



Institutional Landscape and Research Policy For Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) in Armenia

GlobalSSH project background report

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1. A short summary of the history of SSH development in Armenia.

The damage caused by the "transformation" could have had a fatal impact on the further progress of the society and the nation. During the post-Soviet period, the preservation of national intellectual potential has been the primary task of scientific organizations. At present, the state's task is to provide all the necessary conditions for the development of the talent and the application of intellectual potential of these individuals in their homeland. The lack of such prospects will accelerate the processes of emigration and brain drain, as well as further diminishing of intellectual potential.

The difficulties of a transition period, worsening of the economic situation, destruction of previous economic, scientific connections, sharp decrease of a demand for a traditional Armenian intellectual production have led to the sufficient reduction in the activities of many scientific centers. The reduced budget allocations to S&T, mainly used for salaries and covering growing operating costs, a sharp reduction of total number of research staff and slowdown of inflow of young specialists to science and technology resulted in deficiency of practicing scientists and emigration of qualified Armenian specialists to the developed foreign countries or other sectors of the economy.

During these years, science especially in the SSH field has not received adequate state support. The reduction of funds allocated to science and education appears to have become permanent. The level has dropped to 1% of the state budget expenditures. In 1992 the government introduced a thematic funding scheme for scientific projects based on the conclusions of an expert council made on a competitive basis. These funding measures were aimed at stimulating initiative on the part of researchers and ensuring independence in carrying out research, as well as at shutting down small and unpromising projects. However, the allocated funds were mainly directed towards paying salaries. Thus, science in Armenia was deprived of the ability to carry out an integrated policy in the field of fundamental research, to ensure the re-orientation of its potential, to initiate new research trends, to provide effective organizational and financial support to research institutes, and to stimulate investigations.

In Armenia there actually exist state, international and private sources for science funding. The strengthening measures should be the only policy for R&D in this situation. The government is expected to be the main source of funding of the institutions belonging the government institutional sector. At the same time, intensifying collaboration with international scientific foundations, Armenian and foreign benevolent organizations, and certain individuals has greatly assisted science development during this difficult period.¹

Grants and credits received in Armenia from abroad formed 50% of the state budget allocation for R&D. While the other non-official transfers from emigrated Armenians account for 30% of the state budget. The Armenian state budget specifies three channels for financing of scientific researches: thematic, basic and special-orientated financing. In 2000 the Armenian National Assembly - Parliament adopted the Law on Scientific and Technological Activities. The Law acknowledged the important role of science in the social and economic development of the country and development of science policy and cooperation between the university and academic science. The Government of RA assigned leading position to the Ministry of Education and Science in management and policy

¹ *The Science, Technology and innovation System in Republic of Armenia, Country report #2, July 2005.*

making. This Law stressed that the preservation and further development of R&D potential was considered to be a core element in improving national security of Armenia. Along with thematic funding, it was recommended that special-orientated financing aimed at addressing the science tasks be introduced.

The institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of RA shares the R&D performance with both universities and private sector. Armenian scientists and research institutions have been receiving increasing numbers of grants within the framework of international research projects aiming at supporting the networking, the publication of research outcomes, and the purchase of modern equipment and facilities, such as establishing reliable communication lines, internet and e-mail connections and addressing other vital problems.²

During the years of building up the new Armenian statehood, the level of training in post-graduate and doctorate courses has declined, urgently necessitating tailor-made steps directed to improving the situation. In recent years, the requirements for the scientific level of defended dissertations have to a certain extent improved, but much remains to be done in this direction. In the period from 1991 to 2001, 112 dissertations for doctoral and 447 for candidate's degree were defended.

Number of Scientists Employed in Armenian in the Period of 1998 -2005

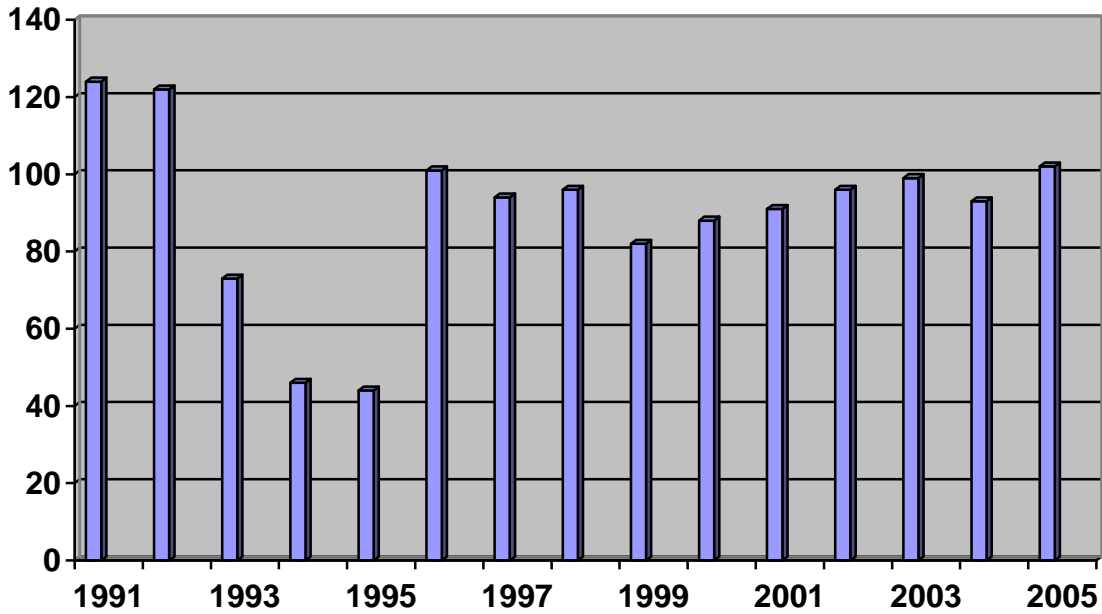
Year	Number of Scientists	Doctors of Science	Candidates of Science
1998	6125	513	2101
1999	6528	417	1644
2000	7309	494	1701
2001	6965	449	1670
2002	6737	476	1758
2003	6277	496	1698
2004	6685	487	1811
2005	6892	542	2029

Source: National Statistical Service of Armenia, 2003. Statistical Yearbook of Armenia, www.armstat.am

There are serious problems with the science personnel. Over the last 15 years, low salaries and emigration of scientists (brain drain) lead to significant decrease in the number of research personnel while at the same time the average age of researchers is increasing.

² *The Science, Technology and innovation System in Republic of Armenia, Country report #2, July 2005.*

Figure 1: NUMBER OF R&D INSTITUTIONS (1991-2005)



2. SSH institutional framework (organisations)

The disciplinary division of SSH in Armenia

Traditionally in Armenia historical science and philosophy were well-developed. Alongside those, linguistics, law and, of course, theology were also developed even in ancient times. There is no hard and fast division between the humanities and social sciences. In different periods of time history, the study of literature and arts, law, linguistics, oriental studies, ethnography and archeology were ranked among the humanities. Social studies, economics, demography, pedagogy, social philosophy, sociology and political science were, as a rule, ranked among social sciences. All these fields of knowledge are being advanced in the country. In particular, within the system of the Academy of Sciences they are included in the Division of Armenian Studies, Social Sciences & the Humanities. In terms of the classification of disciplines, it is specific for Armenia to single out Armenian Studies as a separate field within SSH. In the post-Soviet period such SSH fields as sociology, law and legal studies, political science, psychology, management, economics, history and philosophy have been experiencing particularly rapid development. Having broken away from the stifling boundaries of the Marxist ideology, these fields of the humanities have been evolving most dynamically.³

As shown in Table 1, economy, history, philology, law, philosophy and art are the most attractive fields for post-graduates.

