



# *Playing to Our Strengths*

THE ROLE OF THE ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY



IRCHSS

**HEA**

Higher Education Authority  
An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas





# *Playing to Our Strengths*

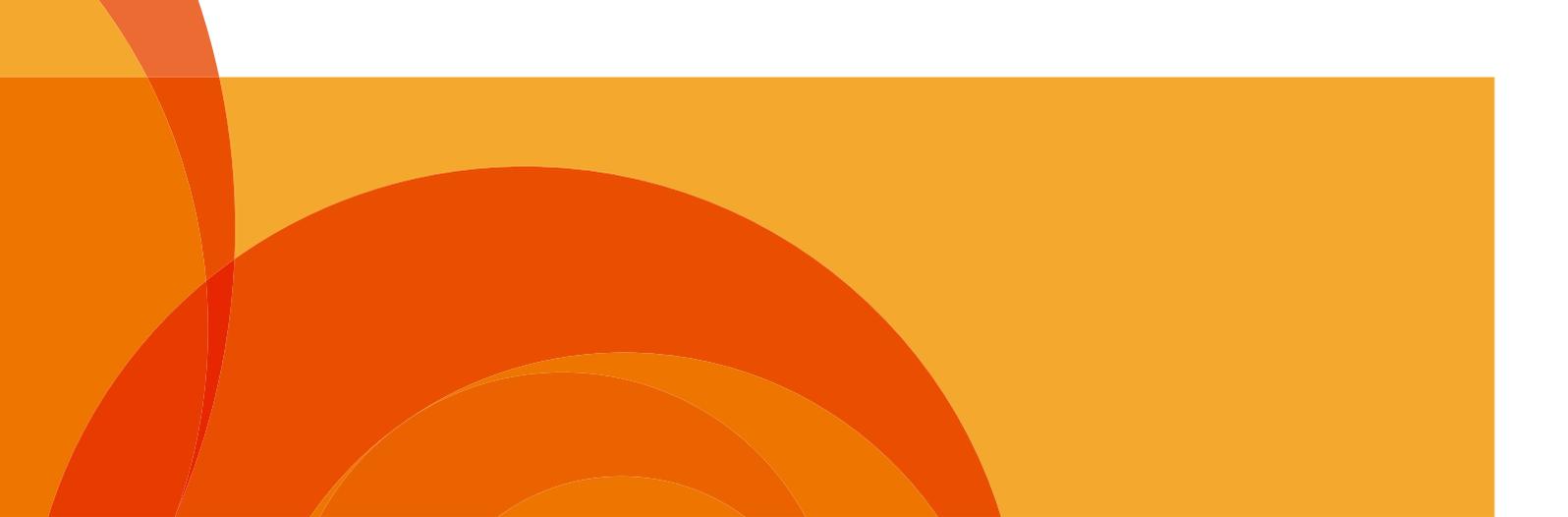
THE ROLE OF THE ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
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# Foreword

## Introduction

This report was commissioned in 2008 by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS), at the invitation of the Minister for Education and Science. This was a response to *Advancing Humanities and Social Sciences Research in Ireland*, a report prepared by the Royal Irish Academy in March 2007. This current Report underlines the significant role that the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) play in our economy and society both directly and indirectly. It recognises that while the AHSS provide skills for specific economically important occupations and sectors, they also enhance quality of life generally and help to make Ireland an attractive place in which to live and do business. In this Foreword the HEA and the IRCHSS together offer some reflections on the AHSS prompted by this Report. We also indicate areas for action, in addition to those identified in the Report, and we set out a process for the development of the proposals contained in the Report.

The Report is a timely contribution to the debate that has followed the Farmleigh Global Irish Economic Forum (September 2009) and the Report of the Innovation Taskforce and it is an important input into the National Strategy for Higher Education.



## The Intrinsic Value and Diversity of the AHSS

As the Report notes, the AHSS are at the heart of society. The HEA/IRCHSS strongly assert the intrinsic worth of studying great art and literature, of historical research and research that increases our understanding of human behaviour and social and economic processes. This should be valued because of its role in bolstering our humanity, enhancing our enjoyment and appreciation of life and creating a society in which it is good to live and work. The study of AHSS disciplines should equally be valued for the knowledge and understanding that it creates that can be applied to economic productivity, creating jobs and solving societal problems.

The AHSS cover a very broad range of subjects and the use of the term “arts, humanities and social sciences” can obscure the differences (and richness) of the various areas. In discussing the future of these disciplines in Ireland, and their contribution to social and economic development, it may be helpful to disaggregate them.

History, languages and literature are disciplines which are an essential part of cultural identity and are necessary for the functioning of a democratic society. They also form a key element of secondary education, and provide ways of intellectual training which can serve graduates in many business and public service occupations. Subjects such as philosophy and archaeology employ relatively few individuals professionally, but these few professionals are essential, not least because societies need a capacity for ethical analysis in debating policies as well as a deep understanding of our past. Social sciences, including economics

and law, are disciplines necessary for business, as well as the regulation and economic and political functioning of society. Artistic disciplines, including the visual arts and design, architecture, music, and film enhance the cultural life of society and contribute to educating the professionals in these areas.

We also need to be careful about stereotypical assumptions about disciplines, for example, assuming that economics is only about improving the financial functioning of society or that law is about regulation. Each of these disciplines may in fact contribute much more to societal cohesion and sustainability; and it may well be the literature scholars who have greater economic impact. After all, Ireland’s contribution to the world is seen internationally in terms of its poets, novelists, essayists and philosophers and this reputation, around the arts and culture particularly, is a large part of what attracts tourists.

## The Economic Value of the AHSS

While we continue to assert the intrinsic merits and pleasures of the study of the arts, humanities and social sciences we also need to develop new ways of ensuring that the AHSS makes an economic impact and of assessing its value.

Many theories on what makes innovative societies place a strong emphasis on “educated” societies. The AHSS has a key role here especially having regard, as the Report notes, to the high demand by young people for AHSS courses of study. (See *Appendix VIII Graduate Recruitment Survey*; *Appendix IX Graduate Careers Survey* and *Appendix X The Consultative Forum*). As

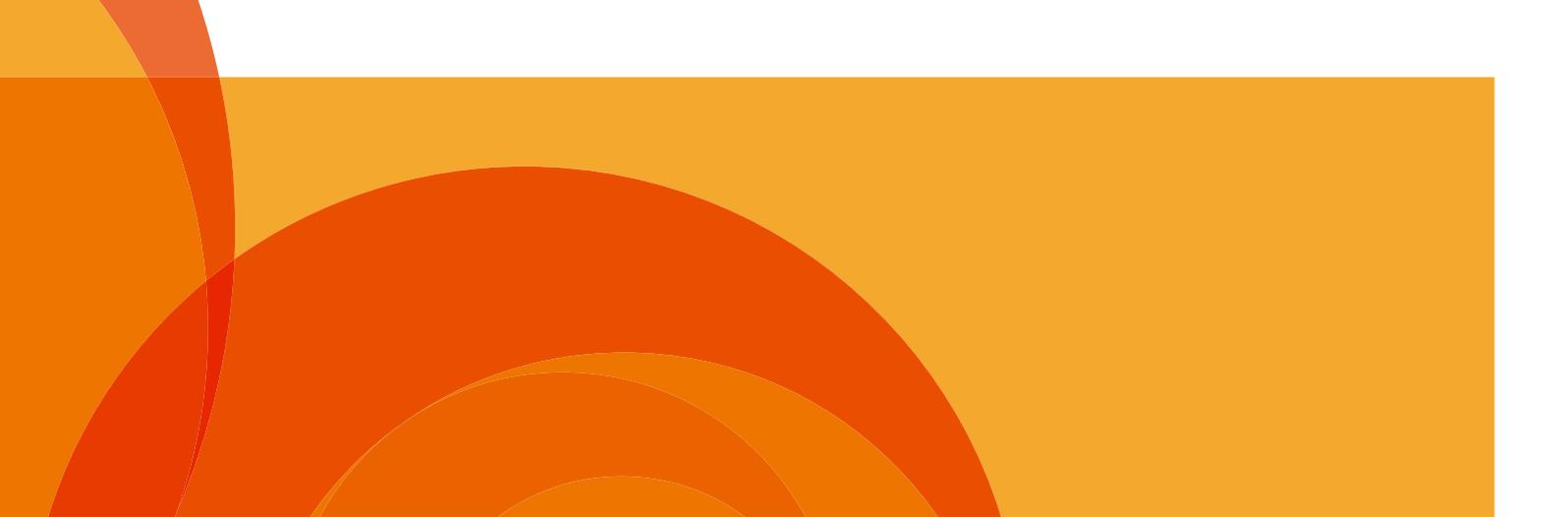
the Report also notes, many graduates from these courses do not follow predictable career paths, demonstrating the wider skills base and more flexible potential employees provided by an education in the AHSS. More specifically, in the context of innovation, the AHSS train a wide range of professionals, e.g. teachers, economists, lawyers, playwrights. Furthermore, its disciplines identify and analyse social and economic issues and develop appropriate policy responses – in effect, social innovation. In addition, its disciplines make a unique contribution to the creative and cultural industries and contribute to developing a wide range of generic skills beyond specific qualifications, such as critical and analytical thinking, cultural awareness, communication, etc.

### The AHSS and the Services Sector

In the Irish economy, the manufacturing sector has traditionally dominated national innovation policy. However in recent times a sea-change in economic circumstances has seen the services sector thrive, surpassing all other sectors in terms of gross value added and employment. Some figures demonstrate the reality as well as the potential –

- Financial services provided over €640 million in tax revenue in 2009.
- The tourism industry employed approximately 200,000 in 2008 with genealogy, literature, theatre, music, art and folklore key selling points for Ireland. (The 2009 Arts Council's document *Assessment of Economic Impact of the Arts in Ireland* spells out the economic value of the arts)
- The creative industries, television, on-line education provision, web design, development of assistive technologies and digital content harness the synergies between AHSS disciplines and those of Science, Engineering and Technology.
- The European Commission (2006) reported that the creative industries generated €654 billion within the European Union (EU).
- Indecon International Economic Consultants reported that the total gross value of the wider arts sector to the Irish economy was €782m (0.45% of GDP and 0.52% of GNP) in 2006.

