

The European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, held a speech about "The future of Social Sciences and Humanities in Horizon 2020" at the British Academy London on the 10th of November.

In this speech she underlined the importance of the Social Sciences and Humanities and announced they would have a central role in Horizon 2020, the new European research funding programme estimated to be worth €80 billion.

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn highlighted the importance of European Research Infrastructure Consortia - commonly called "ERICs" - in the social sciences and humanities.

*"Given the importance of developing and providing better access to social sciences data to increase knowledge, innovation and evidence-based policy making, we are planning to launch by 2015 a number of European Research Infrastructure Consortia - commonly called "ERICs" - in the social sciences and humanities. They will play a significant role in reinforcing cooperation between national and EU-level research and innovation policies.*

*ERICs work to establish and operate research infrastructures to promote innovation, research and technology transfer in areas that are often beyond the reach of a single research group, nation or region.*

*While one normally thinks of such infrastructures in terms of particle accelerators or large-scale laser systems, SSH infrastructures are also very important, and these range from the digitalisation of data archives in the fields of history or arts, to open access datasets in areas ranging from ageing to voting behaviours.*

*Infrastructures are one of the important elements of the European Research Area – better known as ERA. As you know, in addition to Horizon 2020, the Commission's intention is to come forward with proposals for an ERA Framework in 2012, as announced in the Innovation Union."*

[Read the Commissioner's speech](#)