Table 1: Enrollment, Admission and Graduation of Post-Graduates by SSH Disciplines

³ *The Science, Technology and innovation System in Republic of Armenia, Country report #2, July 2005.*

Discipline	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
History	59	55	61	73	64
Economics	297	255	281	354	413
Philosophy	8	12	16	12	16
Philology	113	112	124	127	128
Law	47	48	63	80	75
Psychology	19	22	24	24	20
Sociology	11	6	12	18	23
Political sciences	5	9	7	9	15
Art	53	44	64	39	41
Pedagogics	25	37	36	40	34
Architecture	37	32	35	20	28
TOTAL	674	568	723	796	857

National structures in the S&T field

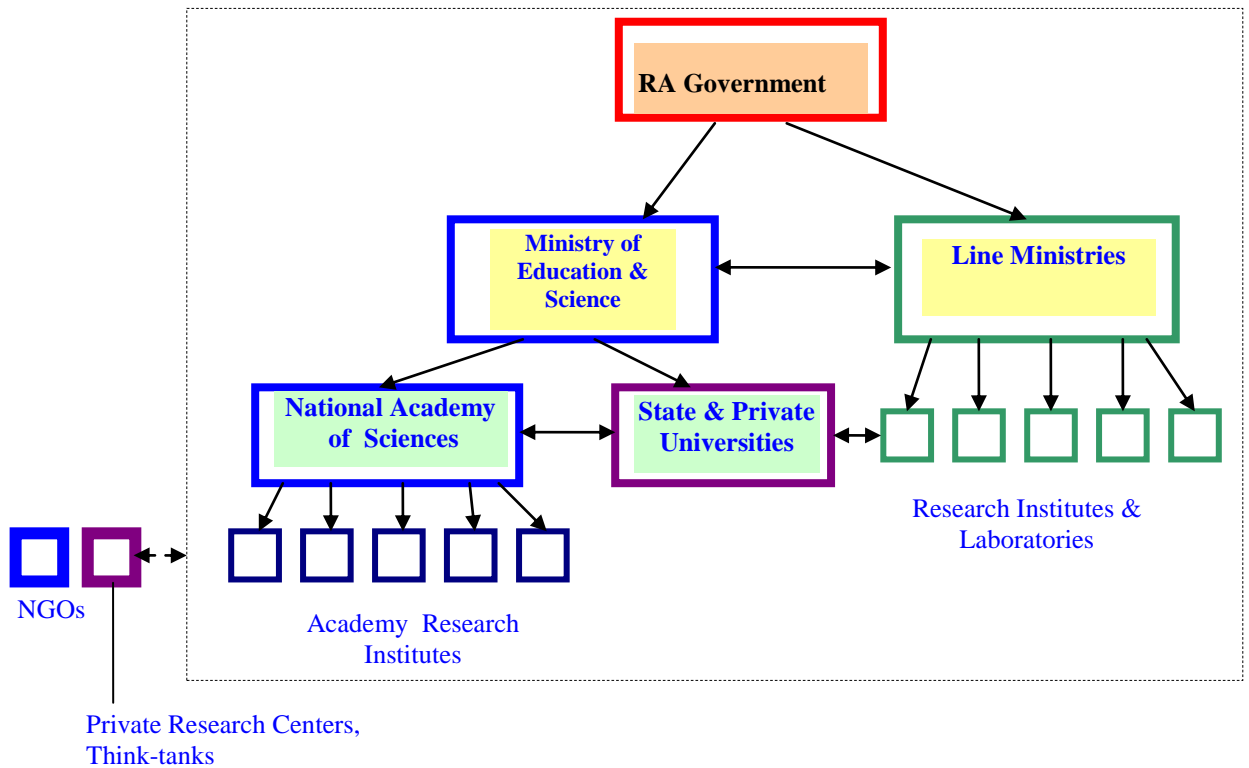
institutional

Researchers in the Republic of Armenia work in different organizations. In Armenia, like in most of other post-soviet republics, the soviet model for scientific organization remains to exist, which includes four sectors of science:

- 1) the National Academy of Sciences of RA,
- 2) in Universities and High Education Institutes,
- 3) in research institutions affiliated to various ministries,
- 4) in research units within private companies, think-tanks and NGOs.

In the Republic of Armenia the S&T activity is under the auspices of the Government and the National Assembly. The National Assembly has a Commission for Science and Education. The Government has established a Council for Promotion of Information Technologies, and a few Ministries manage S&T activity. Since 1994 the budget expenditures for the sciences have been fluctuating from 0.2% to 0.3% in 2006. Meanwhile several new research institutions have been established aimed at fostering certain research disciplines, thanks to support from the Government, international grants, and other sources. Among the newly established institutions there are the Armenian Sociological Association (ASA), Center for Ecological and Noosphere Studies, the Caucasian Media Institute-CMI, the “Noravank” Scientific-Education Foundation, the Armenian Center for Strategic & National Studies, Yerevan Press Club and the International Scientific and Educational Center.

Diagram: R&D Institutional Structure



Short overview of research organisations in Armenia

SSH occupy quite a modest place in the overall system of the research organizations in Armenia. For the most part research was and is still conducted in the field of physical, mathematical, technical and engineering sciences, in the fields of medicine, biology and chemistry. In our estimates, not more than 20% of the research organizations were engaged in SSH. However, in recent years, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the number of institutions doing SSH research has increased considerably due to the emergence of private universities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private companies and think-tanks. The 50 institutions that we surveyed and that engage in SSH research by us included:

- 10 NAS RA Institutes,
- 8 State institutions of higher education,
- 5 private IHEs,
- 5 research institutes under various line Ministries,
- 5 private companies/organizations,
- 17 NGOs.

Basically, it reflects the overall picture of the SSH research infrastructure existing in the Republic of Armenia.

The National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (NAS RA) was founded in 1943 as the highest scientific institution in country, which consolidate the efforts of scientists in carrying out fundamental researches in different fields of science. It is apparent, that science is concentrated in Armenia mainly in the system of the National Academy of Sciences. The NAS RA includes more than 30 public scientific organizations, councils, and societies. Presently the NAS RA employs 3900 personnel, including 83 Full Members, 54 Corresponding Members, 356 Doctors of Sciences and 1165 Candidates of Sciences. It also includes the second largest Fundamental Scientific Library in the country with thirty-two branches in the research institutes, printing and publishing houses, and museums.

In the NAS RA institutions there have been carried out studies on SSH too, like History, Economics, Philosophy, Philology, Law, Education, Art, Architecture, Psychology, Sociology, Political sciences, Armenian studies, Oriental studies, Anthropology and Archeology.