Currently, Ireland has an opportunity to leverage its competitive advantage in the services sector and aspire to establish itself as a world class leader in the provision of services. The AHSS skill-set could play a pivotal role in the development of the services sector. It is imperative that, as a nation, we embrace a mindset which recognises the role and value of service activities in economic and social terms and actively consider whether existing policies need to be expanded or new policies created in order to align strategic thinking in this area. In particular, economic policy development must be aligned with the services economy and in parallel the education system at third level must continue to support and adapt to suit the new needs of the global service economy. The 'added value' of services is a significant opportunity for Ireland as a country that has in recent decades developed a strong tradition in both visual creativity and information and communications technology.



In addition, we should harness to national development the growing awareness of the contribution that our “Irishness” (i.e. those elements of the national character and psyche which have brought international renown for our practitioners in the AHSS) could make to social and economic development. The creation of a distinctly Irish offering, combining traditions of insight, creativity and entrepreneurship provides an opportunity for us to trade on our AHSS strengths. We should focus on determining what Ireland could achieve in this space which could be distinctive and of interest and value internationally.

## Research

The European Commission (EC) has been actively mapping out the research territory for the next three/five/ten/twenty years. While the research community in Ireland must pay attention to the EC priorities, there is a danger that the EC priorities will become our priorities by default. Because we have not considered what the arts, humanities and the social sciences signify to us in Ireland or to our own grand challenges, we are not prepared psychologically or in terms of resources to begin to address them. Also, as a small country, it is likely that we will be unable to engage with the entire EU agenda so we need to identify our own research strengths and focus our energies and resources.

Foresight and forward looks are built into the EU’s *SSH 2010-13 Work Programme*. We should be able to undertake such exercises, even if the future is inherently unpredictable. Such exercises would benefit from, and contribute to, research planning for individual researchers and groups of researchers and their students. Openness to individual initiative

in the AHSS may have served us well, but in the future we might benefit more from combining that receptivity to individual creativity and initiative with a greater focus on identified critical issues and challenges.

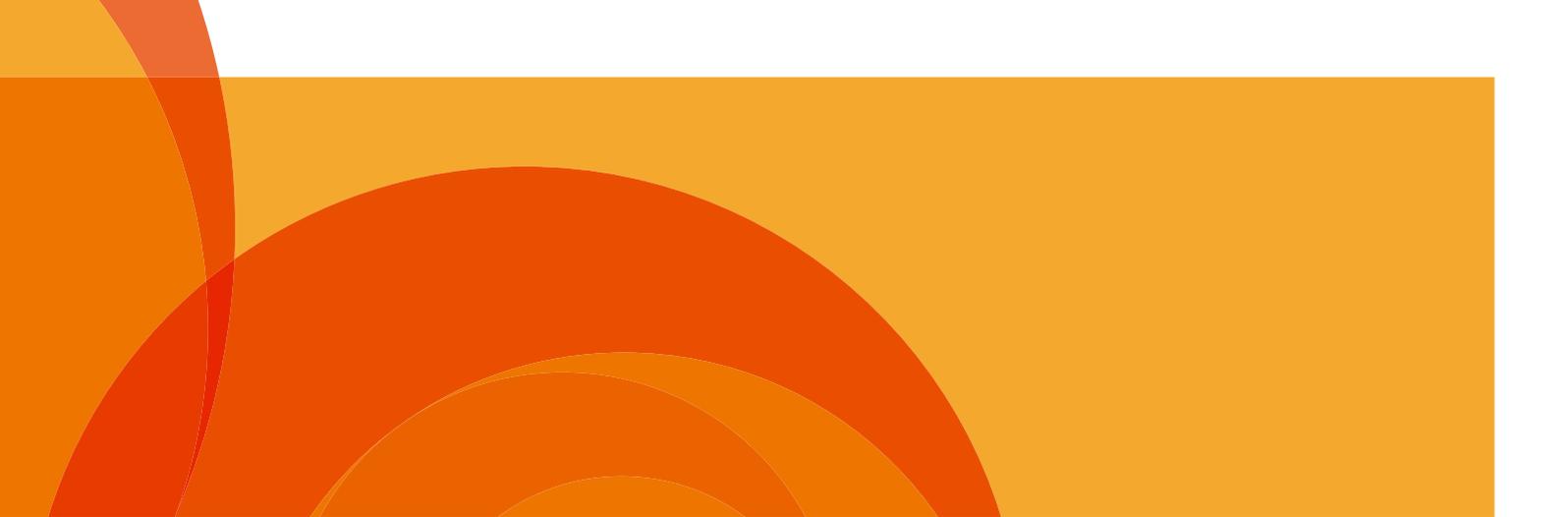
As application to society, economy, policy and practice are important goals of research in the AHSS, the education institutions need to develop quality assessment frameworks that include the valuation of such applied research. At the moment they are almost exclusively focussed on (international) peer-reviewed publications as the sole mechanism for assessing academic merit in promotions, school reviews, etc. While there is a lot of rhetoric about multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, the metrics used are all single discipline-based. The drivers must change if the behaviour of researchers and scholars is to change.

In addition, the research activities of the AHSS are not always well connected with public policy development and implementation. There is a need for structures to ensure appropriate communication and awareness: that research is available and that policy makers are listening. For instance, it is not evident that the research activities of economics departments are available to or availed of by those engaged in economic policy development. Equally, across a broad range of social policy development, there is a need to capture the output from social sciences schools and deploy it in public policy development. Looking at the issue from the other end, social integration presents significant challenges that would benefit from evidence/research based policy making.

## Taking the Agenda Forward

The Report identifies a number of “Proposals for Progress”. The HEA/IRCHSS endorses these as areas for further development and action. In particular, in its consideration of the Report, the IRCHSS and the HEA identified a number of related issues as follows –

1. Economic policy should focus explicitly on developing programmes for promoting services growth and development and on the contribution that can be made by specific AHSS disciplines in providing the skills for the services sector (including tourism, creative arts, media, etc.). This would build on the Forfás Report *Catching the Wave – a Services Strategy for Ireland* (Forfás).
2. Building on the Forfás Report *Skills in Creativity, Design and Innovation Report 2009*, as well as views expressed in the consultation process, higher education institutions should seek to offer wider discipline combinations (e.g., technical/scientific and AHSS courses). Course development should ensure how undergraduates and postgraduates can avail of generic skills, technical and business skills offerings, so as to provide them with the complementary skills that will allow them to give active expression to their creativity.
3. Structures should be created through which the research capacity of AHSS disciplines can be incorporated into public policy development and public policy issues requiring research could be identified to the AHSS community. Applications for funding of research in the AHSS should, where appropriate, demonstrate how the outcomes of the research will be utilised and transferred.
4. Metrics should be developed and implemented for assessing research output for both internal institutional purposes (promotion, etc) and external purposes (e.g. institutional rankings).
5. In developing teaching skills, HEIs should bring stronger focus on those aspects of the science of teaching that foster generic skills such as analysis and reasoning over those that foster capacity for memory. This needs to follow through in earlier stages of education in terms of writing and communication skills.
6. A programme should be established of optional internships in the workplace for all AHSS students, which could include exposure to entrepreneurship and innovation training.
7. All SET programmes should have AHSS modules specifically designed to provide graduates with relevant skills associated with these disciplines.



The agenda presented is broad and complex. The process leading to this Report has to-date been highly consultative. It is proposed therefore to end this phase of the process by convening, in the near future, a consultative forum to consider the Report in broad terms and to canvass views on the way forward.

### Appreciation

The IRCHSS and the HEA would like to express our sincere gratitude to the members of the Working Group and the Steering Committee. They each gave of their time and expertise generously. We would like to record a special thanks to Professor Maurice Bric, who chaired the Working Group and drafted the report. In addition, we would also like to thank the project manager, Ms Jane Sweetman, as well as Dr Abigail Chantler, Ms Orla Christle and the staff of the HEA and the IRCHSS.

REPORT PREPARED FOR THE HIGHER EDUCATION  
AUTHORITY AND THE IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL  
FOR THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

*Professor Maurice J. Bric*  
*Rapporteur*

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# Abbreviations

AHSS	Arts, humanities and social sciences
CAO	Central Applications Office
DES	Department of Education and Skills
FAHSS	Foresight in the arts, humanities and social sciences
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
GREP	Graduate Research Education Programme
HEA	Higher Education Authority
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
IoT	Institute of Technology
IRCHSS	Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences
IRCSET	Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering & Technology
NDP	National Development Plan
PRTL	Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
SSTI	Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation

## Third Level Institutions

### Universities

DCU	Dublin City University
NUIG	National University of Ireland, Galway
NUIM	National University of Ireland, Maynooth
QUB	Queen's University, Belfast
RCSI	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
UCD	University College Dublin
UCC	University College Cork
UL	University of Limerick
UU	University of Ulster

### Institutes of Technology

AIT	Athlone Institute of Technology
CIT	Cork Institute of Technology
DIT	Dublin Institute of Technology
DKIT	Dundalk Institute of Technology
IADT	Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire
ITB	Institute of Technology Blanchardstown
ITC	Institute of Technology, Carlow
ITT	Institute of Technology, Tralee
IT Tallaght	Institute of Technology, Tallaght
ITS	Institute of Technology, Sligo
GMIT	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
LIT	Limerick Institute of Technology
LYIT	Letterkenny Institute of Technology
WIT	Waterford Institute of Technology

### Colleges of Education

MIC	Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
SPCD	St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra
StAC	St. Angela's College, Sligo

### Others

NCAD	National College of Art and Design
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# Executive Summary

The arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS) are at the heart of society. This is reflected in an educational system where AHSS subjects attract considerable numbers at all levels. Many of these end up in education, the law, the media and communications, and social services: professions which have long been associated with the AHSS. Increasing numbers are also attracted to areas such as financial services and especially, the creative industries.

However, it is also clear that many AHSS graduates do not follow predictable career paths and that their training can take them in directions beyond what might be immediately suggested by their initial choice of subject. This underlines the crucial importance of the wider skills base which the AHSS provide, a base which is directly and robustly recognised by employers and employees alike. In making such observations, FAHSS drew on commissioned studies, submissions from HEIs, and public and other interested agencies in Ireland and beyond.

These inputs also emphasised the importance of the AHSS in producing a more skilled workforce. Irish HEIs have themselves recognised this in introducing some changes to the ways in which degrees are structured. They are also developing a culture of greater co-operation across the third level sector as a whole as well as competing for resources and networks at EU level and beyond.

