managed only on the level of Barbu’s institute.) In the end, all international cooperation of the institutional sort is organized on such a personal basis. To get to meet a Western professor, one (as a junior researcher) has to get to know the Romanian contact first. This feudal system is by no means discouraged (why would it be, by the ones who run it?). So, cooperation with Western academia is both scarce in effect and personalized, failing to achieve maximum impact.

The best connected are the young researchers who, as students or postgraduates, went to the west and established their own contacts. Will they be just as feudal? This depends on the internal competition in Romania, open-mindedness, desire to produce good work, at a standard compatible with „Westerners“, and on the willingness of Western partners to cease cooperation (provided there is an alternative) with the Romanian „academic Axis of Evil“ (as one of my interview partners put it). This „axis of evil“ is constituted by the above-mentioned old-boy networks, which block the emergence of an academic „open society“ on which progress in the social sciences and a

greater usefulness of social science research for contemporary Romanian society crucially depend.

## 2.5 Information Resources for Social Scientists

I use:

- „Morning News Brief“ e-mail service by Mkco.ro (<http://www.mkco.ro/>) for daily English-language news from Romania. This service is free.
- TOL – Transitions Online Knowledge Network and Electronic Newsletter (<http://www.tol.cz/>). This is an excellent database on all post-communist countries which is also very affordable.
- Internet-based daily news providers: International: Google News (<http://news.google.com/news/en/us/world.html>), Deutsche Welle (<http://www.dw-world.de/german/0,3367,2972,00.html>); Romanian: *Adevărul (Truth)* (<http://www.adevarulonline.ro/>), *Ziarul Financiar (Financial Daily)* (<http://www.zf.ro/> index.php).
- On-line analysis and commentary:  
On Romania: *Revista 22 (Journal 22)* (<http://www.revista22.ro/week/>), *Dilema (Dilemma)* (<http://www.algoritma.ro/dilema/>), *Academia Cațavencu* (<http://www.catavencu.ro/>); international: mainly EUROPA ([http://europa.eu.int/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/index_en.htm)) and other European institutions' websites
- All Journals and E-mail Services included in membership in the International Studies Association, International Political Science Association, International Society of Political Psychology, American Political Science Association, Romanian Political Science Association, Peace Research Institute Weilheim/Germany, Civic Education Project Alumni Network, and at-tac Germany.

Many fellow researchers in Romania use other daily international news providers, such as CNN, Reuters, or BBC. Many read the leading domestic journal(s) in their field on a regular basis, such as the *Revista de Cercetari Sociale (Journal of Social Research)* for sociology. Many use the main libraries' resources, such as those of the Central University Library in Bucharest (which, as mentioned above, however suffers from a serious shortage of international and up-to-date material). Many, especially young, Romanian researchers travel whenever they can to access better equipped libraries, such as that of the Central European University in Budapest.

All young researchers use Internet searches at least to find out about if not to access published material. Free databases such as Ingenta.com and Ebsco-host.com are used, as is the Amazon.com catalogue (and other booksellers' and publishing houses' catalogues) to find out about books. A few institutions (such as the Invisible College in Bucharest) have access to J-STOR or other pricey publication databases, which is a luxury for Romanian researchers. Based on specific interests, researchers based in Romania also consult the websites of important foreign universities (which often provide not only information but also useful links) and make extensive use of theme- or region-specific e-groups and e-mail lists.

## 2.6 Information services referring to Eastern Europe

The main obstacle to using research from neighbouring countries and cooperating with researchers there is the problem of languages. It is vitally important that more research be published in transnational languages (English and French are the most widely known in Romania). Due to the language problem and also the history of lack of communication with neighbouring academic and scientific communities, cross-border networks tend to develop only in the context of larger international efforts, such as the Soros Open Society Network or EU-funded projects (which are encouraged top-down and provide local individuals with incentives for cooperation such as funding, international recognition, and improved domestic status), or else in the private sector (within companies with regional operations).

„SocioGuide Eastern Europe“: The classifications used in the „browse classification“ function seem quite arbitrary. For most subjects I might be interested in I would have to browse several sections to make sure I have found all the relevant pages. As for the function of searching by country, it is impossible to know how thorough or representative the collection of institutions represented here is for the country, so one cannot know when one has collected enough information or obtained a useful image of the situation in a country. I would find this site only useful to get a first „way in“ to identifying potentially useful institutions and websites in the countries represented. I would not find it useful for research purposes.

„INEastE“: I find this site very useful for identifying institutions and individuals with whom I might want to cooperate (for example if I wanted to put together a network grant proposal) or even to find places where I might want to work. My main question is how complete the coverage is. But for starters at least the site is useful for the purposes just mentioned.

„Newsletter Social Sciences in Eastern Europe“: I would not read this newsletter on a regular basis because it contains much information I do not need and I do not have much time to read non-essential things. But I can clearly see that this newsletter is very useful for individuals who must keep current on the developments covered, for example people working in NGOs and in staff functions at research and teaching institutions across the region, who should know about such developments to pass the information on to their colleagues, clients, and students.

„Social Sciences News“ Mailing Service Eastern Europe: I find this service very useful, both to keep myself current about opportunities and to pass information on to my students and collaborators. I would gladly subscribe to this service myself.

