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GP3 & 4 (1.2.2019 – 15.9.2019)

## Participants

There are officially 65 researchers signed up to WG2 from 31 countries; 47 list the WG as being their primary affiliation within ENRESSH and 18 as another affiliation. There is a core group of 47 researchers from 13 countries (not necessarily the same 47 as those that are signed up to WG2 as their primary affiliation) that can be described as active participants in the WG. We lost one WG2 member in the reporting period.

## Achievements and Work in Progress

### Ongoing achievements

There have been the following papers published in this period arising from STSMs (including one in this period):

Boshoff, N., & de Jong, S. P. (2019). Conceptualizing the societal impact of research in terms of elements of logic models: a survey of researchers in sub-Saharan Africa. *Research Evaluation*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvz020>

Muhonen, R., Benneworth, P. & Olmos-Peñuela, J. (2019) From productive interactions to impact pathways: understanding the key dimensions in developing SSH research societal impact, *Research Evaluation*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvz003>

The results of one STSM (Wroblewska) were published as the inaugural Working Paper in the ENRESSH Working Paper series:

Wroblewska, M. N. (2019) “Impact evaluation in Norway and in the UK A comparative study, based on REF 2014 and Humeval 2015-2017” ENRESSH Working Paper Series 2019-1, Enschede, NL: ENRESSH  
[https://ris.utwente.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/102033214/ENRESSH\\_01\\_2019.pdf](https://ris.utwente.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/102033214/ENRESSH_01_2019.pdf)

We provided feedback to the European Alliance for SSH (EASSH) on a draft version of a paper to the European Commission. This feedback was incorporated in the final submitted version.

<http://www.eassh.eu/sites/default/files/pdf/positionpapers/easshimpactfnl.pdf>

The Grimpact activity that was started following RESSH 2017 in Antwerp has been continuing; the main activity in this period was the publication of a LSE Impact Blog piece.

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2019/05/28/grimpact-time-to-acknowledge-the-dark-side-of-the-impact-agenda/>

A version of the *Research Evaluation* paper was presented at the Oslo TIK Centre for Technology, Innovation and Culture

Muhonen Reetta, Benneworth Paul, Olmos-Peñuela Julia (2019). From productive interactions to impact pathways: Understanding the key dimensions in developing SSH research societal impact. TIK Centre for Technology, Innovation and Culture seminar 11.04.2019. Oslo, Norway.

## Main activities

The main activity has been the CARES project (“Careers and Research Evaluation Systems for societal impact”). A survey of 108 early career researchers across Europe was completed before the start of this reporting period, and this reporting period has involved analysing the data, including through 2 STSMs around 7 working themes. These themes are being prepared for papers for presentation at the RESSH Valencia conference and will be submitted for a special issue next year.

### **1. Steering effects of research evaluation on SSH early career researchers · Paul Benneworth, Julia Olmos-Peñuela and Elena Castro-Martínez**

We ask the question of what are the effects of the evaluation of societal impact of research on SSH researchers at the early stage of their career. This paper presents some preliminary descriptive statistics from the survey to understand the effects of impact evaluation processes as respondents took prospective and contemporary research decisions in the hope that that research would be regarded as ‘good’. The research had two main findings. The first finding was that impact is a consideration for SSH ECR: most were aware of the idea of impact, and understood its significance for their own research activities Secondly, there were three mismatches in the effects of impact evaluation on SSH ECR. Researchers felt creating impact was important for science, but not did that they had been successful in creating impacts; motivation to deliver impact was high, but training received to deliver that impact was low; finally , there was little principled opposition to creating impact, but there were opportunistic barriers, (a shortage of time) necessary to create impact.

### **2. Professional factors affecting career and engagement success for Early Career Researchers · Julia Olmos-Peñuela and Paul Benneworth**

In this paper, we address the issue of the effects of increasingly intense research evaluation systems on early career SSH researchers’ willingness to engage with societal partners. To do this we ask the specific operational research question of which are the professional factors leading to ECR’s engagement success? To address this question, we construct a model for early career researcher willingness to engage with societal partners as being shaped by the following conditions, namely, the training they have had in engagement, the institutional

environments in which they are operating (university environment) the extent to which being involved in engagement practices creates problems for them. We also contend that their engagement will be affected by the quality of the environment, and in particular the generalised demand for their knowledge coming from society.

### **3. Early Career Researchers and Societal Impact: Motivations and Structural Barriers** · *Corina Balaban, Marta Wróblewska and Paul Benneworth*

This study shows that many early career researchers (ECRs) are highly motivated to do research that has a positive impact on society. However, there are many structural barriers that prevent them from doing so: they are employed on short-term contracts; they relocate frequently; and they have their junior academic status to take into account. This paper explains what these structural barriers are and reflects on how they might be addressed. First, we briefly outline the background for this project; second, we explained how we conducted our study; third, we discuss the key findings regarding motivations of ECRs to do ‘impactful’ research and the barriers that they encounter; and lastly, we argue that good impact requires SSH researchers to develop stable identities as engaged researchers.

*This was associated with an STSM from Corina Balaban in the Netherlands in February/ March 2019*

\*\* An *LSE Impact Blog* piece was also published on this.