However, FAHSS also suggests a number of initiatives to ensure that this culture of co-operation at both institutional and inter-institutional level has the flexibility to serve the interests of the student and the third level sector as a whole. It also suggests that while agencies outside individual HEIs promote innovation and skills, this is at present

too far removed from the formal world of higher education to have maximum impact on the training of those at third level.

This report underlines the crucial importance of AHSS programmes and the need for effective structures and delivery to serve not only the needs of the economy but also those of society as a whole.

The enhancement of economic opportunity without due regard for social innovation and civic society is short-sighted and ultimately self-defeating.

## Proposals for Progress

The following proposals for progress will be argued in the report that follow. They are grouped here under four general headings and assigned to particular agencies to lead the action:

### 1. Programme Structures: Institutional Level

While the structures and delivery of degree programmes have been undergoing important changes in recent years, the FAHSS process believes that there is room for improvement and greater efficiencies that would better serve the interests of both students and HEIs. These improvements would entail changes in the ways in which individual institutions approach both undergraduate and graduate curricula, having regard to the generic and wider importance of the AHSS as well as the need for flexible curricula.

#### Proposals for Progress

- Institutions should design a mandatory undergraduate course in the AHSS which would highlight cross-disciplinarity as well as the differing methodologies and character

of various AHSS disciplines. Such courses might include non-staff teachers and persons of experience from the wider community. While they might be introduced initially on a pilot basis and reflect the culture of individual institutions, they should be implemented as a mandatory module of the curriculum at undergraduate level within 2 years of being launched. **(HEIs)**

- In developing interdisciplinary syllabi, the weighting of AHSS modules, including languages, must be equal to those of other course components. **(HEIs)**
- Given the acknowledged strength and reputation of the AHSS in Ireland, the Irish educational system should proactively develop the country as a portal for programmes in which linguistic and intercultural fluency can be promoted and supported more explicitly. **(HEIs, IRCHSS and HEA)**
- There should be a clearer stress on the links between teaching and research, as well as an immediate end to the practice where principal and/or associate research investigators are not obliged to teach at undergraduate level over prolonged periods of time. **(HEIs)**
- Curricula should incorporate ICT training in all AHSS programmes, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. **(HEIs)**
- Given the renewed emphasis on continuing professional development, the profile of 'second chance' education needs to be strengthened. The Higher Education Authority should work with HEIs to ensure a broader range of entry routes, more flexible models of

programme delivery and review the role and organisation of part-time courses to ensure that both access and content are suited to those who want to participate. **(HEA and HEIs)**

- A system of relevant indicators must be developed and adopted by stakeholders to evaluate the quality of AHSS research as well as its impacts on both the teaching and research missions of our HEIs. **(IRCHSS)**

## 2. Programme Structures: Wider Contexts

FAHSS also focussed on how degree programmes can interact with entities outside any given institution. These entities include the civil and public service, voluntary agencies, NGOs, and industry and enterprise which can enhance degree programmes and impact through the provision of placement modules. They also include partnered institutions which can complement the expertise available in any given institution with what is available elsewhere within a strategic alliance with respect to opportunities in teaching as well as research.

### Proposals for Progress

- Degree structures should allow for placement outside the lecture room. Such modules would ensure that graduates will acquire a deeper understanding of the workplace and its ethos, develop a sense of how skills can be applied in a practical manner, and enhance career prospects for graduates. They should also include training in skills that can underpin entrepreneurship. **(HEIs and HEA)**
- Graduate and undergraduate study in the AHSS should be structured in ways which can enable students to take modules in any partnered institution within a strategic alliance. **(HEIs)**

## 3. The Wider World of Knowledge and Innovation

The creation of knowledge and the promotion of innovation will be enhanced by closer co-operation between HEIs and other agencies. However, there is a need for greater dialogue between all these entities towards which the following are recommended:

### Proposals for Progress

- In order to facilitate more active dialogue between academia and policy-makers, public servants and HEI-based researchers should be encouraged to take a more active role in developing creative alliances between education institutions, businesses, and the public and civil service. The HEA should manage a rolling forum in order to develop and implement such links. **(HEA and HEIs)**
- Government departments should set and publish targets for two-way secondments with HEIs, and research organisations and institutes so as to correlate the expertise of the higher education sector and the civil and public service. **(DES)**
- More targeted initiatives should be put in place to allow private enterprise, including those in computer-based technologies, to interact with funding agencies and institutions to promote digitised projects in the AHSS. **(IRCHSS and HEA)**

#### 4. Funding and Resourcing the AHSS

In terms of strategic context and funding, the landscape of research is undergoing rapid change for all researchers and teachers, including those who are involved in the IRCHSS. As the IRCHSS moves into a new phase of its development, the best interests of the AHSS will be served by the following

##### Proposals for Progress

- The strategic development of the impact of the IRCHSS will be best served by associating the Council within the *world of education* with the Higher Education Authority, and the Department of Education and Skills. This will also promote greater interaction among all agencies which promote the creation and development of knowledge and skills. **(IRCHSS, DES and HEA)**

- There should be one agency with a clear mandate to evolve and co-ordinate policy and funding on digitisation. For AHSS interests, the sectoral responsibility should be vested in the IRCHSS. **(IRCHSS and DES)**
- The Arts Council and the IRCHSS should meet under the aegis of the HEA with a view to identifying a menu of initiatives to fund research in the creative arts and whether by joint-funding, or concentration on a single agency, publish conclusions for take-up in the academic year 2011-2012. **(IRCHSS, HEA and the Arts Council)**



# Introduction

The arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS) go to the heart of our national identity and sense of self. They also promote values that are central to human progress. For Cicero, for example, the purpose of the Republic was 'to make human life better' by 'thought' as well as 'effort' while the American Declaration of Independence highlighted 'the pursuit of happiness' as well as 'life' and 'liberty' as 'inalienable rights'. Such sentiments remain fundamental to self-development and social harmony and both inspire and are inspired by the role and force of the AHSS.

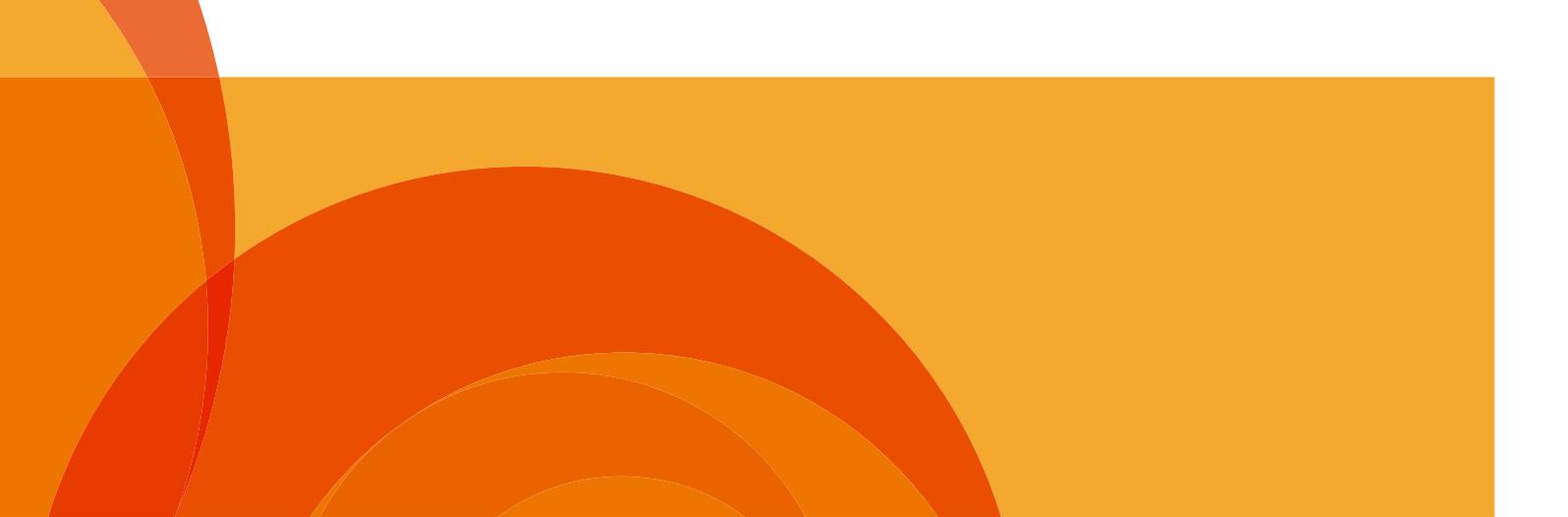
The AHSS drive economic and social innovation, promote ways in which the economy is managed and developed, and suggest how individuals can engage and participate in civil society.

The AHSS also nurture a host of transferable skills that are valuable to employers beyond the specific qualification of an employee. These skills include cultural awareness, self-discipline, critical and analytical thinking, the ability to create and sustain complex argument and to identify contextual perspectives, creativity, self-confidence, international and multicultural perspectives, and oral and written communication skills. Such skills are flexible and adaptable. As a result, and as recently noted by the British Academy, many of the most 'versatile people' in the economy come from AHSS backgrounds not least because 'the skills of analysis, research and presentation acquired ... can be applied in a wide variety of non-discipline-specific areas.'<sup>1</sup>

However, there is still a perception that the AHSS are 'educational disciplines' which have little tangible

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<sup>1</sup> British Academy (2004), *That Full Complement of Riches*, 58.



impact. At times, as put in one submission to Foresight in the arts, humanities and social sciences (FAHSS), they are also seen ‘to be characterised by contestation... about theories of knowledge, key concepts, causation, interpretation and understanding’. But as the same submission argues,

ambiguity and contestation should not be regarded as a weakness in HSS scholarship; rather does this stem from the nature of the exercise and the relationship between HSS and the objects of enquiry, society and the individual. In HSS scholarship, context, ideas, culture, history and place matter.

This is not always fully realised by either researchers or policy makers. As a result, the contribution that the AHSS make to the ‘smart economy’ is often recorded in uneven ways.

This is not helped by a perception that research in science, engineering and technology (SET) has the only keys to economic prosperity and progress. However, the expectation that SET research is best suited to ‘create jobs’ is to misunderstand what drives creativity in the first place and understates the importance of the AHSS as well as the underlying importance of generic skills in promoting innovation and productivity.

This report seeks to underline the positive role which the AHSS have on the Irish economy and society both directly and indirectly and that crucially, the AHSS have an impact on all types of skills. It also recognises that while the AHSS provide skills for specific occupations and sectors which contribute directly to economic sustainability, they also enhance quality of life and help to make Ireland an attractive place to live, work and do business.