Many applied social-orientated projects were implemented in NAS RA with the assistance of USAID, TACIS, World Bank, and other organizations. The number of information management systems of countrywide importance have been created: for example, Araks (1994-1999), a system for pensioner registration, pension appointment and payment, and account of employer payment; Paros (1994-2001), a system for family requirements and distribution of state domestic grants for poverty; Sevan (1997-2001), a system for calculation and analysis of employment; MIDAS (2001-2002) a system for development and analysis of medical-organization information; OSIRIS (since 2002), a system for automatic registration of civil status acts; PARNAS (since 2002), a system for individual pension insurance; and others.

The NAS RA maintains close collaboration and supports development of scientific studies carried out with Yerevan State University, the State Engineering University of Armenia, and other higher educational establishments.

SSH research associations and major research networks

Numerous associations, societies and unions that unite researchers in various SSH field operate in Armenia. Among them are Armenian Sociological Association (ASA), Philosophical Society, Association of Political Scientists, Union of Armenian Political Scientists, Psychologists' Society, Society of Practitioner Psychologists, Lawyers' Association of Armenia, Society of Lawyers, Young Lawyers' Union, Society of Attorneys, Attorney's Chamber of Armenia, Economic Society, Geographic Society and many others. As a rule these unions, societies and associations are individual membership-based professional societies. However, there are also societies that allow collective membership of institutions and organizations. The key feature of those professional associations is that bring together researchers from various SSH institutions, viz. NAS RA, IHEs, Ministerial Institutes, private companies and NGOs. They are not subordinated to any State entity and they unite researchers from various fields. Quite a few professional associations of Armenia are members of international associations. Thus, e.g., established in 1990, Armenian Sociological Association has since 1992 been a national member of the International Sociological Association (ISA), a member of Euro-Asian Marketing Research Association (EMRA) since 1998 and a member of ESOMAR since 2006. Many professional association maintain close research contacts with their counterparts in CIS countries, in particular in the South Caucasus countries. The most advanced associations of research organizations have offices, paid staff, publications and newsletters and web-sites and are included in international reference books and directories.

Short overview of the higher education system

The higher education system in Armenia consists of 22 public institutions of higher education (IHEs) and over 67 private IHEs. From 2000 on, the system of higher education in this country started to reform itself along the lines of the European models as per the Bologna agreement. By 2007 virtually all Armenian IHEs are expected to move to a three-tier system of higher education, i.e. studies leading to bachelor and master's degrees and post-graduate studies ("aspirantura").

Many IHEs departments conduct theoretical and applied research. Even though basic science is on the whole advanced in the system of the Academy of Science, the IHEs departments are also engaged in research, albeit to a lesser degree.

At present, efforts are put forth to reform the science system in Armenia. According to the proposed reform of the science and research institutes system, in the near future the research institutions of the Academy of Science will cooperate much closer to relevant IHEs departments and chairs and in some cases will merge⁴.

3. SSH policy frameworks

In 2002 the Armenian Government adopted the resolution "On Priority of S&T Trends in Armenia" that included the following disciplines:

- Armenian Studies,
- Information Technologies,
- Special Purpose Investigations,
- High-tech including Biotechnology and Nanotechnology,
- New Energy Sources,
- Risk Factors and Human Health,
- New Materials,
- Basic Research having crucial importance for applied sciences.

The declared priority areas are very general and hardly to be developed all together by scarce funds allocated for R&D and only one is on the SSH field – Armenian studies. The process of making up special R&D programs in Armenia has been at its initial phase, and the Government has not adopted yet any of such program. Lack of general understanding of intellectual property issues and laws induce delay in the end solutions of numerous problems in the Armenian science transfer as well. Only the legislative basis is more or less developed in Armenia. Recently an Agency for Intellectual Property was created in the structure of Ministry of Trade and Economic Development of RA.

At present a science reform document is being drafted in the country. According to the draft, a special entity affiliated with the Armenian Government will be set up to carry out national policies in science and research. So far that function has been performed to a varying extent by the Ministry of Education & Science and by the National Academy of Science regarding basic research.

⁴ See *Concept Paper of the Reform in the Science Sector*. Inter-Departmental Commission. Yerevan, 2006. – 24 p. (in Armenian).

There is an agreement with the Academy of Sciences of the Russian Federation on cooperation in science in general and in SSH in particular. In Russia there is a Fund that supports the humanities and according to a preliminary agreement reached in December 2006, Armenian scholars and social scientists will be entitled to participate in grants competition. Besides, there is also an agreement of cooperation between the Academies of Sciences of the two countries. Many SSH research projects are implemented within the framework of the European Programs such as COPERNICUS, INTAS, TEMPUS, TESIS, FP6 and FP7. Various international foundations that have been operating in Armenia since 1995 (such as Open Society Institute (Soros Foundation), Eurasia Foundation, USAID / IREX, CRRC) have been instrumental in promoting international collaboration in the SSH field.

At present, the Government regards Information technologies and Advanced technologies as well as Armenian Studies as the science and technology development priorities, which is also reflected in funding policies. Thus, in 2005 the Armenian Government started funding of 8 targeted research programs in high tech and communications technologies. One program aimed at creating a new four-volume publication on the history of the Armenian nation.

4. SSH funding

SSH is heavily under funded in Armenia even by the standards of a poor developing country. Only a fraction of modest amounts (at best about 0.2% of the GDP comes from the national budget and slightly more from foreign sources) allocated to science is earmarked for SSH. While the lion's share (89.2% and 87.1% in 2003 and 2004 respectively) of the meager budgetary funding goes to natural and technical sciences (51.3% and 37.9% in 2003 and 44.5% and 42.6% in 2004), humanities get 3.9% in 2003 and 4.7% in 2004 and social sciences 1.8% in 2003 and 2.3% in 2004. The remaining 5 or 6% are split almost evenly between agricultural and medical sciences⁵. In August 2002, the Armenian Government approved a list of national priority directions in the development of science and technology. Out of 8 priorities only one ("Armenian Studies")⁶ is somewhat related to the mainstream SSH. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the Armenian Government does not have a long-term budgetary commitment to improve the current situation and to make bold reforms that would result in the founding of a new system.

In 2007, AMD 5.83 bln (or 1.04% of total Expenditures in the national budget) are earmarked for the sector⁷. Although a 12.4% increase as compared to year 2006 (AMD 5.19 bln, or 1.08% of the overall Expenditures)⁸, the amount falls short of the Government's initial intention to allocate to science (including R & D) at least 3% of the Budget Expenditures from 2002 on. In fact, that was more than mere intention. It was a provision in the 5 December 2000 Law of the Republic of Armenia *On Scientific and Technological Activities*⁹. However, on December 14, 2001 the Law was amended stipulating that an annual increase in appropriations for science shall be at least

⁵ These are the latest available data. See: Republic of Armenia. National Statistical Service. *Social situation in the Republic of Armenia*. Yerevan, 2003 and 2004 editions (in Armenian).

⁶ Government of the Republic of Armenia. *Decree No. 1302-N*, August 15, 2002.

⁷ Republic of Armenia. *Law On the National Budget of the Republic of Armenia for Year 2007* (adopted on 29 November 2006).

⁸ Republic of Armenia. *Law On the National Budget of the Republic of Armenia for Year 2006* (adopted on 11 October 2005).

⁹ Republic of Armenia. *Law On Scientific and Technological Activities*, Article 23.2 (adopted on December 5, 2000).

proportionate to the growth in the national budget revenues¹⁰, thereby drastically curtailing the potential budgetary allocations for SSH as well.