Balaban, C. & Benneworth, P. S. (2019) “To unlock the impact of ECR research, create stable academic identities” *LSE Impact Blog*, 2nd May 2019,  
<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2019/05/02/to-unlock-the-impact-of-ecr-research-create-stable-academic-identities>

### **4. Diversity in impact conceptualization and engagement: accounting for social, epistemic and local contexts within the social sciences and humanities** · *Marc Vanholsbeeck, Karolina Lendák-Kabók and Alexis Dewaele*

This paper considers the different way in which there is a framing of the creation of impact by ECRs in different social, epistemic and local contexts. The paper seeks to look at the way that early career researchers position themselves with regard to impact, the kinds of activities associated with the creation of impact (teaching, media experience, policymaking, working with local audiences) and the associations that researchers have with notions of impact. The paper identifies four broad and contested framings for impact by ECRs; firstly that impact exists in opposition to excellence, secondly that it is in tension with fundamental research, thirdly that it is complementary to but distinct from fundamental research, and finally that it is part of the research activity.

*This was associated with an STSM from Marc Vanholsbeeck in Hungary in February/ March 2019*

### **5. Does impact have gender? Gendered definitions and framings of impact in social sciences and humanities** · *Karolina Lendák – Kabók, Marc Vanholsbeeck and Alexis Dewaele*

This article is based on the Careers and Research Evaluation Systems for Societal Impact (CARES) survey, which was distributed in 29 European countries. It focused on investigating the attitudes of Early Career Investigators (ECI) toward societal impact. One hundred and six questionnaires were filled in by ECI's across Europe who were either still preparing or already completed their PhD's in the field of social sciences and humanities (SSH). The questionnaire consisted of 14 close-ended and 14 open-ended questions, which aimed to make sense of the complex environment within which ECIs are doing their research and creating societal impact. The questions were focusing on the following topics: definition of impact, pathways to impact, creation of impact, difficulties during the creation of impact and motivation for creating impact. For this study we focused on two specific topics: gendered difference between the definition of impact among ECIs' and their attitude towards impact. The preliminary results are based on the sample of 30 analysed questionnaires.

*This was associated with an STSM from Marc Vanholsbeeck in Hungary in February/ March 2019.*

#### **6. Early Career Researchers' experiences with impact encouragement and support: insights from across Europe Reetta Muhonen, Stefan De Jong and Nataša Jermen**

In a previous study (De Jong & Muhonen 2018), we found that SSH scholars from Eastern Europe operate in a less developed impact ecosystem, which is anticipated to negatively affect their ability to successfully respond to European level funding calls, like Horizon 2020. In this article, we study SSH early career researchers' (ECR) experiences concerning the 1) support of impact practices by their home institution and national science policy, and 2) challenges in impact generation. In analyzing the survey consisting of 104 responds from ECRs across 29 European countries we also pay attention to 3) differences in impact ecosystems between scholars coming from widening and experienced European countries (See more De Jong & Muhonen 2018).

#### **7. Hurdles in the Research Impact Ecosystem: Power and Agency for Early Career Investigators, Bradley Good, Rita Faria & Paul Benneworth**

In 2018 and 2019, the EU COST Action ENRESSH commissioned a broad survey of 100 Early Career Investigators (ECIs) from across Europe. This survey provides an initial look at both the negative and positive influences on ECIs in producing societal impact. Utilizing a qualitative and quantitative approach, our paper provides an initial analysis of this data from a power-critical perspective, working to highlight factors that either keep ECIs from producing societal impact or that encourage them to do so.

*This was associated with an STSM from Eleanor Good in Portugal in February/ March 2019*

The following incidental papers have been presented arising from these themes:

Benneworth, P. S. & Olmos-Penuela, J. (2019) "Steering effects of research evaluation on SSH early career researchers" CWTS Seminar on Careers and Research Impact in SSH, Leiden, 27th February 2019.

Balaban, C. Wroblewska, M. & Benneworth, P. (2019) “Social Impact: Motivations of ECRs” CWTS Seminar on Careers and Research Impact in SSH, Leiden, 27th February 2019.

Benneworth, P. S. & Olmos-Penuela, J. (2019) “Introduction to Careers & Social Impacts in SSH : an conceptual and empirical introduction” Paper presented to ENRESSH Careers & Social impact in SSH symposium, Podgorica, 7th-8th March, 2019.

Balaban, C., Wroblewska, M. & Benneworth, P. (2019) “Social Impact: Motivations of ECRs” Paper presented to ENRESSH Careers & Social impact in SSH symposium, Podgorica, 7th-8th March, 2019.

Olmos-Penuela, J. & Benneworth, P. S. (2019) “Professional factors affecting career and engagement success for Early Career Researchers”, Paper presented to ENRESSH Careers & Social impact in SSH symposium, Podgorica, 7th-8th March, 2019.

Balaban, C., Wroblewska, M. & Benneworth, P. (2019) “Social Impact: Motivations of ECRs” Paper presented to KNOWSCIENCE Syposium, Lund University, Lund, Sweden, 18th-19th March 2019.

## Future activities

A new stream for WG4 has been opened up to deal with the development of guidelines for evaluating *ex ante* impact in research proposals. This came out of a presentation of some of the CARES material to the Norwegian Research Council.

Benneworth, P. S. (2019) “An brief introduction to ex ante impact in research evaluation” Paper presented to Forskningsrådet Roundtable on Ex ante Research Evaluation, Oslo, Norway, 22nd May 2019.

Following that presentation, a Working Paper has been prepared, and will be presented at the ECOOM Sumposium on Research Impact, (29<sup>th</sup> November 2019, Brussels). It is currently in press but can be cited as:

Benneworth, P. S. & Olmos Peñuela, J. (2019) “*Ex ante* evaluation of societal impact in research: towards a conceptually-based reflection”, *ENRESSH Working Paper 2*, (in press).

This led to the launch of an STSM position to undertake additional empirical research in collaboration with the Forskningsrådet. WG2 member Gemma Derrick (UK) has been appointed to the position and will visit Norway in November & December.