In tracing these themes, this FAHSS exercise has been concerned with a number of streams which while being important in their own right, are even more so when associated with one another. These streams include

- the promotion of an environment in which everybody can develop their potential with independence and confidence
- the established importance of the AHSS to the Irish economy and society and how in future the AHSS might enhance that role, especially with reference to a focus on values, participation in society, and active citizenship
- educational structures and curricula that can satisfy the economic as well as the social needs of the country
- the continuing importance of having a sustainable supply of AHSS researchers and teachers
- fostering an appreciation of a nation’s unique history and cultures, religions and societies
- productive relationships between AHSS and SET knowledge and skills
- the impact of information and communication technology (ICT), and
- a clear link between teaching and research.

Given an impact that is more free-ranging than for other areas, the AHSS are presented here with a focus on their importance for the promotion of social values, active citizenship as well as economic impact.

Public policy on the AHSS should reflect this diversity.

## Background

This FAHSS exercise has been developed from *Advancing Humanities and Social Sciences Research in Ireland*, a report which was submitted to the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) in March 2007.

At the launch of that report the Minister for Education and Science asked the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) to implement one of the key findings: to reflect on how the humanities and social sciences might contribute to the further development of Irish society. As a result, Foresight in the arts, humanities and social sciences (FAHSS) was established

to provide a comprehensive review of the contribution which a thriving humanities and social sciences sector can make to social and economic development; to review the current status, strengths and weaknesses of the arts, humanities and social sciences in Ireland; and to chart a course for the future development of the arts, humanities and social sciences so that it can make the best possible contribution to social and economic development with particular reference to the *Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation, 2006-2013* and the *National Development Plan, 2007-2013*.<sup>2</sup>

The terms of reference are listed in Appendix I. A full list of the relevant subjects that the exercise covers is given in Appendix II.

FAHSS builds on a number of policy statements and actions on research and skills which have been put in place in recent years. These include

- the *Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions* (PRTL: 1998 to date) which has identified and refined templates for strategic prioritisation, promotion and impacts
- the *Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences* which was established on a permanent basis in 2000 to fund different types of activities in the humanities and social sciences, and
- the *Strategy for Science, Technology, and Innovation 2006-2013* (SSTI) which has also highlighted the importance of the internationalisation and commercialisation of research and development.

More recently these initiatives have been complemented by

- the *National Skills Strategy* (2007) which underlines the importance of a well-educated and highly skilled population if Ireland is to develop its 'knowledge economy' in more competitive and innovation-driven ways
- *Building Ireland's Smart Economy* (2008) which outlines a framework to stabilise the economy in ways that will lead to longer-term prosperity, and
- Developments at EU level, including the European Research Area and a reconfigured *Framework Programme*.

These initiatives highlight the importance of investment in research and development to promote creativity and innovation. However, they also pose challenges in addressing which different research areas have distinctive roles. These areas include the disciplines of the AHSS and their central importance to both the 'smart economy' and the 'smart society' in Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> All the appendices may be consulted on-line at [www.heai.ie](http://www.heai.ie). For the terms of reference for Foresight in the arts, humanities and social sciences, see Appendix I.



In February 2009 the *National Strategy for Higher Education* Group was established to re-evaluate the role of Irish higher education in a modern knowledge society (for its terms of reference, see Appendix III). As a contribution to this process, FAHSS has scoped the role and potential of the AHSS and related them to

- current and future problems
- the production of new knowledge in an era of globalization, and
- their part in reflecting, as well as driving, change in an increasingly unpredictable environment.

FAHSS is one way in such issues can be discussed.

## Overarching Considerations

Certain overarching considerations have informed FAHSS. In general terms these reflect the belief that the AHSS provide crucial frameworks for examining society and that they bring distinctive benefits in *instrumental* as well as in *intrinsic* terms to Irish society.

*Instrumentally*, the AHSS contribute to society by

- identifying and analysing societal, political and economic problems
- providing training for a wide range of professionals, such as teachers, lawyers, academics, public servants, business people and cultural heritage professionals and publishers
- promoting teaching, learning and research and supporting strategically significant sectors of the economy, including the creative, services and cultural industries, and by

- promoting innovation and improved productivity.

*Intrinsically*, the AHSS are well placed

- to address social, civic and economic issues
- to equip employers and employees with key communication and analytical skills as well as high-level expertise, and
- by stimulating imagination and criticism, to facilitate problem-solving.

To this extent the AHSS are a *crucial* enabler that allows people to participate fully in society, realise their potential and contribute to social, economic and cultural development.

FAHSS has also been influenced by the ways in which the AHSS promote

- *the Innovative Society*, for which bright, creative, flexible and innovative AHSS graduates are key to economic progress and innovation. While the AHSS have their own intrinsic skills, as well as vocational roles, they are central to the creation and transmission of new knowledge along a continuum that includes the sciences, technology and engineering as well as the AHSS themselves.
- *the Creative Society*, for which the culture and skills of the AHSS are especially relevant.
- *an Informed Cultural Identity*, for which the AHSS are the central means by which cultural memory is created and transmitted. They lead the way in fostering an understanding of a nation's history and cultures, religions and societies. As well as the ways in which Ireland, past and present can be put in European and global contexts. Thus, they help to inform identity and promote multicultural tolerance and interaction, and

- **a Sustainable and Inclusive Civic Society**, for which the perspective of the AHSS is a prerequisite to understand social change and inform social policy. Studies in these fields provide overarching perspectives that often lead to a re-definition of social issues by confirming or refuting ideas that guide policy-making, identifying issues for future research and more generally, informing public debate.

In fostering a rich sense of personal well-being, as well as community identity and social inclusion in the face of competing value systems, the AHSS are a more obvious civic pillar than any other area of education.

## Foresight

In these contexts, Foresight aims to establish ‘the ability to judge correctly what is going to happen in the future and plan your actions based on this knowledge’.<sup>3</sup> However, it is also an uncertain process, not least because it is influenced by the volatility, unpredictability and eccentricities of social, educational and economic developments. It presents a sense of the future without quite knowing what it is.

But in any event, Foresight is not about **defining** the landscape of the future in a literal sense. Instead, irrespective of the extent, pace or direction of change, it is about engaging in a **process** which can help identify how a modern economy and society might function in a dynamic way and draw on higher education to steer change as well as set the circumstances in which such changes might be managed. As a result, Foresight has to be flexible and adaptable.

<sup>3</sup> *For Society: Transnational Foresight* ERA-Net, ([www.eranet-forsociety.net/ForSociety/index.html](http://www.eranet-forsociety.net/ForSociety/index.html)). See also Hamel, G and Prajalad, C.K (1994), *Competing for the Future*.

Within the European Union (EU), Finland, Britain, the Netherlands and the European Science Foundation (ESF) have been engaging in Foresight exercises for a number of years (see Appendix IV).<sup>4</sup> In Ireland, two important exercises in Foresight have recently been completed

- In 2008 Forfás established a project to encourage long-term thinking in public policy formation. This looked at what decisions should be made to ensure a sustainable and competitive enterprise sector in 2025 and 2040 and has identified a number of scenarios to help do this. The report of the process, *Sharing Our Future: Ireland 2025*, was published in July 2009.
- *FuturesIreland* was undertaken by the National Economic and Social Development Office, at the request of the Department of An Taoiseach. Complementing the work of the Government’s *Information Society Commission*, the *FuturesIreland* project examined the conditions that would support Ireland’s transition to a learning society.

FAHSS complements these activities.

<sup>4</sup> See Academy of Finland and Tekes (2005), *Finnsight 2015: The Outlook for Science, Technology and Innovation*; British Academy (2004), *‘That Full Complement of Riches’: The Contributions of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences to the Nation’s Wealth*; European Science Foundation (2007), *Higher Education Looking Forward: Relations Between Higher Education and Society*; European Science Foundation (2008), *Higher Education Looking Forward: An Agenda for Future Research*; Denmark, Ministry for Science, Technology, and Innovation (2008), *Research 2015: A Basis for Prioritisation of Strategic Research*; Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (2007), *A Radiant Future—Policies for Valorisation of the Humanities and Social Sciences*; Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2001), *Alternative Wor[ld]ds: The Humanities in 2010: Report of the Working Group on the Future of the Humanities*.

## Process

Foresight exercises are often carried out through **scenarios**. This is where small sub-groups are dedicated to specific headings and where various experts discuss and criticise trends and impacts in their own areas. They can also assess how their areas might be affected by unpredictable external forces and critical uncertainties. Forfás has used scenarios in its activities.

Instead of using scenarios, FAHSS has focused on **drivers of change**. In 1999 the *Technology Foresight* report suggested that such an approach might be used to identify likely trends and in its case, how science and technology might influence the process of change in ways that are beneficial and pragmatic. For FAHSS, such an approach can also suggest ways and platforms in which the arts, humanities and social sciences can be utilised more clearly and valued at all levels of society, both inside and outside the world of education.

Foresight also requires work at different interactive levels and with different types of data and actors at the same time. With this in mind, FAHSS drew on different types of input.

A Working Group was established to develop the exercise (see Appendix V). This met on seven occasions to July 2009. It also received briefings from a number of relevant parties (see Appendix V). A complementary Steering Group, which included persons of international experience in the area, met in March and September 2009 (see Appendix VI).

Universities, colleges, institutes of technology, government departments and other organisations and parties of interest were invited to comment on FAHSS as well as on how Foresight features in their own plans for further development (see Appendix VII).

FAHSS drew on existing data sets, some of which are held within the HEA and the Central Statistics Office (CSO), as well as on data in other reports, including *Catching the Wave: A Services Strategy for Ireland* (Forfás: 2008).