In general, judging by the national budgetary funding patterns, science, including, SSH, is definitely not at the top of the priorities list of the Armenian authorities. Thus, twice as much money will be spent on the public administration system and the parliament. In 2007, Armenia is going to spend on embassies and military attachés only 1.3 times less than on science. The increase in the appropriations for science falls behind the growth in the amounts allocated for other purposes. At the same time, an increase in the appropriations, for example, for the public administration system and the parliament is 14.2%, for maintenance of public order is 21.8% and for national security is 28.6%. Thus, even though the 2000 Law identified science as “an exceptionally important factor” in ensuring national security¹¹, the national budget in years 2000-2007 does not support that contention.

To increase significantly the amounts allocated to SSH it would be necessary first to increase substantially the funding of the science sector in general and to increase the share of SSH. While there has been a steady growth in recent years in the allocations from the national budget to SSH research conducted in the institutions of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences (See Table 1), those amounts are sadly inadequate. On the average, the spending is 619 961 AMD (about US \$ 1,675) per researcher per year or about US \$ 140 per researcher per month.

Table 1. Amounts allocated from the national budget to 10 research institutions of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences for SSH research (thousand AMD)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total amount	121759.2	106252.0	133741.5	181260.6	187415.1	212085.4	275118.4	329199.4
Minimal	894.8	621.9	641.8	1045.2	1180.4	1180.4	2379.2	2566.2
Maximum	25994.4	20065.2	27306.0	38908.3	39687.8	54729.1	72778.2	90553.2
Average	13528.8	11805.8	14860.2	20140.1	20823.9	23565.0	30568.7	36577.7

Source: *Mobilizing SSH Armenian Project*

The above-mentioned Law also set forth the three *types* of funding of science from the national budget, viz. **fixed** (*institutional*), **targeted** (*State priority programs-specific*) and **thematic** (*contractual*) types¹². The Armenian Government issued special Decrees detailing those types and establishing relevant selection, approval, funding, implementation and reporting procedures¹³.

The **fixed** (*institutional*) is used for funding: (i) basic research and very significant applied research, (ii) maintenance and development of infrastructure used for R & D, (iii) maintenance of scientific

¹⁰ Republic of Armenia. Law *On amending the Republic of Armenia Law ‘On Scientific and Technological Activities,’* Article 1 (adopted on December 14, 2001).

¹¹ Law *On Scientific and Technological Activities*, Part 1, General Provisions.

¹² Law *On Scientific and Technological Activities*, Sub-clauses (a), (b) and (c) of Article 23.4

¹³ Government of the Republic of Armenia. *Decree No. 1121(On approving the procedure for fixed funding of scientific and scientific-technological activities*, November 17, 2001), *Decree No. 1122 (On approving the procedure for thematic funding of scientific and scientific-technological activities*, November 17, 2001) and *Decree No. 1121(On approving the procedure for targeted funding of scientific and scientific-technological activities*, November 17, 2001).

facilities of a national value and (iv) State programs of training of science personnel. The **targeted** type is used for funding scientific and scientific-technological programs that have high priority for the State. The **thematic** type is used for funding on a contractual basis all kinds of research projects (including R & D, testing, training, etc.) selected through tenders, contests, etc.

Thematic funding has been prevalent (and at times almost the only type) since its introduction in 1992. **Fixed** (institutional) funding was reestablished in 1998 and gradually became more prominent, especially in the aftermath of the passage of the said Law. Thus, in 2003, 75% of the budgetary allocations to science were to go through thematic funding, while fixed funding accounted already for 24%. **Targeted** funding (which actually started in 2004) was negligible (1%). However, the Armenian Government saw that correlation as grossly inadequate. In what can be regarded as a major policy shift the Government first sought to raise the share of the fixed and targeted funding to 37% and 10% respectively and identified the following percentages as a “final goal” to be attained within 8 years since 2004: fixed funding 50%, thematic – 40% and targeted – 10%¹⁴. About a year later the Government made another radical move, setting as the final goal (to be reached within the following five years) the following correlations: fixed funding 50%, targeted – 30% and thematic – 20%¹⁵. No explanation has been provided for this dramatic reversal of funding policy priorities and while it would be premature to speak of a return to “Soviet”-style models, there is unquestionably a discernible trend towards highly centralized regulation and governance in the science sector. This conclusion is also supported by the fact that the projected annual estimates for fixed funding for years 2006-2008 are 56.6%-58.5% (i.e. tangibly higher than the stated “final goal”), with the share of thematic funding spiraling down to 24.0%, while targeted funding cannot gain proper momentum (12.7%-14.5%).¹⁶ In addition, it is clear that these drastic changes reflect a lack of a consistent, well-designed and well-thought policy in the sector.

The budgetary allocations of all types for science were disbursed in the Republic of Armenia in 1992-1997 through the RoA Ministry of Economy and since 1997 the national budgetary appropriations have been channeled primarily through the RoA Ministry of Education & Science. Some research units and institutions are administered by and funded through Ministry of Finances & Economy, Ministry of Trade & Economic Development, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labor & Social Issues.

Lack of adequate funding from the national budget underscores the necessity to diversify sources of funding and also leads to greater dependence on donors, especially foreign ones. That is one of the reasons why each year since 2004 the Ministry of Education & Science announces its intention to start applying the principle of co-financing from the following year on. It means that it will be providing only a part of the required funding, while R & D performers (including individual researchers) will have to secure some additional funding from other sources. However, as at late 2006, that intention was never translated into action. Year 2007 has so far been no exception. It remains to be seen if some change is going to occur throughout the year. Nevertheless, the principle is seen as an incentive for entities and individuals engaged in research to supplement funding they get from the national budget with money earned by getting research grants and business contracts and by providing services (including consulting and advisory services). To make that happen, it is believed, performers will seek to enhance quality of their research and to make it attractive for potential sponsors.

¹⁴ *Republic of Armenia. 2004-2006 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework*. Yerevan, 2003, p. 91.

¹⁵ *Republic of Armenia. 2005-2007 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework*. Yerevan, 2004, p. 92.

¹⁶ *Republic of Armenia. 2006-2008 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework: Science*. Yerevan, 2006, p. 94.

There is growing sentiment (echoed in a number of official documents such as *Medium-Term Public Expenditure Frameworks*) that this proposed and anticipated diversification of sources of funding calls for better coordination of research priorities and funding efforts. An idea of establishing a Council or a Science Foundation that would do that coordination has been floated for some time already.

It is difficult to visualize how SSH could draw additional funding through loans or application of research results given the fact that on the whole Armenian economy has so far shown inability to absorb adequately even the output of research capacity in technical, natural, agricultural and medical sciences. As regards services provided on a contractual basis, it is already a well-established and steadily growing, albeit tiny, segment of a still modest market of intellectual services. For a number of reasons it is extremely difficult to assess quantitatively the scope of work done in that segment and the overall size of the latter. That is so because (a) no statistical data (official or otherwise) are available, (b) those services are not registered, (c) implementing parties are not particularly eager to draw public (and particularly tax bodies') attention to financial arrangements, thus much work goes unreported and (d) sometimes the line between purely commercial and grant-like commissioned research is blurred. Another important reason is related to misconceptions entrenched in public mind. While not necessarily affecting the thinking and/or *modus operandi* of the research community per se, those popular misconceptions make researchers heed them. As there is no well-established tradition of academic freedom in post-Soviet countries, one of public perceptions is that SSH research is still "ideological" in the sense that **it has to reflect** ideology, values, priorities and interests of those who commission the research and pay for it **and has to deliver** the "appropriate" results. There is strong suspicion harbored by general public that ideological dogmas of the communist party of Soviet times are merely replaced by no less ideological dogmas and preferences of a customer on a putatively "free" market of ideas. Thus, an idea that research commissioned by foreign entities can pose a threat to national security as it can promote subversive ideas and "foreign" values is not a rare occurrence in public discourse. Those perceptions are reinforced by local practices. While there are almost no private sources in the country for funding SSH research, the very few exceptions include short-term public opinions polls and similar sociological surveys commissioned by political parties for the most part with an express purpose of getting pre-determined results to be used as a tool in their propaganda and political struggle.

