

1. Publishable summary

Fig. 1: NET4SOCIETY Workshop participants in Riga (April 2010)

NET4SOCIETY is the first network of National Contact Points (NCPs) for Socio-Economic Sciences and the Humanities (SSH). It actively supports networking in the SSH research community and provides help in every respect of 7th European Framework Programme (FP7) consultation.



46 European and international SSH National Contact Points are active in the network (status: Nov. 2010). For its 3 year duration, the project has a budget of 2.6 Mio. Euro.

Fig. 2: Mr. Keraudren, EU Commission, at NET4SOCIETY Brokerage event 2010



Communication and networking is considered an open process, which connects SSH NCPs, the EU Commission as well as other NCP networks, relevant stakeholders and researchers. Undeniably a challenge in itself, given the heterogeneous nature of this community, NET4SOCIETY has come a long way during the past 3 years in mastering this challenge and continues to do so.

NET4SOCIETY's commitment translates into tailor made workshops, specific high quality trainings and mentorings. It provides targeted tools such as the Best Practice Handbook and partner search support.

Fig. 3: SSH Experiences with FP7 - a Commentary

The network activities do not only target NCPs, but also researchers. It facilitated three international SSH brokerage events in 2009 and 2010 targeted at SSH researchers and stakeholders, focussing on "financial system" - "addiction" - "multipolar world" as well as on "education" and on "EU international relationships & Combating poverty".

Moreover, the Research Directory is a database of actively involved researchers and key players in the SSH theme. It is designed to facilitate research cooperation in the context of FP7 and has already more than 500 profiles (Nov. 2010); link: www.net4society.eu/research-directory.

NET4SOCIETY carried out the "SSH Experiences with FP7 - a Commentary" to complement the EU Commission's mid-term evaluation of FP7: it focuses on the experience of SSH researchers in FP7, their assessment of the programmes, and a list of recommendations for future EU research funding programmes. By doing so, it provides key background reading in the current debate on "Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation"; link: <http://www.net4society.eu/public/survey.php>



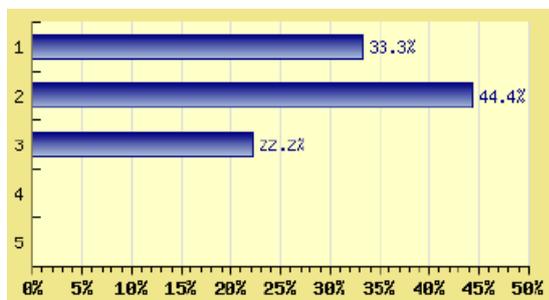
The yearly evaluation of NET4SOCIETY clearly indicates that a vast majority its members experienced a substantial benefit the SSH NCP network.

Throughout the project duration more than 75% of the members were satisfied or very satisfied with the added value of NET4SOCIETY (see Fig. 4 left).

The project as a whole was rated very positively with satisfaction rates of around 90% throughout its lifetime (see Fig. 4 right).

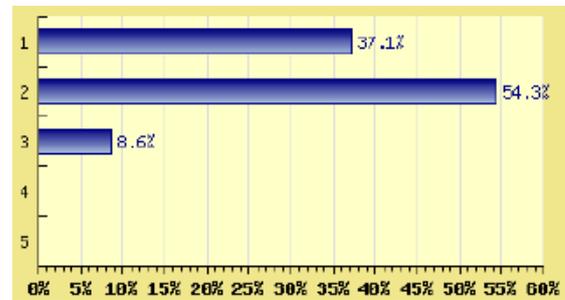
Fig. 4: Members' feedback on NET4SOCIETY

How do you rate the benefit of the Project for yourself?