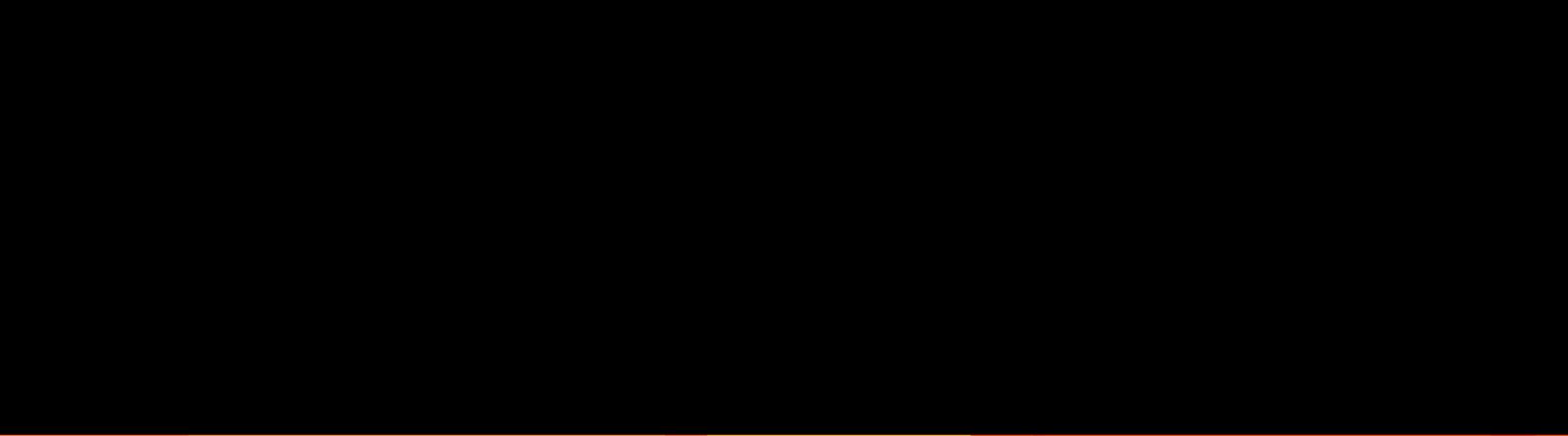
FAHSS also commissioned two surveys of its own.

The **first** of these surveys (the FAHSS Graduate Recruitment Survey) was designed to assess the ways in which employers perceive AHSS graduates, the skills that they have, and the areas where there may be room for improvement (see Appendix VIII).

The **second** survey focused on the attitudes of Graduates (the FAHSS Graduate Careers Survey). This addressed how individual AHSS graduates had come to their particular destinations and how the education system helped or hindered them as they did so (see Appendix IX).

Both surveys gave respondents an opportunity to present their thoughts on the role of the AHSS in society and the economy.

FAHSS also hosted a Consultative Forum in January 2009. This included some 50 delegates who were asked to draw on personal experience to address a number of pre-circulated questions under three general headings: skills, futures, and training. Its conclusions are contained in Appendix X and are reflected in this report.



# I

## Part I: Context

'a large part of the problem with education is ... the contemporary belief that we educate ourselves in order to get a job. To that extent the contemporary view distorts the purpose of schooling, by aiming not at the development of individuals as ends in themselves, but as instruments in the economic process' (A.C. Grayling).<sup>5</sup>





1

Society, Culture  
and the Economy

# 1

## Society, Culture and the Economy

Grayling's observation highlights one of the cruder questions that are often directed to education as a 'system'. Should it focus on the abilities and circumstances of individuals? Or should it place these within a wider 'economic process'? Such queries can also be re-configured in other ways to focus, for example, on what types of learning are more 'relevant' than others.

Put in such terms, however, these questions misunderstand the wider culture of education in which in varying degrees everybody participates, sometimes through a formal process, sometimes not.

### The AHSS, the Public Sphere and Civil Society

Among others, Grayling suggests that the best response to such questions lies in stressing the wider civic value of a 'liberal education'. For him, this is what 'makes civil society possible'. It underlines the enduring importance of education in giving people the skills and abilities to continue learning even after their formal education has finished and to 'think, and question, and know how to find the answers when they need them'.<sup>6</sup>

This is especially important when addressing political and moral issues. While these often appear without notice, their impact and importance is no less real.

For example, even before Ireland's current problems became apparent, Ireland was being challenged by the implications of a more multi-cultural society which was questioning the assumptions, loyalties and deferences of past generations. This underlines the fact that even societies that see themselves as 'mature' demand constant interpretation and re-interpretation, analysis and understanding. It also suggests that in trying to understand both the nature and drivers of a new Irish society, we should focus not only on values that are common to all slices of Irish society but paradoxically, on the increasing unfamiliarity of the familiar. Moreover, immigrant cultures should not be 'removed' from what is already there. All are part of a new process of re-inventing society.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 157-8.

As Ireland is evolving new 'identities', it is also incorporating a number of new diasporas within these 'identities'. Crucially, these offer Ireland new pathways towards a globalised world, the character of which is informed by culture rather than economics.

Civil society can also be upset by conflict. In such circumstances, the AHSS provide a critical language to navigate conflicting interpretations. As employers remarked in the FAHSS Graduate Recruitment Survey,

Their [AHSS graduates] training and skills lend to contributing to a better society and an enhanced understanding of human behaviour....

They bring an ability to research, understand and critique social problems and their related social policies. Graduates of social sciences have the necessary understanding of the problems of the target groups they are working for and with.

Such comments highlight the flexibility which the AHSS have to understand and address the process as well as the realities of wide-ranging change.

As part of the FAHSS Graduate Careers Survey (see Appendix IX), graduates reflected on these points in the light of individual experience. Among the observations were the following:

The timeless value of the contribution made to society by the arts and humanities has been proven over the centuries. I fear that without sufficient emphasis on these topics our ability to understand our own situations, and our capacity for thought and creativity will be greatly diminished...

...The arts, humanities and social sciences provide a valuable insight into the processes that shape how people live in Ireland ...

The arts provide an essential opportunity for young people to gain attention and a sense of achievement that in turn has a positive effect on society.

...Art, humanities and social sciences are crucial to our society and its future. These disciplines offer an insight into people as human beings. The greater we understand ourselves and society the more we can achieve. Also students of these disciplines acquire vital critical and analytical skills which are partnered with independent thought and knowledge in a wide range of subjects. Society, and the economy, needs such people.

Along similar lines, the Rector of the Royal College of Art, Sir Christopher Frayling, has pointed out that while discussion about recovery after World War II revolved around five areas of physical poverty, 'want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness', John Maynard Keynes proposed a sixth: the need to address the 'poverty of aspiration'.<sup>7</sup> For Keynes, the funding of arts on a level with health and education was not just part of a programme for recovery. It was a *sine qua non* for the essential enrichment and creativity of society. As such, investment in the AHSS gave a reality to recovery which while difficult to measure in quantifiable output, was no less vital in terms of qualitative impact and the underlying stimulus to the process of recovery as a whole.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Wallace, A 'No Time for the Faint Arts', *Irish Times*, 29 April 2009.

Despite such expert reflection, it is often the case that the world of learning is divided into mutually exclusive streams as determined by 'relevant', 'tangible' or 'commercial' results. As a result we often think of science, engineering, and technology as the major 'contributors' to economic progress. However, the reality is that the process of creativity and innovation can be effective only if it is promoted in an all-embracing manner, a point made as follows in an FAHSS submission:

Technology addresses what we *can* do, the arts humanities and social sciences provide the insights to address the ethical questions of what we *should, ought, or must* do. The equipping of students with the conceptual tools and skills of critical reflection to enable them to make sense of and participate in contemporary society's key debates is essential to the 'Knowledge Society'.

In any event, the instrumental should not be stressed over the intrinsic. The AHSS are 'relevant' because of their impacts on the market-place and job-creation, whether direct or indirect, 'tangible' or not. They are 'relevant' because of the training and intellectual process which they bring to critical skills and analysis in the first place. A submission from one of the country's leading representative bodies in industry highlighted this point as follows:

Those who debate the relative merits of learning for its own sake and the need for higher education institutions that are more responsive to the business sector risk being at cross-purposes. The goals of satisfying the needs of enterprise and developing well-rounded, culturally literate citizens are not mutually exclusive; they are complementary.

This considered observation is reflected in the FAHSS Graduate Recruitment Survey.

Employers were asked if they thought that AHSS graduates bring distinctive qualities to their organisation. Over half of them answered 'yes'. Among individual comments were the following:

Arts, humanities and social sciences do bring strong analytical experience from their college experience and most critically, the ability to present this research in a clear, concise and discursive argument...

...We work in information technology, but we are paid to bring a different perspective to the work than the traditional engineering perspective. We need the understanding of the human experience that the humanities foster and the skills to study that experience that the social sciences deliver. We need people who can gather information diagnostically, analyse it methodically and communicate it persuasively. We find these qualities most often in the top 5 percentiles of graduates in the humanities and social sciences.<sup>8</sup>

A number of submissions to FAHSS have reinforced the point that in their focus on problem-solving, innovation and creativity, such skills are essential to both the 'smart economy' and the 'smart society'.

They are also increasingly important to current trends within the world of work.

The developed economies, once the giants of manufacturing, now look to knowledge and services

<sup>8</sup> More detailed observations are included in Appendices VIII and IX.

as the drivers of renewed growth and prosperity. In Ireland, the promotion of the ‘smart economy’ reflects independent evidence that in recent years,

- the country has been moving from a dependence on manufacturing and that a capacity to innovate and to be flexible is key to further progress,<sup>9</sup> and that
- high-skilled employment and alternative sources of clean energy (the so-called ‘smart’ and ‘green’ economies) are central to new modes of economic planning.

One of the central drivers of change in the ‘smart economy’ is the intrinsic creativity of the AHSS as well as their potential to generate new ideas.

Despite differences in training and culture, the AHSS have always promoted broad definitions of creativity. They offer a distinctive capacity for critical thinking and creativity that transcends the worlds of SET and business. However, while the SSTI and the NDP acknowledge the importance of creativity for the development of both the ‘smart economy’ and the ‘smart society’, challenges remain.

As noted in one submission to FAHSS, creativity is a form of capital which is often undervalued as such. However, as leading growth theorists argue, and as put to FAHSS, ‘it is the intrinsically human ability to create new ideas, new cultural forms, new technologies and whole new industries that really matters’.

9 See [www.cso.ie/statistics/LabourForce.html](http://www.cso.ie/statistics/LabourForce.html) for relevant data from the Central Statistics Office. See also ESRI (2008), *Medium Term Review 2008-2015*; and Forfás (2009), *Sharing Our Future, Ireland 2025*.