However, the above-mentioned misconception becomes less common due to efforts of international organizations that operate as a rule transparently and on a basis of formal agreements signed with the Armenian Government. There is also a growing realization that external funding helps the SSH research survive in this country, supports advanced research, encourages the introduction and use of modern methods and techniques and assists Armenian scholars and social scientists in getting integrated in regional and global networks and in re-establishing contacts and cooperation with colleagues and partners in other countries.

It is not always easy to draw a hard and fast line between contracts and grants also because a legally binding contractual agreement is signed in all cases of individual or team projects. The study conducted within the framework of the *Mobilizing SSH Armenian Project* indicates that the following models of external funding are currently prevalent:

(i) grant or contract money comes directly from a foreign funding entity (Foundation, company, government entity, international organization, etc.) for an explicitly research project to be implemented by an Armenian party;

(ii) Armenian scholar or social scientist or a research team is a partner in the implementation of a joint or a multilateral research project; money is usually channeled through a “senior” foreign partner;

(iii) a foreign entity operating in Armenia and implementing a grant or a contract, which includes research only as one, usually secondary, component, engages an Armenian party as a sub-contractor because the said entity does not have a research capacity or for some other reason;

(iv) a small part (rarely exceeding 10-15%) of the grant given to an NGO. As a rule, it is a small-scale research, which aims at getting a clearer picture of a situation in a particular field or better identifying an existing problem or tapping into a pool of ideas held by some group as to how certain problems could be addressed, etc. Sometimes it also has an educational, training and/or capacity-building dimension.

Even though several foundations and similar entities emerged in Armenia in the past few years with a stated mission of promoting and supporting science and research, such as *National Foundation of Science and Advanced Technologies* (NFSAD, established in 2000), they are for the most part merely grant-awarding and disbursing entities, with money coming from foreign donors or from the Armenian Government. They have yet to engage Armenian business community as donors. Besides, they focus virtually exclusively on promoting applied and basic research in natural, physical, engineering, agricultural and medical sciences. SSH research is not seen as a priority. That attitude mirrors the policies of most of the foreign and international entities that sponsor science in Armenia, particularly International Science & Technology Center (ISTC), USDA, US Civilian Research & Development Foundation (CRDF), US Department of Energy, EU Copernicus program, etc.

The same slant is reflected in the policy of the *Armenian National Science and Education Fund* (ANSEF) established in 2000 in New York (USA) by Armenian Americans. ANSEF is said to be modeled on western science funding agencies and to be geared to Armenia's special needs. It solicits and gets both individual and corporate donations, thereby differing from the Armenian foundations and agencies in this country. As of 2006, it disbursed over US \$ 600,000 to over 500 scientists in Armenia¹⁷. Even though the ANSEF objectives are, *inter alia*, “to perpetuate Armenia's tradition of excellence in research and scholarship,” “to foster and nourish all aspects of Armenia's scientific, and intellectual capabilities” and “to promote modern scientific, technological and scholarly study in Armenia,” nevertheless, its focus is almost exclusively on physical, engineering and natural sciences. Thus, out of 161 projects funded in Armenia by ANSEF in 2001-2007 only a handful (11) were SSH, i.e. less than 7%. In terms of money allocated for projects and the number of researchers involved, the imbalance is even more pronounced. It is also noteworthy that all those 11 projects were only *Armenian studies-related* (and in the field of humanities at that, with not a single project in social sciences funded).

There has been a positive development in recent years, which it would be too premature to regard as a trend, *viz.* some Armenian non-commercial and non-governmental entities choose to allocate discretionary funds for research, which, as a rule, complements their projects of a broader scope. A good example is Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (IDHR), which commissions public universities and private colleges as well as commercial research centers research to do research. While amounts allocated for that research may be modest, still a certain model is set, which is replicated and which gradually may become a standard practice.

¹⁷ See: <http://www.ansef.org/index.html>

As a rule, businesses do not provide grants or donations for SSH research. Big businesses sometimes tap into the research potential of primarily commercial and NGO-affiliated centers on an *ad hoc* basis. When they do, they commission almost exclusively the PR-related or marketing research. While a positive phenomenon in and of itself, the role of business “intervention” is too modest yet. Those contracts are few and far between. Research centers (NGO-affiliated, thinktanks, commercial) report those contracts account for only a fraction of the funding they get for research (about 3- 5% at best).

All those domestic positive developments and emerging patterns notwithstanding, SSH research in this country is still very much dependent on external funding. Some funding for applied research of social issues comes from international organizations. Even though research is not at the top on the list of their priorities, still they do allocate some money to small-scale research projects or research components of bigger projects. Since many of them are development (*UNDP*, German *GTZ* or British *DIFD*) or relief agencies (UNHCR, Norwegian Refugee Council-NRC, DRC) or agencies close to them in their mission (such as UNICEF or IOM), not surprisingly their focus is primarily on poverty eradication, millennium development goals, sustainable development, good governance, human rights, particularly women’s and children’s rights and on issues of refugees and IDPs and on trafficking in women and children. However, there is no consistent pattern or policy on the part of some other international organizations. Thus, in Armenia the country offices of Council of Europe, OSCE and the European Commission do not sponsor research¹⁸, while their offices or units in other countries do support social issues-related research projects in Armenia.

Applied, social issues-oriented SSH research figures more prominently on the agenda of private foreign and international foundations. These policy and practices are best exemplified by *Eurasia Foundation* and *Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation Armenia* (OSIAFA). It is an important part of their mission and policy to support such research within a broader context of serving as catalysts for democratic change, assisting democratic transformations and promoting rule of law, effective public policy reforms, private enterprise, vibrant and viable civil society and respect for human rights and other values of an open society.

In addition to its core program areas and objectives, Eurasia Foundation supports, as a stand-alone project, the *Caucasus Research and Resource Center* (CRRC) initiative¹⁹. CRRC is used as a mechanism to support and promote SSH research, thereby also strengthening “the capacity of local social science researchers, academics and policy practitioners to promote public policy analysis and formulation” and increasing “incentives and opportunities for collaboration among academics, researchers and practitioners.”²⁰

OSIAFA includes research in its core programs. Its grants program, which annually funds from 58 (in 2006) to 105 (in 2002) projects, always includes at least 6 or 7 research projects or research components of projects that may focus on designing a university course or research and/or teaching methodology, study of cultural rights or of quality of education, legal aspects of various social policies, etc.

