

Connecting Europe – Sustainable Work in Horizon 2020

By Elisabeth Lagerlöf

Horizon 2020, the European research programme for 2014-2020, is a challenge to the European Research Society. Instead of the thematic approach used up to now, the Horizon 2020 programme works through challenges – to a large extent inspired by the Lund declaration from the Swedish EU-Presidency in 2007.

Horizon 2020 challenges are seen as means to drive economic growth and create jobs, and as an investment in EU's future, which puts it at the heart of the EU's blueprint for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs, i.e. Europe 2020.

To fulfil these goals, Horizon 2020 is divided into three programme sections

- *Excellent Science* - making Europe an attractive location for the world's best researchers
- *Industrial leadership* - making Europe a more attractive location to invest in research and innovation, and
- *Societal challenges* - tackling societal challenges for a better society

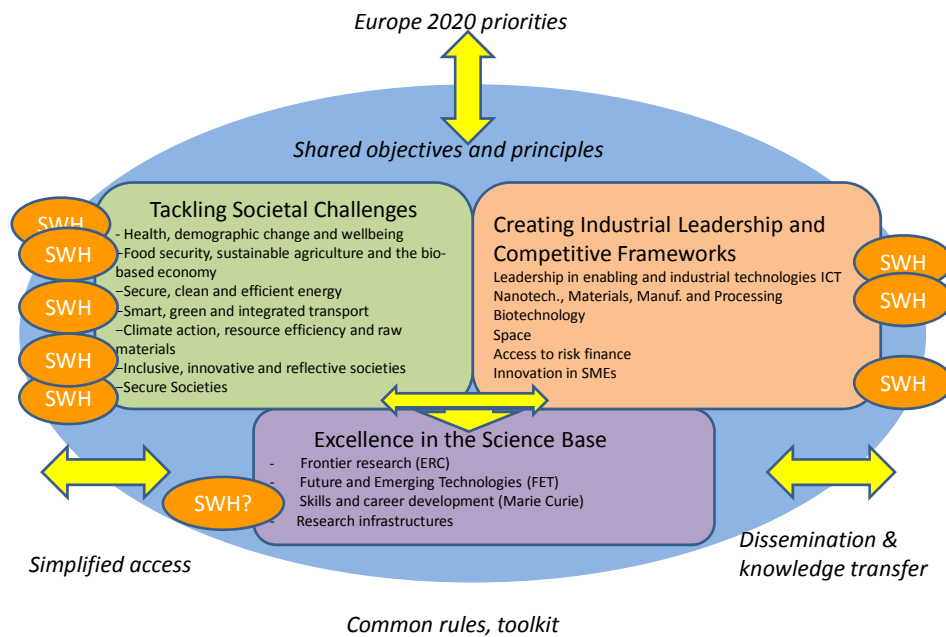
Sustainable work as a resource for health, innovation and growth

Research on the sustainable workplaces' environment, conditions and management has importance for innovation, growth and smart production. A healthy working environment includes important factors that contributes to growth, value processing and development and has implications for long-term competitiveness. A bad work environment provides not only great costs for companies and businesses but also generates ill health, loss of income and loss of quality of life for the individual, as well as long-term social costs and a burden on social security.

The strategic importance of sustainable work, as a resource for health, innovation and growth, is emphasized in the European innovation strategy, and also by the social partners. The question is, though, how visible it is in the Horizon 2020 programme?

At a first glance, there is very little coverage in the research programme connected with sustainable work, expressed as better jobs, occupational health and safety or wellbeing of the workers. A more in-depth examination of the programme, however, presents another picture, as is made clear by figure 1. It shows that in every section of the programme, there are specific Calls with topics that could include sustainable work and health. As sustainable work and health is a broad research area, it can be expected to find bits and pieces at many parts of the programme – but they are not easy to find!

A further exploration of interesting Calls shows however, that very often the topics are rather narrow in scope (covers i.e. applies only factory work, but not other sectors of importance for EU economic growth and competitiveness, such as the service sector) or that the health outcome of new technologies, such as nanotechnology, biotechnology, is not part of the Call.



HORIZON 2020

Figure 1. Horizon2020 programme sections containing Calls of interest for Sustainable Work and Health (SWH)

The aim of this project is to set up an advocacy platform to increase the possibilities for research about sustainable work and health. Being in a position to examine the present Work programmed for 2014-2016 we see the aim of the project as to

- Inform researchers and companies about the possibilities in the present Calls
- Increase the visibility of sustainable work and health in Horizon 2020 through enlarging the scope of present calls in 2015 and the Work programme for 2016 - 2018
- Propose one or two Calls dedicated to sustainable work and health to be included in the work programmes from 2016 and onwards.