A similar point has been made in the Arts Council’s report, *Points of Alignment* (2008):

The nature of the Irish economy and the ever-quickenening rate of change it is experiencing underline the need for economic and social policies that are underpinned by an education system that fosters creativity. Creativity is not a skill or a stand-alone intellectual process. It is more akin to an aptitude whose presence (or absence) has profound implications for both personal well-being and for enterprise, wherever applied, but especially in an economy characterised by knowledge, services and high-level manufacturing.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, according to one submission to FAHSS:

This Creative Knowledge Economy revolves around idea creation, value retention and value exploitation. It is used to describe activity that relies on intellectual resources such as ‘know-how’ and expertise. A key concept is that this creative knowledge and education can be treated as a commercial asset ... Content development and production is highly labour intensive. This is because ideas rely on human capital rather than processes that can be automated – this goes to the heart of the Creative Knowledge Economy.

As Ireland moves through uncertain times, an economy driven by innovation is a viable basis for renewal and prosperity, for promoting home-grown initiatives and continued foreign investment.

10 The Arts Council (2008), *Points of Alignment: The Report of the Special Committee on the Arts and Education*, 17.

## The AHSS and Innovation

Innovation draws on knowledge to create new products and services in an obviously new way. While research is key to innovation, there is often a rush to re-label and re-brand all research as such.

There must be a clear focus on what additional steps should be taken to enhance innovation for the benefit of the economy and society at large.

The concept of 'innovation' itself is also under constant scrutiny. This is especially important for countries such as Ireland and the United States where increasingly 'harder' streams of research are being undertaken elsewhere at a lower price. Moreover, there is a realisation that many changes in business behaviour are being driven by influences other than technology. Google, YouTube and eBay are often cited as examples of companies which successfully combine a variety of technological developments as the basis for innovation in service and delivery. However, they know that they must also be sensitive to changes in consumer behaviour, the social and economic application of technology, and continuing improvements in the delivery of goods and services.

The concept of **social innovation** is also relevant in this context in that it flows from what affects different types of social needs. As Ellen Hazelkorn has observed, 'social innovation takes place in daily life, in social relationships and behaviour and in the home and is therefore not trapped by any standard measures of economic activity ... social innovation [also] aims to create social value for the wider community rather than for personal profit'.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Hazelkorn, E (forthcoming), 'Community Engagement as Social Innovation'.

The *Ideas Campaign* is a recent example of social innovation in Ireland. This was launched in March 2009 as an independent and non-political campaign to suggest ways to improve economic activity. The internet was at the heart of the campaign which was developed through online promotion (particularly on social media sites such as FaceBook and Twitter) and volunteerism. In July the Government committed itself to implement seventeen of the ideas in the campaign's Action Plan including:

- the establishment of a new Volunteer Corps to engage the unemployed in community and voluntary work in Ireland and internationally, without losing their unemployment benefits
- the teaching of business skills as part of all PhD education as a means of promoting the knowledge economy, and
- the development of a coherent 'Ireland' brand for education in order to draw more international students to our third-level institutions.

The *Ideas Campaign* is also an example how social innovation can often originate 'on the fringes' where divergent attitudes and approaches can meet to develop new ways of doing things.

The research undertaken for the *FuturesIreland* project provides further evidence of innovation happening between different sectors. The experts who participated in this project were invariably driven to look beyond their own specific areas and methodologies. As a result, *FuturesIreland* concluded that a key challenge is how to unlock the potential of innovation across all sectors of Irish society.

Along similar lines, Frans Johansson has stressed that 'New discoveries, world changing discoveries, will come from the intersections of disciplines, not from within them'.<sup>12</sup> He argues that it is at an intersection of fields, disciplines or cultures that concepts can be combined to produce extraordinary and new ideas. Innovation takes place in a space which Johansson calls 'the intersection' where people from different fields connect. In his view, expertise within one field may lead to solutions and concepts following a singular line of thought. But it is only by combining expertise from and between multiple fields that ideas are generated that can lead in different directions.

In all societies, intersections have been challenged by

- migration
- the changing nature of scientific discovery, from 'headline' discoveries to uncovering how things interact, and
- the possibilities offered by technology in increasing the speed of processes and opening up new lines of communication

Johansson suggests that 'association barriers' can be reduced by

- exposure to different cultures
- learning differently
- revising assumptions, and
- looking from multiple perspectives

As a result, Johansson makes a plea for 'a broad education, one that covers several fields...that...can help us break out of the associative boundaries that expertise builds'.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Johansson, F (2006), *The Medici Effect*, 26.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 51.

## Comment

Christopher T. Hill's research on these matters reflects these sentiments and in doing so, the AHSS are key;

the creation of wealth and jobs based on innovation and new ideas will tend to draw less on the natural sciences and engineering and more on the organizational and social sciences, on the arts, on new business processes, and on meeting consumer needs based on niche production of specialized products and services in which interesting design and appeal to individual tastes matter more than low cost or radical technologies.<sup>14</sup>

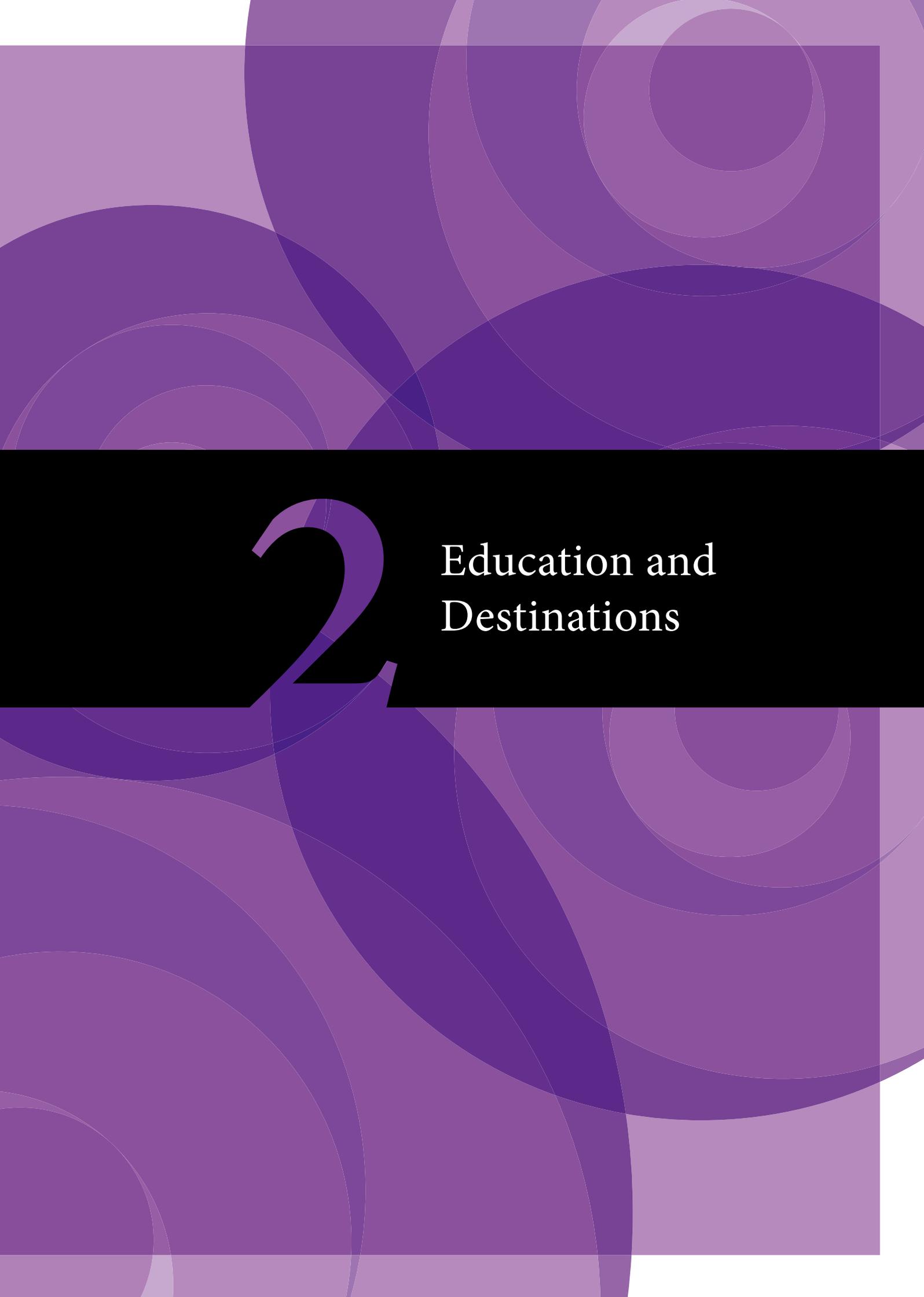
His advice has a resonance for contemporary Ireland.

So does the decision by the U.S. President, Barack Obama to establish an Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation (May 2009) to engage those outside government to help provide solutions to national issues such as education, healthcare and economic opportunity. In doing so, the president was also indicating that the issues that confront us at present are social as well as economic in nature and that as such they require a combination of approaches to solve them.

This advice is also worth heeding in Ireland.

<sup>14</sup> Hill, C. T (2007), 'The Post Scientific Society' in *Issues in Science and Technology* (available on line at [www.issues.org/24.1/c\\_hill.html](http://www.issues.org/24.1/c_hill.html)).



The background is a vibrant purple with a complex pattern of overlapping circles and arcs in various shades, from light lavender to deep violet. A large, stylized number '2' is positioned on the left side, partially overlapping a solid black horizontal band. The number '2' is filled with a gradient of purple, matching the background's color scheme.

# 2

## Education and Destinations

# 2

## Education and Destinations

At the launch of the RIA report in March 2007, the Minister for Education and Science asked that the 'as is' of the AHSS in Ireland be examined. The student numbers discussed below refer to the relevant disciplines, as listed in Appendix II.