¹⁸ As evidenced by their responses to the questionnaire in the survey conducted within the framework of the *Mobilizing SSH Armenia* Project.

¹⁹ See: *Eurasia Foundation Representative Office in Armenia* publication. <http://www.eurasia.am>

²⁰ See <http://www.crrc.am>

Other thematic priorities for foreign and domestic entities that fund SSH research include integration into Europe, conflict management and resolution and peacebuilding, regional security and cooperation, Armenian studies, human rights, democracy building, citizen and political participation, economic freedom, gender issues, environmental protection, corruption, media laws and freedom, organizational and policy changes in science and education, youth issues, issues of socioeconomic development in the country's regions, marketing research, art critique, Oriental studies, etc.

Both the funding timeframe and scope vary significantly depending on the type and source of funding. As regards Government funding of SSH from the national budget, the overall share of SSH in the appropriations for science usually does not exceed 7%. No funds have been allocated yet to targeted funding of SSH. As there is no statistical data as to the ratio between annual spending through the thematic and fixed funding, expert estimate on the basis of the existing trends in ratios in the science sector as a whole, on funding patterns and on numbers of graduate students (whose education is supported with money disbursed according to the fixed principle) that the share of the thematic funding is 80-85%. When applied, the targeted funding will be for the duration of the specific project, which, judging by currently existing projects in physical, natural and engineering sciences, will be 2-3 years on the average). Fixed funding is approved and disbursed annually, while usual duration of thematic funding is 3 years. An average monthly amount scholars and social scientists get per project from the Government or other domestic sources for their research is about US \$ 100.

It is still rather an exception that a Government entity should commission a study to a non-governmental research unit, which is not surprising given the national budget constraints. In a representative sample of 18 independent or NGO-affiliated research centers surveyed within the *Mobilizing SSH Armenian Project* only two (i.e. 11.1%) had provided services to the Government for a fee. One was a public opinion poll and the other a study related to the proposed constitutional amendments. What is important, however, is that the Government did not give grants but **commissioned** services and that it paid the amounts on the order of those disbursed by international organizations (about US \$ 11,000 and US \$ 30,000 respectively).

International organizations prefer to fund short-term research projects conducted by a team, with an average duration of 6 to 9 months. When a project contains a research component, the latter's duration is 3-4 months or 6 months maximum. 12-month-long projects are regarded as medium-term ones and are a rare occurrence in SSH research conducted by a team. Individual researchers may get a grant for 12 months; however, projects of shorter duration tend to dominate the landscape.

It is very difficult to estimate the scope of the research done outside the Government-and some donor-funded programs (hence, the overall amount of funds disbursed) because there is no statistical data and no reporting. Most donors point out that on the average they allocate US \$ 5,000-8,000 per SSH research project or a research component and about US \$ 15,000-20,000, when projects are more labor-intensive (such as surveys) and require bigger teams working for a longer period of time. The data obtained from NGO-, IHEs or Ministry-affiliated, commercial and RA NAS research centers are for the most part in line with the donors' estimates. When NGO-affiliated research centers or experts and for-profits get research grants or contracts those are usually within the US \$ 3,500-5,000 range for short-term small-scale projects and US \$ 8,000-10,000 for medium-term projects of a larger scope. Research projects with bigger funding are a rare occurrence for them. Other centers get fewer and smaller grants and contracts.

Foreign funders indicate that they prefer to give research grants to NGO-affiliated centers and to independent non-profits or to commission them to do research. RA NAS research institutions and university-based research centers are next on the foreign funders' priorities list. Commercial, for-profit research centers bring up the rear among the "leaders" on the list. It follows from the responses of the surveyed funders that they select NGO-affiliated centers and non-profits as research performers three times more often than the RA NSA research institutions and university-based research centers and five times more often than commercial research centers. The cross-checking of those contentions with the commercial, RA NAS, NGO-, Ministry- or IHEs-affiliated research centers' data shows that basically the performers concur with the donors' opinion. About 90% of the surveyed independent non-profit or NGO-affiliated research centers get funding from foreign donors.

5. National approaches to the evaluation of scientific capabilities

The evaluation of research capabilities and output has traditionally been an important component of policies and administration in the field of science (including SSH) in Armenia. While such evaluation is a standard requirement and, in fact, a *sine qua non* in the field, the procedures may and do indeed vary considerably as they are predicated on specific arrangements, needs, goals and/or policy objectives. In fact, it cannot be otherwise since different policy-makers, funders, administrators and certifying entities have vastly different agendas and it is only natural that the evaluation procedures should be tailored to those. At the same time, those differences notwithstanding, the crucial components are the same. They include ability to achieve expected outcomes and measurable results, relevance and originality of research, rigorous compliance with the existing standards in a given field, demonstrable critical thinking, creativity and analytical skills as well as demonstrated research experience and excellence of end product. The priority and relative importance assigned to each of these and other components and to their combinations are institution-specific, may be *ad hoc* or relatively permanent and depend on whether evaluation is conducted *a priori* or *a posteriori*. More often than not the procedures and entailing requirements are formalized, explicitly and quite detailed. However, while unequivocally stated, **some criteria** (such as, for instance, competence or excellence) **are not clearly defined**.

In the post-Soviet period two factors have contributed to an increased significance of and to more frequent and systematic evaluation and self-evaluation of individual researchers, research teams and institutions (units). The first is an opportunity to get funding from domestic and particularly from foreign donors. The second is an introduction of a *quasi-grants system* (thematic funding).

A requirement of submitting periodic and/or final reports also boosts evaluation and self-evaluation.

Rarely a single evaluating entity conducts evaluation at all three levels, *viz.* individual, team (group) and institutional. Usually, their mandate include one or two levels. The most prominent actors in evaluation of research capabilities are Higher Certifying Commission (HCC), Ministries, Academy of Sciences and research institutions, since they routinely conduct evaluation and since systematic and comprehensive evaluation is assigned to them as one of the most important of their official duties and functions.

HCC confers advanced (*Candidate* and *Doctor of Science*) academic degrees based on a qualifying research work (dissertation) successfully defended in a specialized academic council and titles of associate and full professors based on teaching in institutions of higher education (IHEs) and on

supervising the research done by those who seek an advanced degree. Thus, almost by default the lion's share of the HCC work is at the level individual evaluation. However, it also evaluates the said academic councils.

Ministries that stand proxy for the Government cannot do more than a cursory and perfunctory evaluation of project proposals submitted for thematic funding since they deal with hundreds of proposals. They rely heavily on the expert opinion of review committees formed up of the respected researchers and academics and on the general standing of an institution where an individual or a research team works.

Ministries, especially Ministry of Education & Science (MoES), also evaluate research centers and activities in the IHEs that are under them as a part of a broader process of evaluation of IHEs. MoES also conducts serious evaluation of all IHEs for the purposes of their licensing and accreditation.

Academy of Sciences evaluates its research institutions on a regular basis, especially within the format of a fixed (*institutional*) type of funding.

Research institutions within the RA NSA evaluate their employees and teams based both on a reporting and contract cycles and on periodic individual evaluation. While the former is tied to thematic and fixed funding, the latter is conducted once every 4-5 years to monitor professional and career growth of researchers.

As a rule, donors rely heavily on experts' opinions and on peer review. They introduced the external review procedure (i.e. evaluation by foreign experts) that was not practiced formerly.