## **2.7 Information services on social science results in German speaking countries**

The interest is high if the results are published in a language the researcher can read. (There are few German speakers left in Romania.) German research still has an excellent reputation in Romania especially in history, classical sociology, political theory, and social and individual psychology. If German research results would be made available to Romanian students and academics in a language they can read they would undoubtedly use them, especially if it can be demonstrated that the research findings are published and recognized also internationally.

As mentioned above, not many Romanian researchers are able to read in German. If they could, the databases would generally be useful. Especially SOLIS and FORIS are useful for academics, and „Society in the Focus of Social Sciences“ is interesting. I think it could be a bonus add-on for paid subscription to the other databases and thereby make them more attractive. SOFO is useful but not worth much money. „List of German Journal Profiles“ and soFID I found not very relevant. I myself know German and would use these databases if I had free access to them through my institution. Given their prices, it is, however, highly unlikely that Romanian institutions would sign up for them. I would advise special rates for institutional memberships in weak-currency countries, such as Romania.

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*Prof. Dr. Larissa Titarenko*

*Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, Belarus State University, Belarus*

### **3 Research Work (personal approach) and the Role of Available or Missing Information/Communication Infrastructure - Synthesis Report**

This paper shed light on three aspects:

- most general aspects of research work in all 8 countries of Eastern and Central Europe
- similarities and differences among two groups of countries of the region
- some particular problems mentioned in the reports

I reviewed eight national reports that were divided into subgroups. For the very beginning, my idea was to analyze three different groups: (1) the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), (2) the so-called Slavic Post-Soviet states (Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia); (3) Central European states (all the rest). However, as some countries did not email their reports in time, I had to use another approach. I selected two groups of countries on the basis of another criteria:

1. the more advanced and economically developed countries (Estonia, Poland, Czech Republic, and Slovenia),
2. the less advanced and economically developed countries (Belarus, Romania, Slovak Republic, and Ukraine).

All the countries of the first group are currently the EU members, their GDP per capita is much higher than in the second group where only Slovakia managed to enter the EU. It goes without saying that significant difference in economic and political status of the countries influenced the research opportunities for scholars and the level of availability of literature in the field of social sciences. However, to say so means to say only half of truth. Because of their common communist historical background, all the countries of this region still have some clear similarities connected somehow with the past. I would like to begin with common features.

### 3.1 Common Features

Representatives of all countries worried a lot about insufficient financial support that is currently provided for social sciences and social research. Of course, the term „insufficient financing support“ does not mean the same level of support in each country. Although the percentage of GDP that goes to social research is small in all countries, the GDP is quite different. For example, 0,54% in Czech Republic is still more than 1% in Belarus. In any case, social sciences receive much less finance than natural sciences in the whole region. From this point of view, social scholars of the CEE region really suffer from the current lack of domestic financial support for research and therefore they dramatically depend on substantial support from the West.

All the scholars stressed the importance of personal contacts, the networks of international scholars who provide a good opportunity to find partners for research projects, to exchange professional information, to receive new publications, etc. Therefore one can state that workshops as the one organized by GESIS are of great professional and personal importance as well. Such meetings bring the scholars together, let them establish close contacts, exchange the news, etc.

I would like to add that even in the most advanced countries the situation is similar: nearly all the Western scholars highly appreciate professional meetings. That is why they try to attend the annual professional meetings, congresses, and workshops. It's a great loss for scholars from the Central and Eastern Europe that they cannot afford the same luxury because of small salaries, even if they have good findings to share with other people in the field.

All the representatives mentioned that the scholars do not have the information about grants, fellowships and other kind of financial support that might be available for them. The common reasons are the following: many scholars do not have free access to the internet and electronic sources of information, quite often they do not know the necessary websites nor do they even know each other within the same country. It might sound ridiculous, but social scholars do not have enough money even for the regular participation in the national annual meetings and conferences.

All the authors noted that the available data are collected in an insufficient format, which makes it difficult to use the data for further comparison.

I conclude that these common features prove the importance of web resources and the uniqueness of information which GESIS can provide for all of us now

and in the future - creating and supporting this network, distributing information directly to scholars, organizing some meetings, etc..

### **3.2 More Advanced Countries**

They enjoy much more research freedom than the other countries in this region; they have less pressure from the state (although colleague from Poland reported about some reverse move concerning this issue: Ministry of Education ins. Actually, they can select the topic of their interest and then apply for some money while scholars from the less advanced countries do absolutely different things: they search for money first, and second, try to find an appropriate topic in order to apply for financial support and carry out research.

These scholars have more or less stable communication with each other via their annual conferences (for example, Dr. Skapska stressed the importance of meetings of Polish Sociological Association, Dr. Paes spoke of the Baltic network, etc.). Scholars from these countries also need money for new books, but they can easily afford these books. They also have more chances to get library's grants, etc.

These countries have more private donations from the West - for libraries, conferences, exchanges, etc. As a result, there are some libraries with perfect collections of books, journals from abroad. Both scholars and students can use this material, as representatives from Poland, Estonia, Slovenia reported.

Finally, they have better international contacts. They know better how to apply for financial support for the conferences and often receive such grants for research and conferences.

### **3.3 Less Developed Countries**

They have more strict state control on financial sources for their research and on the topics.