This, however, calls for the backing up of the entire European sustainable work and health community. How would this be possible?

Connecting Europe in different ways

There are a number of ways to develop an advocacy process for sustainable work and health in the Horizon 2020, namely

1. The formal way
 - a. Identify and approach the Swedish members and experts in Sweden - and in other Member States - for each Horizon 2020 action of interest, who has been appointed by the governments to the Program Committees and other intermediaries
 - b. Working through other European institutions, such as other relevant DGs, for instance DG Employment, the European Agencies in relevant areas (EU-OSHA, Eurofound and CEDEFOP) and the social partners, both at national and EU level (Business Europe and ETUC)
 - c. Increase the number of sustainable work and health experts as pre-project evaluators or project evaluators in Horizon 2020 Calls.

a) *Identify and approach relevant Swedish members and experts in the Horizon2020 Program Committees and other intermediaries*

The European Commission proposes every framework research programme, in the Horizon 2020, while the decision about the programme is taken by the European Council and the European Parliament.

The formal influence by the Member States' is through the Programme Committees, or before a programme is ready, the so-called Shadow Committees. Their role is to provide formal opinions about the programmes actions and the adoption of Work programmes. They will also assume a new role in ensuring vital links between EU funding and national funding, where there is a new provision to include explicit information on this aspect in the Work programmes.

In Horizon 2020, 14 Programme Committees exist in accordance with the 14 different actions. Each MS has one member in all Programme Committees. The member usually has a one or two of experts to help. The Swedish organisations of the 14 Program Committees is found in figure 2. The ordinary member is usually from a ministry while the expert(s) comes from the authorities. The main responsible authorities are the Swedish Research Council and VINNOVA, the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems.

In addition, Sweden has set up *reference groups* to help the members and the experts in a Programme Committees. VINNOVA and the authorities with expert assignments should inform on their web-sites about the on-going work in the programme committees and provide contact information to the experts and the members in the reference group.

To help with Brussels contacts, VINNOVA has built up a *Brussels Office*. The Brussels Office follows and analyse EU's research and innovation policy, create and maintain networks, and thus provides contacts for the Swedish research community. They receive early information and comments from the European Commission and through other actors in Brussels. The Office can also assist with organisation of seminars/workshops with the aim to provide an input to the European Commission.

For information and advice about the Horizon 2020, VINNOVA is also responsible for the *National Contact Points (NCPs)* for every Action in the Horizon 2020 programme. They also cover the information about actions where the Research Council is responsible. In addition, Assisting NCPs are found in all authorities with responsibility for a specific Action. The NCP organisation also have the mandate to increase the knowledge about other partnership programmes, such as Article 185 and 187, EIT KIC30S, JRC and other European research and innovation programme.

The Swedish larger universities have EU intermediaries, EU-handläggarna (EU-Grant Officers), a resource that the government wants extended to the smaller universities. They disseminate information about the programme directly to the researchers. They may work together with the NCPs and are essential for the NCPs if they want to reach a specific target group.

Priority	Main responsible authority	Actions	Authority with main experts	Responsible ministry(ies)
Horizontal questions			VINNOVA VR	Education Enterprise
Excellent science	VR	ERC, MSCA, FET	VR VINNOVA	Education Enterprise
		Infrastructure	VR	Education
Industrial leadership	VINNOVA	ICT	VINNOVA VR	Enterprise Education
		Enabling and Ind. technologies	VINNOVA VR	Enterprise Education
		Space	Nat. Space Board VR	Education
		Innovations in SMEs	VINNOVA Agency for Econ and Reg. Growth	Enterprise
Societal Challenges	VINNOVA	1 Health	VR Forte, VINNOVA	Education Health & Social Affairs, Enterprise
		2 Bioeconomy	Formas VINNOVA, Energy Agency	Agriculture Enterprise, Environ ment
		3 Energy	Energy Agency VR; Formas	Enterprise Education, Environ ment
		4 Transport	VINNOVA Formas	Enterprise Environment
		5 Climate	Formas VINNOVA, VR	Environment Enterprise,
		6 Europe in a changing world	VR Forte, Formas, VINNOVA	Education Health and Soc Affairs Environm., Education
		7 Secure societies	VINNOVA Civil Contingency Agency	Defence Enterprise

Figure 2. The official Swedish organisation of the Horizon 2020 work

For the most interesting topics seen from a sustainable work and health view, the Swedish Program Committee structure on a personal level looks like the following (for more information see VINNOVAs website www.VINNOVA.se)

Nanotechnologies, Advanced material, Biotechnology, Advanced manufacturing and processing