Editorial boards of scholarly periodicals and other publications rely exclusively on peer review.

As evidenced by the *RoA 2006-2008 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework*, the Government plans to establish an independent expert evaluation entity in the near future²¹.

While Armenian scholars' and social scientists' publications, including in the SSH field, in foreign research journals, monographs, etc. are welcomed and held in high esteem, they are not given extra weight in the formal procedures of evaluation, except by donors (e.g. ANSEF).

While qualitative requirements are clearly spelled out, it is not easy to formalize them and there is always much room for subjective interpretation and assessment. Therefore, an emphasis on quantitative parameters in evaluations is not surprising. One of the most commonly used parameters is the number of publications.

A look at the available data on research papers and monographs published by the RA NAS scientists and scholars in 2002-2004 reveals an interesting picture (See Tables 2a, 2b and 2c). While by "domestic" publications the social scientists and scholars outnumber by far their counterparts from natural, physical and engineering sciences, the situation is quite the opposite in terms of publications abroad.

Table 2a

Year 2002

²¹ *Republic of Armenia. 2006-2008 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework*. Yerevan, 2005, p. 94.

Field	Published in		Armenia		Abroad	
	Monographs	Papers	Monographs	Papers	Monographs	Papers
SSH	83	589	6	73		
Physical, mathemat. & engineering sci.	2	321	2	294		
Natural sciences	3	309	-	328		

Table 2b

Year 2003

Field	Published in		Armenia		Abroad	
	Monographs	Papers	Monographs	Papers	Monographs	Papers
SSH	82	549	4	80		
Physical & engineering	4	298	2	298		
Natural sciences	13	348	8	388		

Table 2c

Year 2004

Field	Published in		Armenia		Abroad	
	Monographs	Papers	Monographs	Papers	Monographs	Papers
SSH	95	651	3	99		
Physical & engineering	6	377	3	329		
Natural sciences	11	326	6	370		

Sources: Armenian National Academy of Sciences; Conceptual Approaches to the Reform of the State Administration of the Science Sector in the Republic of Armenia. Yerevan, UNDP Armenia/RoA MoE&S, 2005 (in Armenian), p.91; Armenia SSH Mobilizing Project

It is also noteworthy (even though it is not reflected in the statistical data) that according to experts assessments, on the whole incomparable more publications of the Armenian scientists are in Western and more prestigious scientific periodicals than those of Armenian scholars and social scientists. The latter publish more in Russia and other CIS countries or, when in Western Europe or North America, in less prestigious professional journals.

While most of the research centers (regardless of their status and affiliation) publish occasional papers, conference proceedings and sometimes even monographs, there are very few periodicals in the SSH field. The number of scholarly journals, the overall quantities of copies printed and the periodicity of publication all fell dramatically in comparison to the Soviet years. There are in fact

only five SSH periodicals in Armenia. The Academy of Sciences publishes *Lraber* (Social Sciences Review) and *Historical-Philological Review* (HPR). In 2001, the RA NAS Humanities Division (which also includes social sciences) started *Kantegh/Lantern* (what can be regarded as a periodical (since it is regularly issued 4 times a year). Armenian State University of Economy (ASUE) publishes (since 2004) its *Bulletin*. There is also the *21st Century* (Journal of *Noravank* Foundation). Yerevan State University (YSU) has a SSH section in its *Bulletin* as does (mostly in theory) the RA NAS quarterly *Reports*. *Lraber*, HPR, ASUE's and YSU's *Bulletins* are issued 3 times a year. The Armenian version of the *21st Century* journal is quarterly and the Russian is semi-annual. In 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2006, there was not a single SSH paper in the RA NAS *Reports* (i.e. none out of 60 or more papers); in 2002 and 2004 there was only one SSH paper a year and there were 3 such papers in 2005. All the SSH papers were in fact in the field of the humanities, except one that dealt with economic issues.

The overwhelming majority of the SSH papers are published in Armenian and only few (and far between) papers are in Russian. There are virtually no SSH papers in foreign languages in those periodicals. With the circulation of 200 copies (or 300 at best) each, none of the above-mentioned periodicals (except the Reports) are posted on the Internet.

These three factors (small number of hard copies, none posted in an electronic format on the Internet and the use of the Armenian language as virtually the only language of publications) account for inaccessibility of almost all output in the SSH research in Armenia to most foreign researchers.

It is notable that unlike the RA NAS or IHEs research centers, the independent or NGO-affiliated research centers publish SSH papers, survey and study results, etc. in Russian and in English. This is a standard practice for *Spectrum* Center for Strategic Analysis, Armenian Sociological Association, The Armenian Center for National & International Studies (ACNIS), AAWUE Center for Democracy and Peace and Center for Gender Studies, to mention but a few.

No Science Citation Index exists in Armenia.

No Armenian SSH (or any other for that matter) periodical or publication is reflected in the international citation indexes. That is evidenced by a search in the Web of Science (WOS), the Internet version of the famous *Science Citation Index*. Science Citation Index Expanded aside, its constituent major elements are Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and Arts and Humanities Citation Index AHCI). As at January 10, 2007, the two cover respectively 1,950 and 1,149 of the world's leading scholarly journals in their respective fields.

The same holds true for the **Thomson Scientific** *Current Contents / Social & Behavioral Sciences* database that covers, as of now, 1,789 of the world's leading social and behavioral sciences journals and books.

There is no Armenian SSH researcher among the most highly cited researchers identified by the ISI's *ISIHighlyCited.com* in the social sciences segment of the 21 subject categories.

So far, no studies have been conducted in Armenia to identify the highly cited Armenian SSH researchers.

6. Challenges and prospects for the support of SSH in the region

(i) Policy Framework

The downsides:

There is no consistent and comprehensive science policy in Armenia. One of the factors is that science in general and SSH in particular are not currently in great demand.

While the science sector on the whole is not a priority in this country, SSH is definitely at the bottom of the priorities in the sector. It is best evidenced by grossly inadequate funding and inattention amounting to disregard on the part of the government and public at large. Science (and SSF to even greater extent) is not taken seriously despite the fact that lip service is paid. No consistent efforts are made to allocate adequate funds, to help research institutions to become self-reliant (through tax breaks, etc.) and to encourage private, corporate and other donors (by tax exempting the donations, etc.).

Inadequate recognition of the importance of SSH research, limited funding opportunities and lack of other incentives also account for the fact that there are few viable commercial (for-profit) research centers in Armenia.

Salaries in the sector are meager and lower than average wages. A paradoxical situation has emerged. In most cases it is virtually impossible to earn a living (at least at the level of subsistence wage) by doing SSH research. Thus, to be able to do that research one has to earn a living by something else (teaching, provision of services, etc.).

Very few foreign donors support SSH research in Armenia. Foreign and international organizations that give grants to NGOs (and progressively more often to GO-NGOs) rarely favor SSH research. At best, they can fund it when it is only a tiny portion of the overall project, is narrowly in its application scope and is geared (or at least said to be geared) to the overall goal of the project. They may spend huge amount of moneys in grants for “activities” without first conducting feasibility or other studies and without conducting impact studies in the aftermath of the implementation of various projects. Another feature of grants-awarding and disbursing system that raises concern is that this research is donor-driven in terms of thematic priorities and preferences.

On the positive side, pluralism should be emphasized. The research is not dominated by ideology. Scholars and social scientists are for the most part free in their approaches but at times they exercise self-censorship.