There exist some „old elite“ groups and networks in some of these countries who have better access to the resources and actually control them for personal use (that is what the Romanian colleague expressed).

They have worse access to the Internet (even if in general more and more people use this service every year). Even the technical characteristics of the Internet (speed, availability of websites) are worse here, which makes professional life poor and uncomfortable.

They have restrictions and additional obstacles for scholars in using the databases: in many cases they are not available to the „people from outside”, and in most cases they are not available for students. Only if the students’ supervisor has an access to the databases, his/her students can also use them for personal research. That is a serious problem that GESIS can probably help us to solve.

### **3.4 Particular Countries**

As far as the situation of research in a particular country is concerned, first of all I’d like to mention Romania. Probably because of the country as well as because of the status of the representative (a Western scholar), she described the situation as dramatically bad, including research work. She said that science and research are corrupted. As a result, there is no money for a grass root person. However, I guess, that if the representative were a native Romanian with a high official status, the situation would be evaluated in a different way, - close to the common situation in post socialist countries that are still non-EU members.

Thus, the Estonian representative gave a very positive evaluation of research situation in her country, probably, because she is a Head of the Institute of Economics; I wonder whether she would be so optimistic being a junior scholar in his country or not. If YES, it would prove the real positive changes in Estonia in this field.

Slovak representative also expressed a serious and important issue: the country does not have money for social research at all: 0,1% of the country’s GDP is not enough. Belarus also badly needs international support and more chances to participate on the international level, otherwise, there will be nothing except for propaganda.

*Prof. Dr. Annette Freyberg-Inan  
Bucharest University, Faculty of Political Sciences*

## **4 International Cooperation - Synthesis Report**

The general opinion emanating from all reports is that international cooperation has been and is extremely helpful for social science research in all the countries surveyed. A problem is that the proportion of scholars taking part in such programs can be small. This problem is raised by the Belarus report, and in general it appears that the further east and the poorer the country the fewer people can benefit from such cooperation with western counterparts.

International communication and collaboration (using the latest technologies) have clearly witnessed an enormous increase in importance in all the social sciences and everywhere in the world. The countries surveyed of course try to keep up with these trends, while at the same time racing to catch up with the standards of research and teaching offered by western models. Their situations must be viewed in the difficult context of this double transition.

Cooperation with western colleagues and institutions is frequently more sought after and considered more useful than cooperation with other (non-western) colleagues and institutions. The importance of cooperation with westerners is everywhere judged high. The rating of the importance of cooperation with non-western partners seems to vary between countries. It logically depends on prior positive experiences.

The positive effects of international cooperation are always and everywhere the same: Researchers are able to network and develop useful contacts, access more and different information sources, gain broader, more comparative, more up-to-date, and more varied perspectives on their subject matter of study, collect new ideas and open up new opportunities, and acquire hands-on knowledge and techniques that they might wish to transfer to their home contexts. Another benefit of such cooperation is improved status at home, which also helps to transfer the benefits acquired abroad or through international cooperation to the home context.

Western support is vital also simply for financial reasons. To illustrate: Scholars may have the information and the initiative, even the connections needed to take part in workshops in, say, Britain, but they will in most cases still re-

quire support from an INGO or another international or western actor to simply gain the funds to make the trip. This is becoming less true in the countries where the most difficult years of transition appear to be over and public institutions as well as civil society actors are obtaining increased financial flexibility. Countries of whom the reports suggest a rather advanced degree of development in the fields covered are the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, and the Baltic states. However, generally such support is still very much needed, and particularly researchers in the poorer countries cannot network internationally, nor progress successfully domestically, without it.

The pattern and process of getting involved in projects is the same everywhere. This is hardly surprising because almost the same set of sponsors is active and the same or very similar projects offered in all these countries. Compared to western contexts, personal contacts and institutional connections appear more important for identifying and opening up opportunities and also for being able to transfer the expertise gained from international cooperation to the home context. Otherwise the steps of getting involved are the usual ones: Information about opportunities may come from a variety of sources (often passed on electronically by personal contacts or pre-existing networks). There is a formal application (which, as mentioned below, sometimes requires institutional backing). If the application is successful, cooperation can begin, subject to the problems sketched below.

The difficulties encountered with international cooperation which are mentioned in the reports are the following:

1. linguistic difficulties (communication)
2. cultural differences
3. the lack of funds available for travel. Scholars from these countries often cannot receive support from their institutions nor any other kinds of public funds, are unable to sponsor themselves, and do not get sufficient (i.e. full) support from the international projects in which they might wish to cooperate.
4. travel restrictions. This is a problem especially for the countries not scheduled to become EU members in 2004, and most particularly for Ukraine and Belarus. These travel restrictions also affect access to archives located in the EU, which can be vital for research conducted in non-EU countries.
5. need for invitations. Another problem, especially where international connections are not yet well developed, is that researchers may have to wait to be invited to take part in international projects. This of course limits the

range of topics they can work on internationally and may seriously influence their research agendas.