- Member
 - Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communication, Mikael Gröning
- Expert Authority:
 - VINNOVA, Ulf Holmgren
- Assistant expert authority
 - VR, Thomas Andersson

- National Contact Point
 - Primary Katrin Danerlöv, VINNOVA
 - Assistant, Tomas Andersson, VINNOVA

Health, demographic change and wellbeing

- Member:
 - Ministry of education and research, Maria Wästfelt
- Expert Authority:
 - VR, Maria Starborg
- Assistant Expert Authorities:
 - VINNOVA, Gunnar Strandberg & Forte, Peter Alebeck
- National Contact Point:
 - Primary Judith Wefer, VINNOVA
 - Assistant Johan Nilsson, VR
 - Assistant Therese Woodhill, Forte

Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

- Member:
 - Ministry of education and research, Eva Stenskiöld
- Expert authority:
 - VR, Eva Mineur
- Assistant expert authority:
 - Forte Lars Värngård & VINNOVA, Sophie Ivarsson
- National Contact Point:
 - Primary: Sandra Oliviera, VINNOVA
 - Assistant Eva Mineur, VR
 - Assistant Cecilia Odelstierna, FORTE

b) Working through other European institutions

The most relevant D, G for sustainable work and health are of course, except DG research and DG Connect, the *DGs Employment*, DG Sanco and DG Enterprise. DG Employment it in particular in particular EMPL B. “Employment and legislation, Social Dialogue”, includes the section of “Safety and Health”, situated in Luxembourg, where committees of national experts contribute to developing, implementing and monitoring EU legislation on health and safety at work, such as

- Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work (ACSH)
- Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits (SCOEL)
- Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC)

The Swedish national experts are Director General Mikael Sjöberg, Swedish Work Environment Agency, (ACSH and SLIC) and professor Gunnar Johansson, Uppsala University (SCOAL).

DG Employment also works with the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work (EU-OSHA) and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) to disseminate information, offer guidance and promote healthy working environments – particularly in small businesses. These two agencies are, together with CEDEFOP, unique, as they have tripartite Boards, consisting of representatives from the governments, the employers and the trade unions as well as from the Commission. The boards are very large, almost 80 persons, but they can be important support-pillars for research on sustainable work and health. The Swedish representatives are found

in figure 3.

Agency	Government	Employees	Employers
EU-OSHA	Mr Mikael Sjöberg Swedish Work Environment Authority, alt Mr Per Ewaldsson Ministry of Employment	Ms Christina Järnstedt Landsorganisationen I Sverige, alt Ms Karin FRISTEDT SACO	Ms Bodil Mellblom Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, alt Cecilia ANDERSSON Swedish Association of Industrial Employers
Eurofound	Hannes KANTELIUS Ministry of Employment, alt Håkan NYMAN Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.	Sverker Rudeberg Confederation of Swedish Enterprise alt Niklas BECKMAN Confederation of Swedish Enterprise	Mats Essemyr Swedish Confederation for Professional Employees (TCO), alt Sten Gellerstedt Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO-S)

Figure 3. The Swedish representatives in the Boards of EU-OSHA and Eurofound.

The Boards also have members from the European social partners and the European Commission, who are of importance in the work for an advocacy platform. The representatives are

- Business Europe: Ms Rebekah Smith, Business Europe (EU-OSHA). Magdalena Bober, Business Europe, (Eurofound)
- ETUC: Ms Judith Kirton-Darling, European Trade Union Confederation, (EU-OSHA) and Józef Niemic, ETUC, (Eurofound).
- European Commission: Dr Francisco Jesús Alvarez Hidalgo, European Commission (EU-OSHA) and Armindo Silva, DG Employment, (Eurofound).

c) Increase the number of sustainable work and health experts as pre-project evaluators or project evaluators in Horizon 2020 Calls

The different framework R&D programmes have up to now not drawn much interest from sustainable work and health researchers, at least not from Sweden. This has partly been due to the problem of finding relevant calls. Thus, there are very few researchers which have applied to be an expert to evaluate of projects proposals and even fewer as project evaluators. Since this work provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the administrative process behind Horizon 2020 and to find how a project is evaluated, i e how “excellence” is assessed. When starting a project, either as coordinator or a partner, this experience can be assessed as an added value.

From a Swedish point of view, the low participation can to a high degree be seen as an information problem, not at least since there is no formal or informal organisation representing the sustainable work and health researchers in Sweden.