The power that be have so far been open-minded probably partly as a result of the above-mentioned disregard.

(ii) Institutional Framework: Organization & Administration

The current division of the research centers into the four types discussed above (affiliation with RA NAS, Ministries or NGOs or having a status of a for-profit independent entity) requires an in-depth study to assess comprehensively all the existing merits and demerits and to come up with conclusions and recommendations grounded in findings of a more solid research. At the same time, the existing studies and the current assessment indicate that serious reform in organization and administration is long overdue.

This idea is also supported by the fact that at this point quite a significant segment of progress in the SSH field occurs outside the traditional institutional settings and forms (workshops, symposia and conferences, round table discussions, etc.).

Several expert groups²² make quite a convincing case for a drastic reform of the Academy of Sciences. The organization is in fact medieval, highly hierarchical and undemocratic. The Presidium is not accountable and its operation are not transparent and at times murky. It takes an inordinately huge share (which varies from 59.4% to 67.7% annually) of the fixed funding that comes from the State budget. In real terms it means over 0.5 million US dollars every year. Money coming from the State budget account only for about a half of the overall budget of the RA NAS, with the other half coming from foreign and (to a much lesser extent) from domestic donors. The public (and probably the Armenian Government) is not aware how those funds are managed and spent as well as the money “earned” through “services” (leasing of space, etc.).

The Presidium does not provide a strategy or vision for the development of the science sector in Armenia, at least in terms of SSH. The research centers should become independent and accountable only to the Armenian Government that provides funding and overall control.

The RA NAS Presidium has failed so far to bring valid arguments to justify the existing situation. Their pronouncements boil down to rhetoric about a crucial importance of science and about great accomplishments of the RA NAS. That was their stance also during the parliamentary hearings on science held in the Armenian Parliament held in 2005. With adequate funding (of USD 500 million), they contended, everything would be fine and the progress of science and technology would make Armenia an advanced country. That argument, however, is not generally perceived as convincing.

To avoid that stifling and outdated system and to secure independence and access to grants and other funds a growing number of research centers have been established outside that system contributing to competition and higher quality of research.

The centers affiliated with the Ministries differ greatly in their potential, professional cadre and quality of output. While *Matenadaran* (the depository and research center of manuscripts) is of high standing internationally and institutions in the field of economics have earned good reputation and demonstrated high quality of research, the operation of the National Institute of Education (NIE) and of the National Institute of Labor & Social Studies (NILSS) leaves much to be desired. Some foreign donors (including USAID) help the NIE to mobilize the existing expert potential in the country so as to improve the situation in the education sector and to enhance the quality of research in the field. Within the past 12-18 months the Armenian Government has made consistent efforts (with a varying degree of success) to get foreign donors fund some projects to be implemented through NILSS. Even though these entities have been strengthened with new leadership, they have yet to prove their viability, sustainability and quality.

(iii) Training & Professional Development

Few opportunities exist for Armenian scholars’ and social scientists’ professional development in and outside the country partly because of the lack of funds and partly because the system of professional training and education is still essentially “Soviet.” Whatever the merits or demerits of that system, it is geared to a no longer existing political, socioeconomic and ideological paradigm. While the higher education system is undergoing reforms within the framework of the Bologna

²² *Conceptual Approaches to the Reform of the State Administration of the Science Sector in the Republic of Armenia*. Yerevan, UNDP Armenia/RoA MoE&S, 2005 (in Armenian). *On the Draft Conceptual Framework the Reform of the Science Sector in the Republic of Armenia submitted by the RoA National Academy of Sciences*. Yerevan, Ministry of Trade & Economic Development, 2005 (in Armenian).

process, the training and professional development of researchers, especially in the SSH field, has yet to be brought in line with the requirements of the new system.

(iv) Intellectual climate and “state of the art”

Even though the shift from the domination of the (Marxist) ideology has led to pluralism and to liberalization of thinking and research, a new prevalent conceptual paradigm has not emerged yet in SSH. It is most visible in social sciences. While most researchers readily embrace greater flexibility and more inter-disciplinary approaches, the lack of “grand theories” can hardly be seen as a positive development. The so-called “applied research” and application of the already existing knowledge to specific tasks dominate the field. It is for the most part accounted for by the commercialization of services. While those contracts help sustain researchers and institutions, they do not promote or stimulate advance and breakthroughs in theory. Only rarely an attempt is made to “reformat” the field and to formulate a new theory that will generate innovative approaches and methodologies, provide a new perspective and produce genuinely new knowledge.

One of the major difficulties faced by SSH researchers in Armenia is limited access to new publications, including periodicals, in the field produced elsewhere. Financial, organizational and logistical constraints impede their access to on-line library and commercial publications networks.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

a) While pursuing an ambitious goal of building a knowledge-based economy, the country should not forget that it should be matched by admittedly no less important and a broader goal of building a knowledge society. That, however, requires assigning priority, *inter alia*, to social sciences and the humanities.

That goal should be reflected in a comprehensive policy that needs to be formulated and implemented without further delay. Therefore, it is important that a special Council be established under the country’s President, Prime Minister or Government at large. One of the first things this Council will need to do is to increase tangible allocations from the State budget for SSH and to correct an imbalance between hard science and SSH.

Special measures will need to be taken done to upgrade the status of research institutions, to enhance research excellence and to secure opportunities for professional training and professional development of SSH researchers in Armenia. To that end new and broader opportunities for exchange and professional development abroad should be created for SSH researchers, especially young ones.

Access to leading periodicals and publications is critical for a dramatic increase in the quality of the SSH research. The State policy should address this issue by establishing new or upgrading the existing libraries or by finding alternative means to fill that gap. A very good head start would be a subscription to the Project MUSE that provides an on-line access to a wide range of top-level scholarly journals in the humanities and social sciences. It is particularly important that their pricing model gives serious consideration to a country’s position in the World Bank Country Income Group listing. Since Armenia is placed in a category of *Lower Middle Income* countries, the subscribing institution will be given a significant discount and the user fee will be much smaller than usual.

b) International cooperation and collaboration in the SSH field should be a constituent part of the overall integration process, particularly of the European integration. It cannot effectively take place without similar integration in the education field. Since at least the Middle Ages science was one of the most internationalized social phenomena and social institutions. In contrast to education, which until recently was firmly grounded in national specifics, science (including SSH) has been to a large extent extraterritorial and cosmopolitan. In Armenia, however, there are grounds to perceive the developments in the SSH field as the opposite trend, as some sub-sectors are definitely parochial in their scope and quality. Concerted efforts are needed to break out of that arguably self-imposed isolationism. Bilateral and regional cooperation should be enhanced. Special professional development programs for SSH researchers should be designed and implemented by the government and by relevant institutions. These issues should be brought to the attention to international and foreign donors and aid organizations and included in their activities. It should be formulated as a national priority.

At least two or three scholarly periodicals should be started in this country exclusively in the international languages of research (primarily English and Russian). That will help raise the minimum quality standards and will facilitate the exchanges and dissemination of the results of the SSH research conducted in Armenia. Some leading SSH research centers in this country issues could be in charge of individual, preferably thematic, issues. These periodicals would focus on cross-cutting topics and would solicit papers from foreign counterparts, partners and individual scholars and social scientists.