6. limited access for young scholars. Young researchers often require support from seniors to be able to participate in international projects. This support may be required at a variety of levels, from obtaining information about opportunities in the first place, to receiving support with applications, to being granted permission (or avoid sanctions for neglecting to obtain permission). Belarus appears to be an extreme case. Here „Young researchers can participate in the international projects only if their supervisors are personally involved in such research, or if the universities have exchange programs with foreign universities.“ The only other option of working internationally is participation in the TEMPUS program. In this way, involvement of the up-and-coming generation in international cooperation, which would be vital for progress in their disciplines, is seriously constrained.
7. implementation requirements. Implementing the rules for managing international project money also poses difficulties for institutions in CEE. This problem is mentioned in the Estonian report, but the technicalities of application and implementation are a source of complaints throughout the region (due frequently to weak administrative capacity).

It should be stressed that in spite of all the potential problems mentioned above, international involvement is considered absolutely vital for the progress of both researcher and discipline by all countries and all disciplines. (See the positive impact summarized under the point above.)

The linguistic criterion is very important. Vital is the ability to communicate in the lingua franca of the project (very frequently English). Accessibility is also vital. Participants in such projects have to be accessible by way of all the modern means of communication, particularly e-mail. As the Lithuanian report points out, this can lead to the exclusion of valuable, particularly older, scholars from cooperative projects. The relative lack of access to information and communication technology has made it difficult for scholars in the surveyed countries both to compete and to cooperate internationally. As pointed out in the Latvian report, electronic resources can help scholars to offset the problems of their generally weak library systems to some extent. Internet access as well is important „to increase the reach and leverage“ of scholars and institutions. To further improve opportunities for international collaboration, access to electronic resources and the Internet should be further improved throughout the region, while library systems as well must continue to be strengthened.

Further prerequisites are mobility and flexibility. Once again, this raises the problem of obtaining funds for travelling as well as the problem of visa requirements. The mobility requirement also raises problems for the many scholars who do not have the support of their superiors in their institutions. They may simply not be granted the necessary time off. Then of course there are scholarly requirements, such as relevant publications (preferably in internationally recognized (usually western) venues), a certain amount of educational and professional experience, and often institutional affiliation. The latter can be a problem for scholars not supported by their institutions (which reformist scholars may often not be). The simple refusal of a letter of support from the department in which s/he teaches can stop a scholar's application to an international project. I was shocked by the requirement existing in Belarus that head of department or director of the institute in which a scholar works has to grant permission to allow trips abroad, even if the institution provides no support of any kind for the trip. Western supporters have to be aware of such requirements and of the fact that they will likely keep many interesting people locked up inside their countries of origin. Publication in international venues is also difficult to achieve. Often, criteria for participation appear, at least nominally, to be rather tough. It should also be noted that having „a foot in the door“ of international or western networks increases the chances for the success of future applications; it is difficult to get in, and once in it is perhaps too easy to stay in such networks.

A number of reports mentioned the fact that EU enlargement and the increasing influence of the EU in and over their countries has affected and will continue to affect the research agendas of the social sciences. In other words, there is clear and strong evidence that the EU (via enlargement) affects the actual contents of research produced.

An important point was raised by the report from Belarus: EU enlargement is threatening to create a „hard border“ leaving Belarus and Ukraine (for example) outside the expanding Schengen regime with its tough visa requirements. Travel from these countries into neighbouring countries with whom there has been considerable cooperation so far (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia) is becoming greatly more difficult. It should at all cost be avoided that blossoming co-operation between these neighbouring countries be choked off by the new borders. On the positive side, the Ukrainian report mentions that, via good contacts in the neighbouring new EU members, it might also be possible to gain better access to EU funding opportunities after May 2004.

For the accession countries, enlargement might also mean (as pointed out by the Estonian report) that competition for participation in international projects

might be tighter. This might happen as an effect of support being targeted away from the new EU members to areas deemed in greater need or of greater interest due to the lack of predictability of their evolutions. On the positive side, however, the EU also clearly provides new opportunities for cooperation and a mobility benefit for the acceding states. As pointed out in the Hungarian report, however, the opportunities offered by the EU can be properly utilized only if national governments and domestic institutions cooperate effectively. Because such effectiveness varies significantly across governments and institutions, one must expect that the impact of the opportunities offered by and through the EU will vary considerably. The same report notes also that EU funds available for research in the social sciences are very small when compared to funds, which support industrial research. Besides the relative scarcity of available funds, opportunities offered by and through the EU also tend to involve extremely complex and bureaucratic application and implementation requirements. As the Hungary report rightfully points out, given these difficulties and the small amounts of money involved, it should come as no surprise if opportunities are sometimes not taken advantage of, especially not in countries where access to other funding sources has improved.

The amount of support received by scholars in general and young scholars in particular varies considerably between the more and the less well-off countries surveyed. For example, in Estonia, even PhD students appear to get institutional financial support for study abroad. In Romania, for example, this is still inconceivable.

Brain drain is a problem throughout the region. As the Latvian report helpfully emphasizes, it would help to supplement the very small salaries of returning PhDs to attract them back to the region, in addition to providing other forms of support for them. The Civic Education Project does so in most countries of the region, but much more money is required to make a real impact against brain drain.

The same organizations are known and active all over the region. The EU's Framework Programs for Research and Technological Development are important, even though some countries appear to be much more active, and much more successful, in applying for Framework program funds than others. In Romania, for example, the Framework program opportunities are little known and little exploited. In the Czech Republic, Hungary, or Estonia, for example, they seem to play a much larger role. Again, involvement in the Framework Programs appears to increase with the country's research sector's level of development according to western models. Other important organizations known and active across the region are the Fulbright Commission (with

its scholarships and visiting professorships), the Muskie Fellowship Program, EU's Socrates-Erasmus Program, the DAAD, or the British Council.