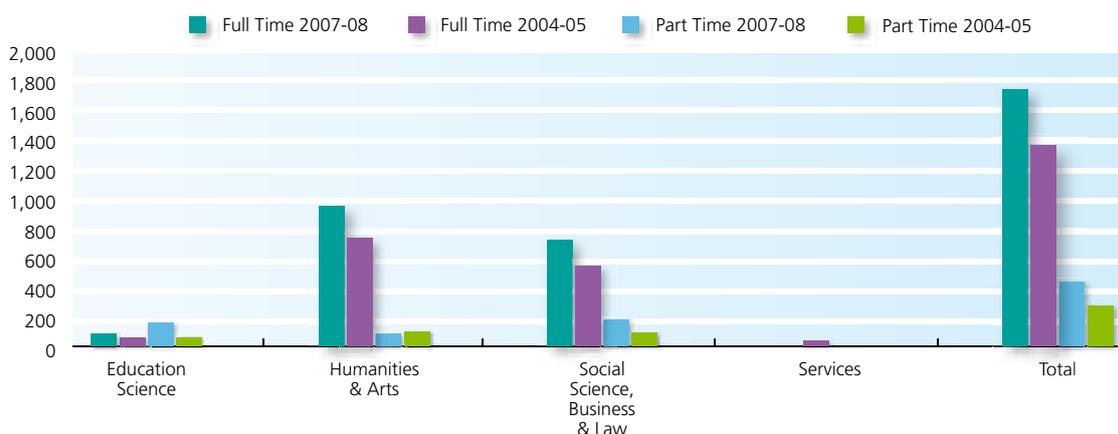
### Profiling Participation: Statistics

Ireland's national strategies are predicated on enhancing human capital and an educated workforce. The principal means to achieve this is by encouraging more people to participate in education, particularly at third level. HEA data reflect the extent as well as the ways in which this goal is being realised.

- Figures for the academic years between 2004-5 and 2007-8 show that across disciplines, the number of students (part-time and full-time, undergraduate and postgraduate) in the university sector increased by 6%.<sup>15</sup>
- While undergraduate numbers have gone up by 5%, the upward trend has been most marked at postgraduate level where there has been an increase of 12% (see Appendix XI).
- In the institutes of technology, the overall change in student numbers was an increase of 1%, with a drop in the number of undergraduate enrolments by 3% and a 112% increase in the number of postgraduate students.
- In the university sector in 2007-8, 58% of undergraduates and 55% of postgraduates were enrolled in AHSS courses, an increase of 0.5% and 3%, respectively, on the figures for 2004-5.

<sup>15</sup> For this chapter, all data has been obtained from the Statistics Section of the HEA or the Department of Education and Skills and refers to students in the publicly-funded education system. In 2007-8, the 'university sector' refers to UCD, UCC, NUIG, NUIM, TCD, UL, DCU, SPD, MIC, RCSI, Mater Dei Institute of Education, St Angela's College, Sligo and NCAD. St. Angela's College is not included in the 2004-5 figures. The IOT sector refers to the 13 institutes of technology, the DIT and the Tipperary Institute.

**Figure 1: PhD Enrolments in the AHSS for 2007-8 and 2004-5 in the University Sector<sup>18</sup>**



Source: HEA Statistics Section/Department of Education and Skills

- In the institutes of technology, the corresponding figures are 49% (for undergraduates) and 56% (for postgraduates), a decrease of 2% and an increase of 3%, respectively (see Appendix XI).

Although some commentators suggest that the changing economic climate is influencing student preferences, analysis of the 2009 CAO applications to third level institutions indicates that there has been little change in the level of first preferences for AHSS degree (level 8) courses.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Data has been analysed from 2006 to 2009. In 2009, arts and humanities accounted for 24.7 % of all first preference applications at level 8. Business and law remained static for the period with slight increases in social sciences and services. First preference applications to education courses are up in number in 2009 but declined in their proportion of overall first preference applications; Patterson, V, 'An Analysis of CAO 1st Preference Applications 2009' (unpublished paper for the HEA).

## Profiling Participation: Graduate Study

With respect to PhD students, the SSTI has set it as a strategic goal to increase the number of AHSS graduate and postdoctoral researchers from 187 in 2005 to 315 by 2013.<sup>17</sup> Figures 1 (above) and 2 (overleaf) show how PhD enrolments have responded to these targets since 2004-5.

Figure 2 shows that

- education science has increased on the part-time side as well as social sciences, business and law

<sup>17</sup> Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, (2008) *First Report on the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation*, 30.

<sup>18</sup> The details of what subject areas are contained in each of the subheadings 'Education Science', Humanities and Arts, 'Social Science Business and Law' and Services are listed in Appendix II

- there has been an increase in all categories of full-time AHSS PhD students in the university sector (except services), and that
- full-time PhD numbers in the AHSS in the university sector have increased from 1370 in 2004-5 to 1759 in 2007-8.

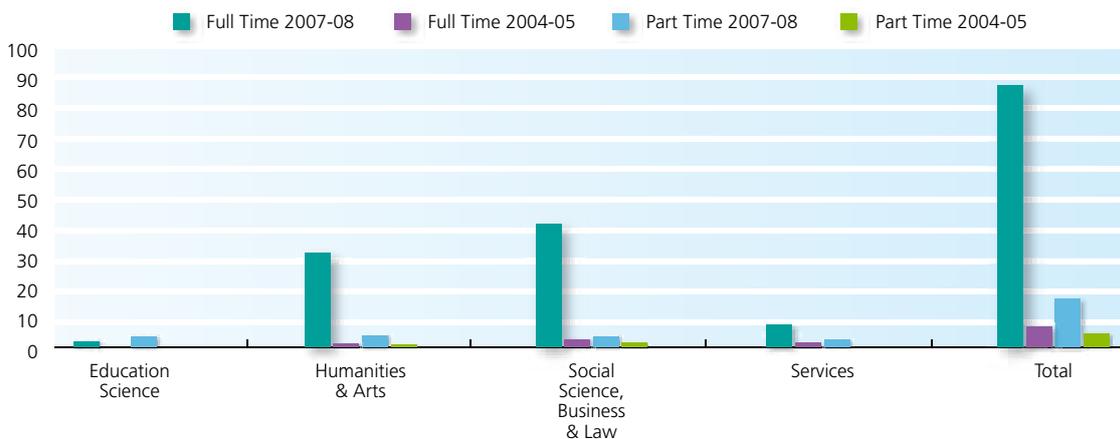
Figure 2 shows that

- there has been an increase in full-time PhD numbers in the AHSS in institutes of technology in all categories
- part-time numbers have increased from a low base of 3 in 2004-5 to 17 in 2007-8, and that
- full-time numbers have increased overall from 7 in 2004-5 to 87 in 2007-8.

The AHSS also attract sizeable numbers of students at Master’s level. In 2007-8, 62% of full-time Masters students in the university sector enrolled in AHSS courses while 56% did so in the institutes of technology. The corresponding figures for those who are pursuing the Masters on a part-time basis are 52% (institutes of technology) and 57% (universities). Such students usually work on a full-time basis and pursue the degree after, or as part of, a regular working day.

In some cases, the Master’s degree is considered as an informal adjunct to the Bachelor’s degree rather than as an access point to the Doctoral programme. To this extent, AHSS Masters are unlike those in the SET where there is a weaker tradition of pursuing degrees at this level. Instead, SET students proceed directly to PhD level as it is generally considered as a requirement for a career in research.

**Figure 2: PhD Enrolments in the AHSS for 2007-8 and 2004-5 in the IoT Sector**



Source: HEA Statistics Section/Department of Education and Skills

In other cases, students pursue a Master's course as part of their professional development, especially in areas such as business, social work and law. However, in some of these professional areas, the numbers who pursue their interests at Master's research and PhD levels are relatively low. In the creative arts, for example, such students account for only 4% of the overall total of the postgraduate population.<sup>19</sup> In the light of the increasing importance of these areas this is disconcerting.

## Profiling Participation: Subject Preferences

Tables 1 (below) and 2 (overleaf) indicate the most popular sub-categories for those who in 2007-8 pursued AHSS courses on both a full-time and part-time basis. The figure in brackets refers to students studying the subject area (ISCED Field of Study Level 2)<sup>20</sup> as a percentage of all students studying AHSS.

**Table 1: Top Two Most Popular Subject Areas in the AHSS (University Sector)**

Undergraduate	
Full-Time	Part-time
Combined Humanities (20%) Combined Business and Administration (16%)	Occupational Health and Safety (13%) Management and Administration, Mother Tongue (10%)
Postgraduate	
Full-Time	Part-Time
Training for teachers with subject specialisation (11%) Management and Administration (8%)	Management and Administration (28%) Education Science (17%)
Masters Degrees	
Full-Time	Part -Time
Management and Administration (13%) Law (12%)	Management and Administration (37%) Education Science (16%)
PhD Degrees	
Full-Time	Part-Time
Combined Humanities, History and Archaeology Psychology (12%)	Education Science (20%) Training for teachers with subject specialisation (16%)

<sup>19</sup> The statistics in the previous paragraphs are from HEA sources.

<sup>20</sup> ISCED refers to the International Standards of Classification of Education which have been designed by UNESCO for compiling educational statistics and allowing for international comparison. See Appendix II for further details.

**Table 2: Top Two Most Popular Subject Areas in the AHSS (Institutes of Technology)**

Undergraduate	
Full-Time	Part-time
Combined Business and Administration (18%) Management and Administration (17%)	Management and Administration (31%) Accounting and Taxation (17%)
Postgraduate	
Full-Time	Part-Time
Marketing & Advertising (16%) Management and Administration (13%)	Management and Administration (29%) Education Science (19%)
Masters Degrees	
Full-Time	Part -Time
Marketing and Advertising (20%) Management and Administration (15%)	Management and Administration (30%) Education Science (18%)
PhD Degrees	
Full-Time	Part-Time
Marketing and Advertising (23%) Audio visual Techniques and Media Production (16%)	Management and Administration (24%) Education Science (18%)

Source: HEA Statistics

As can be seen, the subject areas with the social sciences and business category are strong at all levels, part-time as well as full-time. The field of education is also popular among part-time students.