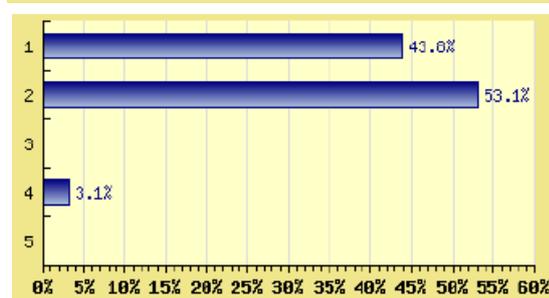
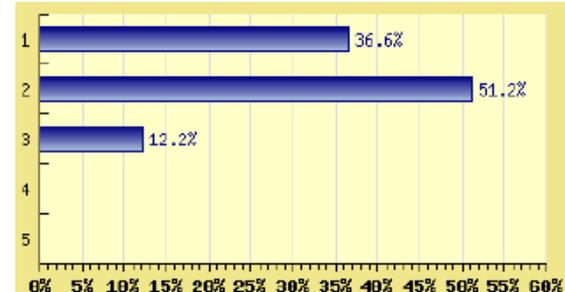


2008

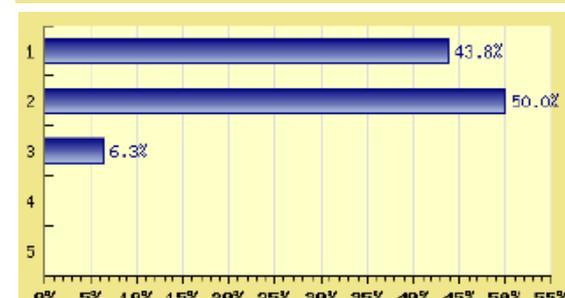
How do you rate the NET4SOCIETY project so far?



2009



2010



(1: Very satisfied, 5: not satisfied at all)

(1: Very satisfied, 5: not satisfied at all)

Looking back on the second reporting period and each Work Package it can be summarised:

Within **WP1 Management**, project and quality management as well as decision making structures have been efficient and well functioning. These structures have proven to be key for the successful administration of a network with so many members and for supporting the work performed within the Tasks. The Project Management Board (PMB), consisting of the WP-leaders/co-leaders and the Third Countries task force leader and Research Directory Task leader, was the core decision-making body of the network. It was complemented by the plenary that includes all beneficiaries and natural members and functioned as an advisory body.

Fig. 5: SSH NCPs networking in Rome (Dec. 2010)

The highlights of the **WP2 Networking** were the four NET4SOCIETY workshops - in Brussels, Riga, Dublin and Rome - with more than 45 participants each, the Best Practice Handbook, the FP7 midterm commentary with significant results from the most active SSH researchers in FP7 and an ICPC focus at one of the workshops.

The active participation of the SSH NCPs in the workshops concluded in a constructive achievement of the NET4SOCIETY goal to become a communicating network. The exchange about best practice in the workshops for the handbook resulted in a highly useful document which can be used by all the NCPs. The FP7 midterm commentary is not only of immense interest for each national NCP and NCP organisation, but has an extremely high impact on the evaluation of the first half of the FP7, having in mind that this survey was done by SSH researchers to give honest feedback on FP7. The ICPC countries were actively involved during the last year of NET4SOCIETY participating in both workshops and staying in close contact to the WP leader and the coordinator.



WP3 Capacity Building supported the members accomplish a basic level of knowledge, exchange good practices, six (of 11) trainings and eight (of 18) mentoring visits were realised. All activities resulted in strengthening cooperation between SSH NCPs from Europe and beyond and promoting the coherence and high-level services of the network, including better knowledge, knowledge exchange, competence and guidance to researchers active in the SSH of FP7.

WP4 Promotion & Partner Search promoted NET4SOCIETY and interacted with the “outside world”, thus sustaining the networking of the European SSH community and providing a valuable source of information at European and international level.

Partner search support was strengthened by the network through a valuable screening of project profiles and ideas thus facilitating SSH stakeholders to get new contacts in different areas of Europe and beyond. In order to sustain the networking of the European SSH community members, NET4SOCIETY organised three brokerage events which took place in October 2009 and in July in Brussels and September 2010 in Istanbul with the presence of European Commission officials, SSH experts and guests from all over Europe. Over 200 SSH researchers attended the brokerage events and scheduled bilateral meetings for matching their project ideas and eventually join consortia.

The Research Directory hosting and sharing information about SSH researchers and stakeholders was established in order to facilitate networking and dissemination of excellent research profiles coming from all over the world. The number of profiles in the Research Directory increased steadily since it was launched. NET4SOCIETY promotion activities covered even reached beyond Europe, promoting SSH and the network even in Beijing, China, at a meeting with the most important agency for funding Research and Innovation.