There remains some regional variation in targeting by and access to opportunities. The Soros Foundation, for example, progressively refocused its work during the 1990s away from the „frontrunner“ states to the CEE countries deemed in greater need (and is now pulling further east to focus more on Central Asia and the Caucasus). In the Baltics, the Eurofaculty Program (established by the Council of the Baltic Sea States and supported by the Fulbright Commission) is important. Bilateral international relations also play a role, as, for example, the Latvian report makes mention of support from the Swedish Institute.

Many authors of the reports have applied for programs run by western organizations, several with considerable success. The Soros Foundation with its Higher Education Support Program and Civic Education Project (as well as its support for the CEU and scholarships programs) must be singled out as perhaps being the single most important supporter of progress in the social sciences in the region. In spite of a relatively modest budget, its work has significantly shaped research communities in the countries in which it has worked, in particular by supporting the young generation of scholars in their efforts to advance reform and by combating brain drain.

The relevance of east-east cooperation again varies from country to country. Where it occurs it seems to be stimulated by geographic proximity. For example, there appears to be significant cooperation among the Baltic countries (sometimes involving also their neighbours to the south and east). As pointed out in the report from the Czech Republic, cooperation among the post-communist countries often results from the common aim of integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. (In the case of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, co-operation between them is for obvious reasons particularly well-developed). Sometimes research contacts go back in time, even dating back to before 1989.

A major obstacle to developing east-east cooperation is the lack of funds. As is wisely pointed out in the Belarus report, eastern institutions frequently lack the money to invite each other, and there are extremely few mechanisms in place to help them obtain money for joint projects. (HESP provides such support, but can grant only very limited funds.) It might be advisable for more support organizations to consider granting funds for east-east cooperation, last not least in the name of developing good-neighbourly relations across CEE.

Regional cooperation occurs of course not only east-east, but also across west-east borders, for example, between Germany or Austria and the Czech Republic or Hungary. The extent and impact of such cooperation, however, decreases notably as one moves further east. Especially where such projects are based largely on telecommunication and require little physical travel, there appears little reason for this trend other than psychological ones.

*Prof. Dr. Franc Mali  
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences*

## **5 Information Resources for Social Scientists – Synthesis Report**

### **5.1 The use of information resources**

On the ground of national reports it could be said that the use of information for scientific work in (social) scientific communities of Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries depends on the following factors:

- the research profile of scientists
- the approach to modern information and communication technologies (ITC)
- the increase of available internet sources
- the position of social sciences inside national scientific community.

### **5.2 Kinds of information resources**

Concerning the kinds of information resources, social scientists in CEE-countries use first of all:

- informal scientific networks: informal communication between scientists at micro- and macro-level (scientific institutions, conferences, workshops, etc.)
- national and expert libraries: in respect to the use in of information in national and expert libraries two basic problems were identified in national reports
- the supply of literature in both types of the libraries is still very bad, if not even catastrophic.

The authors of national reports mention numerous difficulties:

- In Czech Republic the flood had disastrous effect on several libraries. The natural catastrophe almost completely destroyed some libraries in Prague.
- The material stored in libraries cannot be borrowed (libraries in Romania).

- According to the rapporteur from Romania young researchers travel abroad - for example to Central European University in Budapest - to use well equipped libraries. The rapporteur from Hungary also emphasised the particular role of the Central European University (CEU) library. The Central European University is especially well equipped as far as the scientific fields taught at this university are concerned. CEU library also provides access to a significantly high number of new foreign publications. Unfortunately, the library of the CEU can only be used by students, colleagues and in some cases by the participants of research projects studying or working at the CEU.
- The rapporteurs often mention foreign organizations such as the Goethe Institute or the British Council and their important role as key providers of current scientific literature.
- It seems that the access to online local and international databases is still limited to certain groups of scientists in CEE countries:
- The websites: websites on the Internet are often a major means of providing scientific information. On the ground of information received from the national reports one can distinguish two groups of countries:
  - countries with relatively comfortable internet access (Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland)
  - countries with difficulties to use the internet connections in national and expert libraries (Romania, Belarus, etc., where is sometimes the only possibility to connect to internet to visit the rare internet cafes).

### **5.3 The types of information accessed by researchers via Internet**

On the ground of the national reports the following tentative classification of the Internet resources, which are most often used by social scientists, can be presented:

1. Databases in the field of social statistics (Eurostat, World bank, OECD, etc.)
2. Information from Data Archives (CESSDA Web, GESIS Web, etc.); In some Eastern European countries, such as Slovenia and Czech Republic, there exist institutionalized forms of data archives. In other East European countries such as Slovak Republic there is no central archive for social sci-

entists. For example, the data of research results of Slovak sociologists are better represented in well-known European data archives. Common actions in the framework of EDAN (The East European Data Archive Network) must be emphasised here. EDAN acts as an informal network. Its main intention is to unite data archives, which are at an early stage of their existence, and to help them to catch up with the advanced western data archives. The GESIS Service Agency Eastern Europe/Central Archive in Cologne as the German member of EDAN is the coordinator of all activities concerning the network.