2. European Research Networks

Sweden and the other Nordic countries have a strong tradition in occupational health and safety research, as well as research on sustainable work systems. Collaboration with European work environment institutes and universities goes a long way back. The collaboration has continued, but is today more based on a specific research groups’ or a

single researcher's contacts. The lack of an institution, playing a key role in the national affiliation to governments, make it more difficult both to have an impact on Horizon2020 as well as to disseminate information about Calls of interest to sustainable work and health researchers in Sweden as well as for European researchers to find relevant partners in Sweden.

Networks of interest for the advocacy platform are

- *Nordic Collaboration*
The Swedish researchers collaborate closely with the Nordic Institutes in the other four countries. A more formal collaboration exists regarding NIVA (the Nordic Institute for Advanced Training in Occupational Health), in publishing a scientific journal (SJWEH), and by organising the annual Nordic Work Environment Meetings and through several joint research projects. These four activities are funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and the participating institutions. Swedish representatives from different universities or other institutions are appointed by the government to be members of the steering boards for these activities, but no coordination for dissemination is established (??).
During the last years, discussion has been ongoing to create a virtual *Nordic Institute for Wellbeing at Work*. A first start has been made by identifying a number of common projects. Funding is provided from the existing four national institutes. So far, no organisation in Sweden is a formal member of the virtual collaboration.
- *PEROSH, Partnership for European Research in Occupational Safety and Health*
PEROSH was started already in 1989 at a meeting set up by British Health and Safety Laboratories inviting all European national research institutes, among them, the Swedish Work Environment Institute. A formal agreement was formed in Italy 2003. The network comprises 12 Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) institutes in 12 MS. Sweden has no longer any institute in this network.
The aim is to coordinate and cooperate on European research and development efforts in occupational safety and health. Joint collaboration within PEROSH on fields of common interest is one of the key aspects of the network. Currently, the PEROSH members are involved in [eight joint research projects](#).
PEROSH partners also works to maintain a proactive dialogue with the EU and other international and national OSH-partners to explore paths to optimize the added value to Europe of the research, dissemination and funding efforts in this field. The uniqueness and strength of PEROSH lies in the comprehensive interdisciplinary collaboration between leading OSH research institutes in Europe.
- *The European Network for Workplace Health Promotion*
The European Network for Workplace Health Promotion is an informal network of national occupational health and safety institutes, public health, health promotion and statutory social insurance institutions. In a joint effort, all the members and partners aim to improve workplace health and well-being and to reduce the impact of work related ill health on the European workforce.
- *European Technology Platform on Industrial Safety, ETPIS*
ETPIS coordinates and integrates research and implements processes in order to gain safety for sustainable European industry growth. It addresses safety of

industrial installations and production systems from various industry sectors: manufacturing, chemical including pharmaceutical, oil and gas, buildings, transport systems and related structural components.

ETPIS deals with occupational health and safety of the workers in industry, environmental safety, and the prevention of major accidents with off-site consequences.

- *European Network Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health ENETOSH*

ENETOSH promotes quality in education and training in occupational safety and health. It collects and assesses examples of good practices and develops a joint standard of competence for teachers in occupational safety and health in Europe.

- *The Thematic Network for Ultraviolet Measurements UVNet*

The Thematic Network for Ultraviolet Measurements was a three-year project. It enhanced exchange of results and ideas between the research laboratories and industry to obtain a better understanding of the problems associated with the calibration and testing work. The Thematic Network still continues its activity after the official funding period in 2010.

- *European Human Biomonitoring HBM*

HBM is monitoring activities in human beings, using biomarkers, that focus on environmental exposures, diseases and/or disorders and genetic susceptibility, and their potential relationships.

The ultimate aim is to support environmental policy as well as public health policy by better data comparability and accessibility within and between countries and more effective use of resources through shared development of scientific tools and appropriate strategies.

A number of network are also based on cooperation between funding institutions:

- *OSH ERA NET*

The ERA NETs were part of the 6th Framework Programme. The OSH ERA NET aimed at the identification and prevention of new and emerging safety and health risks at work by promoting communication and cooperation between national funding institutions for OSH research in Europe. The network still continues its activity after the official funding period, which ended 2010.

- *WORK-in-NET*

The aim of WORK-IN-NET was to set up sustainable communication and cooperation channels in Europe between the still fragmented national and regional research activities in the area of work-related innovation issues. The WORK-IN-NET Consortium exchanges and collects, analyses and disseminates information on existing national and regional activities on work-related innovations, thus paving the way for joint, transnational initiatives as benchmark exercises, transfer seminars and a joint programme. From 2004 to 2010, WORK-IN-NET was supported by the European Commission, but there are still informal contacts between the national funding agencies.