3. Information from mailing-lists
4. Data from websites of different professional associations (ESA, ISA, etc.)
5. Full-text databases of journals (JSTOR, etc.)
6. Database of social science abstracts (Sociological Abstracts, etc.)
7. Web of Science (ISI)
8. Websites of particular scientific institutions.

On the ground of the presented classification it could be said that social scientists in CEE-countries highly aware of the importance of different sort of information sources for their research work. However, one can also find some self-critical remarks in the national reports. Researchers in Eastern European countries are not always aware of the importance of secondary data analysis for their research strategies. The following statement expresses this problem: „Data services are used less than they should be.“

According to the national reports the following databases are most often used by social scientists in CEE countries:

1. The GESIS Service Agency Eastern Europe
2. Full-text database JSTOR
3. Social Science Data Archives (at European and national level):
  - to provide of the researchers with the data for secondary analysis
  - to safeguard the data and make them easily accessible for research work.

## **5.4 Information barriers concerning social sciences in neighbour countries**

The authors of the national reports number the following main groups of barriers:

1. Unsymmetrical distribution of scientific information.

There was given the warning that in the frame of WWW (World Wide Web) are mostly represented information resources from the developed countries, e.g. the countries that are well developed in ICT. Unfortunately, the CEE countries do not belong to the group of the countries with a well developed ICT infrastructure.

2. Acute lack of money for the establishment of modern information infrastructure. Even the access to Internet websites is often impeded by the lack of financial means in numerous CEE countries.

3. Lack of information at the institutional level;

4. Legal barriers concerning the use of micro-data sets;

5. Language barriers.

The authors of national reports emphasise the importance of the foreign language competence for the use of information sources as they are mostly available in leading European languages (English, German, less French).

## **5.5 The opinion on possible use of information services provided by GESIS Service Agency Eastern Europe in English language**

All national reports mention the important role of the GESIS as an information service for social scientists in Central and Eastern European countries. The GESIS provides information services are extensive set of praises about the richness of GESIS's therefore it is difficult to expose all the possible benefits for the scientists. The list of advantages for social scientists in CEE countries GESIS database cannot be complete. The authors of national reports exposed first of all the following advantages of GESIS information services:

- The logistic advantages: a rather inexperienced user does not have difficulties with accessing the GESIS information offer.

- The advantages concerning the extensiveness: the user can search data with a very high precision.
- The advantages of diversification of topics covered by GESIS: GESIS provides a wide range of information services and even the researchers who are interested in particular subjects in the field of social sciences can find information they need.
- The comfortable software to find necessary information: the user can search for information in several countries at the same time. There exist integration between different databases; in this way the user can avoid the situation that the bulk of data stored in one system does not fit to other system.
- The methodological advantages: GESIS Data Archive provides a lot of valuable information on content analysis software and other statistical methods.
- Availability of academic publications in pdf format
- The transparency of institutional information: it is easy to identify institutions and individual researchers for the purposes of scientific cooperation.
- The opportunity of interactive communication
- Newsletter Social Sciences in Eastern Europe is very useful for people working in NGOs, research institutions and universities.

In the national reports critical remarks concerning the usefulness of GESIS information offer were almost negligible. The authors gave a few recommendations to improve GESIS information services for a wider clientele (not only social scientists, but also policy decision-makers) in CEE countries. The recommendations concerned the following points:

- Socio Guide and INEastE should also cover information from a non-public sector;
- Other sorts of scientific (sub)fields classification should be used because the existing classification is sometimes too arbitrary;
- Newsletter Social Sciences in Eastern Europe should exclude information which is not essential for researchers.

The importance the following GESIS databases has been exposed in the national reports:

1. SOCIOGUIDE: It offers information on social science resources in Eastern Europe. The description of the individual resources includes the following criteria: history, structure, scientific staff, research and technology activities, publications and other empirical data, contract information.
2. DATABASE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE (INEastE): It offers descriptions of social science institutions in Central and Eastern European countries. The description of relevant social science institutions is hierarchically structured and comprises the smallest organisational units (i.e. chairs).
3. THE NEWSLETTER SOCIAL SCIENCE IN EASTERN EUROPE. It contains current information on all questions concerning social sciences in Eastern Europe (institutions, profiles and contents of journals, essays, references to monographs, etc.).
4. DATA AND DOCUMENTATION – STUDIES FROM EASTERN EUROPE. Database that archives the studies from Eastern Europe with respect to content, methodological and technical aspects. The Study profiles are short descriptions of the studies which contain tables with information on country, title, year and sample size: Election Studies, Comparative Studies, Central and Eastern Eurobarometer, International Social Survey Program in Eastern Europe.
5. THE EAST EUROPEAN DATA ARCHIVE NETWORK (EDAN). It acts as an informal network designed to unite data archives which are at an early stage of their existence and share common problems as well as to make sure that the Eastern European data archives will catch up with the advanced Western data archives.
6. SOCIAL SCIENCE NEWS - Mailing Service Eastern Europe. The Mailing Service Eastern Europe offers current information on conferences, workshops, and summer schools as well as on promotional programmes, grants, networks and job advertisements in West European countries and the USA. This Service is designed for students and young scientists studying or working in all areas of social sciences in Eastern, Central and South eastern Europe.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The information services provided by GESIS are very well-known among different strata of social scientists in CEE countries. The information from GESIS databases is used in different situations. The GESIS databases hold one of the leading positions among the information services for social sciences in CEE countries.

## 6 Anhang

### 6.1 List of Participants

Workshop on „East European Social Sciences: Research Conditions and the Role of Information/Communication“

Dr. Maria Antosik  
Information Processing Centre  
Al. Niepodleglosci 188b  
00950 Warsaw, PO Box 355  
Poland  
[antosik@opi.org.pl](mailto:antosik@opi.org.pl)

Prof. Dr. Nikolai Genov  
Director of the Institute for East  
European Studies, Free University  
of Berlin  
Garystr. 55,  
14195 Berlin  
Germany  
[genov@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:genov@zedat.fu-berlin.de)

Ulrike Becker  
Head of the Department Information  
Transfer Eastern Europe,  
Speaker of the GESIS Service  
Agency Eastern Europe  
Schiffbauerdamm 19  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
[becker@berlin.iz-soz.de](mailto:becker@berlin.iz-soz.de)

Prof. Dr. Andriy Gorbachyk  
Kiev Taras Shevchenko University,  
Faculty of Sociology and  
Psychology  
Volodymyrska str. 64  
01033 Kiev  
Ukraine  
[agorbach@agorbach.kiev.ua](mailto:agorbach@agorbach.kiev.ua)

Victor Bedö (doctoral candidate)  
Hungarian Academy of Sciences  
Institute of Philosophy  
Szemere utca 10  
1054 Budapest  
Hungary  
[v.bedo@chello.hu](mailto:v.bedo@chello.hu)

Brigitte Hausstein  
Central Archive for Empirical So-  
cial Research  
GESIS Service Agency Eastern  
Europe  
Schiffbauerdamm 19  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
[hausstein@berlin.iz-soz.de](mailto:hausstein@berlin.iz-soz.de)

Prof. Dr. Annette Freyberg-Inan  
Bucharest University, Faculty of Political Sciences  
Str. Sfântul Stefan nr. 24  
Bucharest  
Romania  
[A.FreybergInan@uva.nl](mailto:A.FreybergInan@uva.nl)

Prof. Dr. Franc Mali  
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences  
Kardeljeva ploščad 5  
P.O. Box 2547  
1001 Ljubljana  
Slovenia  
[Franc.mali@uni-Lj.si](mailto:Franc.mali@uni-Lj.si)

Prof. Dr. Mikhail Ilyin  
Moscow Institute of International Relations, Dep. of Comparative Political Sciences; Editor-in chief of the journal „Political Studies“  
pr. Vernadskogo 76  
119454 Moscow  
Russia  
[ilyin@politstudies.ru](mailto:ilyin@politstudies.ru)

Prof. Dr. Silvia Mihalikova  
Comenius University, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Political Science  
Šafárikovo nám 6  
81806 Bratislava  
Slovak Republic  
[silvia.mihalikova@fphil.uniba.sk](mailto:silvia.mihalikova@fphil.uniba.sk)

Jindrich Krejci  
Head of the Sociological Data Archive, Institute of Sociology,  
Czech Academy of Sciences  
Jilska 1  
110 00 Praha 1  
Czech Republic  
[krejci@soc.cas.cz](mailto:krejci@soc.cas.cz)

Dr. Elena Meleshkina  
Head of the Department of Sociology, INION (Social Science Information Center)  
Nakhimovski prospect 15/21  
117997 Moscow  
Russia  
[meleshkina@politstudies.ru](mailto:meleshkina@politstudies.ru)

Dr. Eva Laiferova  
Head of the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy,  
Comenius University,  
Šafárikovo nám 6  
81806 Bratislava  
Slovak Republic  
[Eva.Laiferova@fphil.uniba.sk](mailto:Eva.Laiferova@fphil.uniba.sk)

Prof. Dr. Tatyana Muravska  
Director of the Centre for European and Transition Studies, University of Latvia  
Aspazijas bulv. 5  
1050 Riga  
Latvia  
[muravska@lanet.lv](mailto:muravska@lanet.lv)

Prof. Dr. Tiiu Paas  
Director of the Institute of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, University of Tartu  
Narva mnt 4-A315,  
51009 Tartu  
Estonia  
[TPaas@mtk.ut.ee](mailto:TPaas@mtk.ut.ee)

Dr. Gigi Tevzadze  
Department of Sociology  
Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences  
Chavchavadze State University  
Chavchavaze Av. 45  
0179 Tbilisi  
Georgia (Caucasus)  
[gigi@osgf.ge](mailto:gigi@osgf.ge)

Prof. Dr. Larissa Titarenko  
Belarus State University, Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences  
ul. K. Marx 31  
220030 Minsk  
Belarus  
[larisa166@mail.ru](mailto:larisa166@mail.ru)

Matthias Stahl  
Social Science Information Centre  
Lennestr.30  
53113 Berlin  
[stahl@bonn.iz-soz.de](mailto:stahl@bonn.iz-soz.de)

Natalija Schleinstein  
Department Information Transfer Eastern Europe, GESIS Service Agency Eastern Europe  
Schiffbauerdamm 19  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
[schleinstein@berlin.iz-soz.de](mailto:schleinstein@berlin.iz-soz.de)