Other interesting networks are

- *EuroHealthNet*
This is a not-for-profit organisation networking the bodies publicly responsible across the European Union for health promotion, public health and disease prevention measures, and particularly addressing health and social inequities. EuroHealthNet aims to stimulate and support actions addressing the social determinants of health and health inequalities and ultimately contribute to better health for European citizens with greater equity within and between states and regions. Of particular interest is in the upcoming EuroHealthNet Study Visit on Occupational Safety and Health.

- *The Joint Programming Initiative on 'More Years, Better Lives'*
The initiative will coordinate research in the field of demographic change and population ageing. Examples of such research include how to retain people in the labour market, how to help older people remain active for as long as possible, in good health and with a better quality of life and how to make Europe's future care systems sustainable. The Joint Programming Initiative will develop its common strategic research agenda on the ageing population over the coming months with the assistance of prominent experts. This agenda will then be implemented through joint actions and projects involving a substantial commitment of funding and participation from involved countries.
The European Commission will provide financial support for the coordination of the initiative; which is expected to start delivering concrete results after 2012, such as science based recommendations for adapting pension systems based not only on age, as is currently the case, but on people's capacity to work.

- *EANPC*
The European Association of National Productivity Centres (EANPC) was established in 1966 as a successor body to the European Productivity Agency. Its purpose is "to facilitate and increase exchanges of information and experiences, and arrange co-operation among participating bodies". Its decision organ is the General Assembly (GA), which consists of the EANPC member organisations. Membership in the Association is open to all 'national productivity centres' or institutions deemed their equivalent within the member states of the 'United Nations Economic Commission for Europe'. Its General Assembly meets once a year to discuss and decide on the activities of the association.

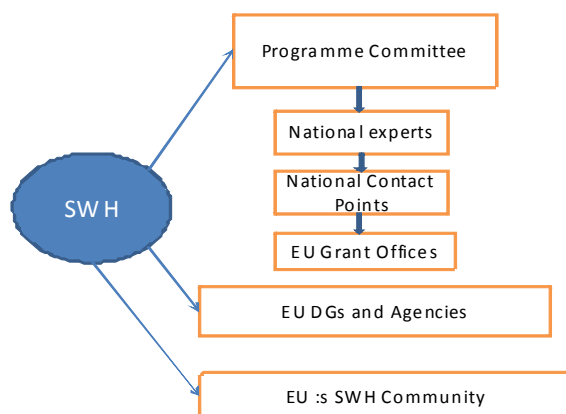
There also exist networks more directed towards dissemination and impact, such as

- *EUWIN, the European Workplace Innovation Network*
EUWIN is a network mainly focused on communication and awareness-raising. It is directed on animating, resourcing and sustaining workplace innovation in companies in order to create more scale and impact across the EU. Its aim is to accelerate the transfer of know-how and the application of workplace innovation practices across Europe.
In its workshops and symposiums EUWIN deploys expert and experienced facilitators skilled in interactive techniques for audience engagement. It is a catalyst for positive change, a stimulator and a generator of ideas. It seeks to establish positive and practical outcomes and a body of usable, not theoretical knowledge. It is set up by DG Enterprise and covers all MS grouped into six regions.

- *UK WON*
This is an UK-based network of institutions, practitioners and individuals researching and developing new ways of organising work to meet the competitive challenges of contemporary economic, technological and cultural change. Based on evidence from workplaces across Europe, UKWON believes that improved competitiveness and performance can be achieved through, rather than at the expense of, a high quality of working life. UKWON is governed by a Board of Directors and supported by an Advisory Board including representatives of leading employers' organisations, trade unions, public bodies, universities and NGOs. They work with a wide range of associates from the UK and the rest of Europe.

How to choose the best way of input

A summary of the different ways of influencing a programme in Sweden can be found in the figure below.



However in order to ensure the best impact, the platform suggests the following approach:
For the present 2014-2015 Calls (input possible spring 2014)

- Disseminate widely information about 2015 year's Calls
- Looking for 2015 year's Calls that may be interpreted wider
- Try to enlarge the scope of the Calls by asking for inclusion of relevant "words" within present Calls, such as occupation , sustainable work systems, etc

2016 and forward Strategic programmes and Work programmes

- Strategic programmes (input possible spring and early autumn 2014):
- Work the formal way to convince national members and experts in the Programme Committees on the need to include SWH as a focus area
- Provide position papers for 1-3 programmes areas made in collaboration with the European network and the relevant DGs and Agencies
- Work programme 2016 and forward (Winter 2014-2015 and July 1st Calls)
 - In a joint collaboration with other European researchers try to influence the calls to include possibilities for SWH research in all programmes

- Try to include 1-2 new calls within Swedish/Nordic excellence areas in the best applicable programme(s).