Dagmar Sucker  
Department Information Transfer Eastern Europe  
GESIS Service Agency Eastern Europe  
Schiffbauerdamm 19  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
[sucker@berlin.iz-soz.de](mailto:sucker@berlin.iz-soz.de)

Dr. Agnieszka Wenninger  
Department Information Transfer Eastern Europe  
GESIS Service Agency Eastern Europe  
Schiffbauerdamm 19  
10117 Berlin  
Germany  
[wenninger@berlin.iz-soz.de](mailto:wenninger@berlin.iz-soz.de)

## 6.2 Guidelines for the Workshop

„East European Social Sciences: Research Conditions and the Role of Information/Communication“

### **Topic I: Organizational framework of the social science research**

Please describe:

- research planning for the social sciences in your country on the national level
- planning control instruments
- general implementation of the planning process for research programs on the institutional level (the procedure of setting up the annual/ medium-term research program e.g. interaction of management, staff, boards). What kind of supervision of the research plan is exercised?
- the main (external/ internal) criteria for a positive evaluation of the research work
- general resources of the social science institutions (institutional budget: ratio of expenditures for staff, technical equipment/ libraries, expenditures for research work).
- basic financing of research work (including research projects) in addition to the institutional budget in your country (public financing, commissioning/funding; please indicate recent facts and figures, if possible)
- the application procedure for research projects (whether there are any fixed guidelines; requirements to be met, how detailed the application has to be). What is the ratio between applications and approvals? What criteria increase the chances for approval?

### **Topic II: Research work (your personal approach) and the role of available or missing information/communication infrastructure**

Please describe:

- what sources (national/ international) you use in the context of your research work. How do you get an overview of already existing (national/ international) projects in your research field.

- access to empirical data (differentiate between senior, junior researchers and students)
- information supply concerning national and international literature (access and use of the libraries; traditional or digital access; internet searches)
- in what kind of scientific communication social scientists in your country mainly take part

### **Topic III: International Cooperation**

Please describe:

- your opinion about the impact of international cooperation within the social sciences in general
- the importance of the cooperation with colleagues from Western countries for the national (your) research
- your cooperation experience while taking part in international projects (e.g. how do you get involved in the project? Difficulties on the working/social level; positive effects for your research work, etc.)
- the main prerequisites for participation in an international project
- whether the EU enlargement will have an impact on your research work (research projects). If yes, in what way?
- what support (young) researchers receive in your country in order to facilitate their participation in international projects
- Western European organizations known to you that support research cooperation (please indicate whether you have ever applied for their programmes).
- the relevance of the East-East cooperation for your research activities. Do you cooperate with social scientists from the region? How do you identify and contact your partners?

### **Topic IV: Information Resources for Social Scientists**

- Please name your main permanent information resources (national/ international periodicals, databases, internet offers, email-services, etc. that you use in your daily work)

- Information services referring to Eastern Europe:
  - Describe your information needs/ barriers concerning social sciences in your East European neighbour countries
  - Please visit the Internet sites on Eastern European social sciences of the GESIS Service Agency Eastern Europe, such as the clearing-house for East European internet offers „SocioGuide Eastern Europe“ ([http://www.gesis.org/en/socio\\_guide/index.htm#oe](http://www.gesis.org/en/socio_guide/index.htm#oe)) or the database on East European Social Science Institutions INEastE ([http://www.gesis.org/en/Information/eastern\\_europe/INEastE/index.htm](http://www.gesis.org/en/Information/eastern_europe/INEastE/index.htm)) or the „Newsletter Social Sciences in Eastern Europe“ ([http://www.gesis.org/en/publications/magazines/newsletter\\_eastern\\_europe/index.htm](http://www.gesis.org/en/publications/magazines/newsletter_eastern_europe/index.htm)). Attached please find another information service „Social Sciences News“ and relate to it.
  - Please let us know your opinion on possible use of these services for your research work: which of them you would use regularly and for what purposes; which of them you would recommend to your colleagues. What kind of information do you find most helpful/do you miss?
- Information services on social science results in German speaking countries:
  - How do you estimate the interest of your colleagues in German research results in the field of social sciences?
  - Please visit the Internet sites of the Social Science Information Centre (IZ) offering information on social science research activities and literature in German speaking countries. (The description of the services is in English. The language of the databases is German):
    - SOLIS (German social science literature database)  
<http://www.gesis.org/en/information/SOLIS/index.htm>
    - FORIS (German research projects database)  
<http://www.gesis.org/en/Information/FORIS/>
    - SOFO (university and extra-university institution database)  
<http://www.gesis.org/en/Information/SOFO/index.htm>
    - List of German Journal Profiles:  
[http://www.gesis.org/en/information/journals/german/zs\\_liste\\_en.pdf](http://www.gesis.org/en/information/journals/german/zs_liste_en.pdf)

- Society in the Focus of social sciences– the up to date information service  
<http://www.gesis.org/en/information/theme/Fokus/index.htm>
- soFid (Social Science Specialized Information Service)  
<http://www.gesis.org/en/information/theme/soFid/index.htm>
- Please let us know your opinion on possible use of these services for your research work: which of them you would use regularly and for what purposes; which of them you would recommend to your colleagues. What kind of information do you find most helpful/do you miss?