### Profiling Participation: Gender

While both the institutes of technology and the universities have seen an increase in student numbers, in terms of gender, there has been little change in the nature of the student population since 2004-5.<sup>21</sup>

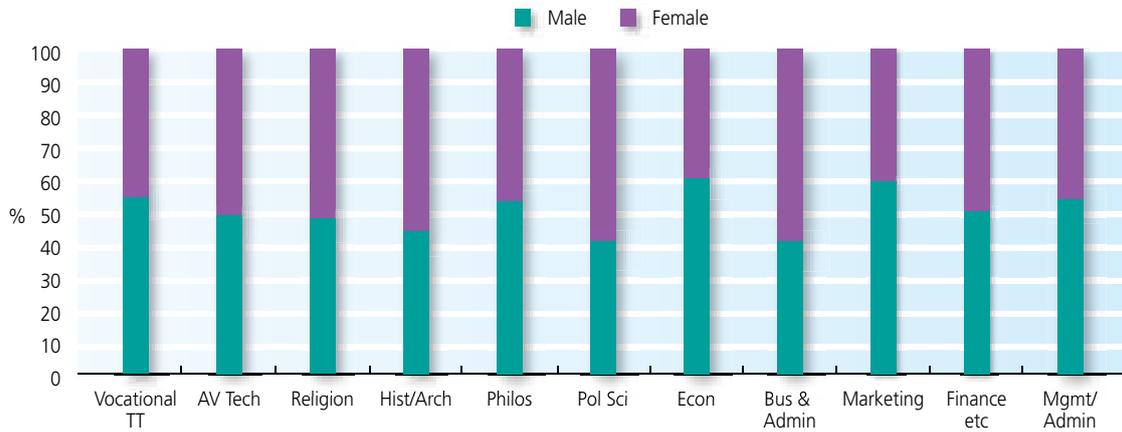
- Within the higher education sector, females constitute a slight majority of full-time and part-time students, accounting for 55% of both. Males currently outnumber females only in full-time undergraduate courses in the institutes of technology but by a slight margin (53% as opposed to 47%).
- More distinct gender profiles are reflected in AHSS programmes. While more female students take AHSS subjects, with fewer taking SET subjects, there have been significant increases in the number of males taking full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the AHSS (see Appendix XI).

<sup>21</sup> See Appendix XI.

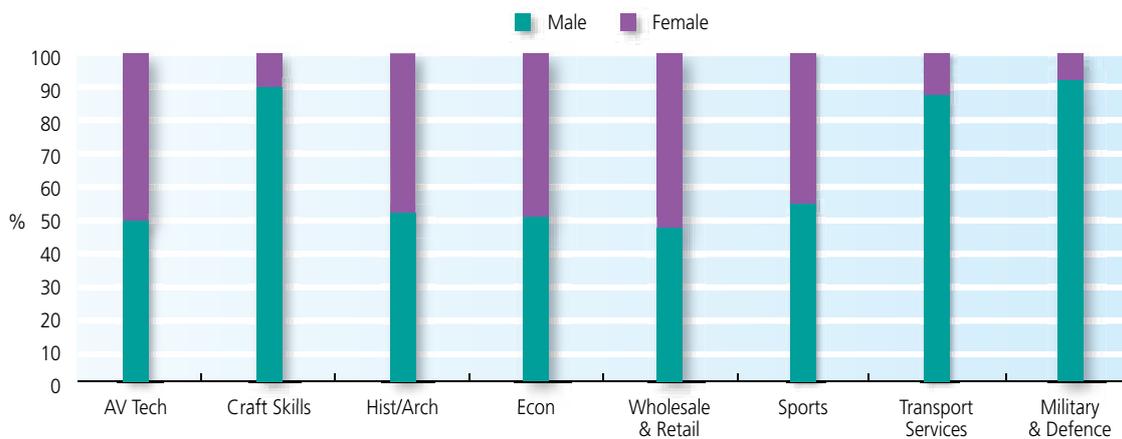
■ With respect to gender profiles, the most marked difference for full-time undergraduates is in the area of education where females account for 74% of full-time undergraduates in both the

institutes of technology and the universities. Figures 3 and 4 below give a breakdown of areas within the AHSS where males outnumber females, or have equal rates of participation.

**Figure 3: Gender Balance in AHSS Subject Areas (2007-8 Full-Time Undergraduates: Universities)**



**Figure 4: Gender Balance in AHSS Subject Areas (2007-8 Full-Time Undergraduates: Institutes of Technology)**



### Access and Lifelong Learning<sup>22</sup>

In 2008, the *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education, 2008-2013* reaffirmed the importance of lifelong learning in higher education in Ireland. The plan noted that while there has been a significant expansion in participation in higher education by school-leavers, the level of lifelong learning among adults aged between 25 and 64 is low (7.3%: 2006) by European standards (17%).<sup>23</sup>

However, the number of ‘mature students’<sup>24</sup> who have enrolled as new entrants to third-level programmes has increased in recent years: from 4.5% of full-time new entrants to the first year of undergraduate programmes in 1998 to 12.8% in 2006.<sup>25</sup>

This increase reflects the development of broader routes of access. While the main route is still the Leaving Certificate, a growing number of students are being admitted through other routes: on the grounds of mature years and on the basis of further education awards. As a result, the proportion of entrants to higher education with further education awards has grown significantly from 3% in 2005 to over 10% in 2008. The *National Access Plan* has set the target to develop ‘non-standard’ entry routes to higher education so that they account for 30% of all entrants by 2013.<sup>26</sup>

22 Lifelong learning has been defined by the EU commission as ‘all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective; European Commission (2002), *European Report of Quality Indicators of Lifelong Learning*.

23 HEA (2008), *National Plan for Equity of Access to Education 2008-2013*, 65.

24 A ‘mature student’ is defined as a person who is at least 23 years of age on 1 January in the year of first time entry to the first year of a higher education programme.

25 HEA (2008), *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education*, 27. The Plan has set a new target of 20% participation by mature students by 2013.

26 HEA (2008), *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education*, 63.

Figure 5 below shows that the disciplines of health and welfare, agriculture and veterinary and the humanities and arts attract more mature entrants than other disciplines. In HEA funded institutions in 2007-8, 97% of enrolments to part-time AHSS programmes and 13% to full-time were mature students.<sup>27</sup>

The higher participation rates by older students in AHSS suggest that the area plays an important role in progressing levels of lifelong learning in Ireland. In terms of delivery, adult education and outreach programmes have been led by AHSS departments, schools and faculties. In particular, dedicated Adult and Continuing Education departments in HEIs have supported the return to education of many mature students as have the National Framework of Qualifications and the FETAC Higher Education Links Scheme.<sup>28</sup> As put in a submission to FAHSS:

[the] Arts and Humanities particularly lend themselves to providing opportunities for students outside of the traditional Leaving Cert cohort to enter education. Both our Art

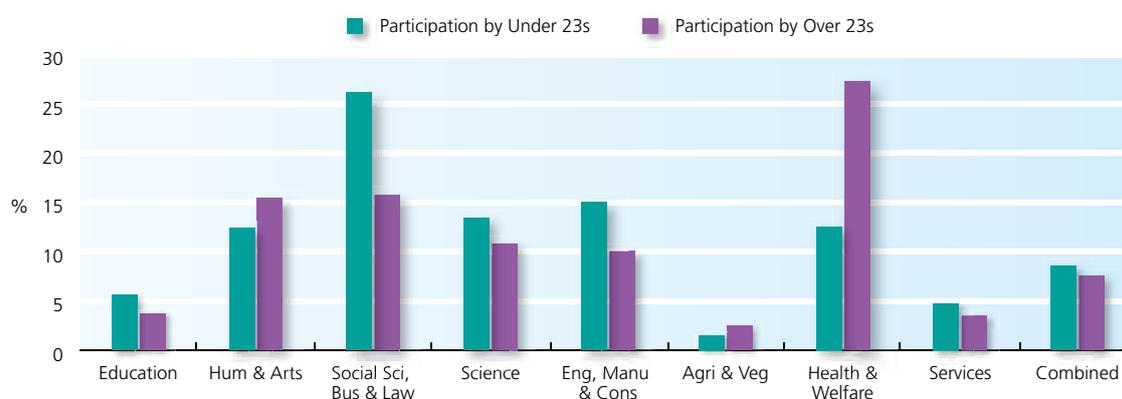
27 *Education At a Glance* (OECD: 2007) gives the enrolment rates of the population in certain age brackets that are attending third level education. The table below is based on 2005 data and shows the Irish participation rate for certain age groups in comparison with the OECD and EU average. The age groups are not directly comparable with the data that the HEA has provided but they indicate that there is room for progress on increasing the participation rate for older age groups.

	20-29 as a percentage of the population aged 20-29	30-39 as a percentage of the population aged 30-39	40 and over as a percentage of the population aged 40 and over
Ireland	20.9	4.0	0.1
OECD Average	24.9	6.0	1.6
EU 19 Average	25.0	5.7	1.3

Participation Rates  
(Source *Education at a Glance* (OECD: 2007))

28 [http://www.fetac.ie/hels/Prog\\_HEC\\_2009.pdf](http://www.fetac.ie/hels/Prog_HEC_2009.pdf).

**Figure 5: Full-Time New Entrants to HEA Institutions 2007-8 by Field of Study: Comparing those under and over 23 years of age**



Source: HEA Statistics

and Design and Social Care programmes attract proportionally more mature students than other ... programmes. They also attract a wider ethnic mix. Significantly they also provide the most popular entry routes for those from the PLC sector to enter third-level education. LIT currently provides education for approx 1000 persons per year through its lifelong learning programme mainly run 3 evenings per week and a significant level of this is in the Arts and Humanities domain.

In order to progress such objectives, there is a need for closer collaboration between the higher and further education sectors. While more students are progressing from further education, the majority of award holders do not progress. As a result, there is potential for the two sectors to explore new ways to work together to facilitate not just increased access but to ensure successful progression.

## The AHSS and Working Life

The AHSS in education do not exist in isolation from society at large. They shape and are shaped by the circumstances in which we live and work. At times, these influences are direct and obvious. At others, they are less so. Nonetheless, the social and the economic impacts and value of the AHSS can also be argued by reference to the career choices of AHSS students.

In the Republic of Ireland, the most recent survey of the career choices of AHSS students refers to the graduates of 2007.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> The HEA carries out an annual survey of graduates nine months after their graduation and the results are published annually in *What Do Graduates Do?* The percentages cited in the text refer to the percentages of respondents and not to the overall cohort of graduates.

The results of the 2007 survey indicate the following top three sectors of employment in Ireland for all respondents holding a Level 8 bachelor's degree <sup>30</sup>:

- Health Services
- Banking Finance and Insurance
- Accountancy and Legal Services

In looking closer at those respondents, with a Level 8 Bachelor's degree in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the top three sectors of employment within Ireland were as follows:

- Banking Finance and Insurance
- Secondary Education
- Social and Charitable Services.

Finally, for respondents with a Level 8 Bachelor's Degree in Commerce and Business Studies, the following were the most common sectors of employment within Ireland:

- Accountancy and Legal Services
- Banking, Finance and Insurance
- Other Business Services

The 2006 census of population also indicates

- that the highest percentage of those with a third-level qualification in the social sciences, business and law is engaged in activities relating to business and commerce (28%), and that
- for those with a third-level qualification in services, the highest percentage (33%) is involved in personal services and childcare (See Appendix XII).<sup>31</sup>

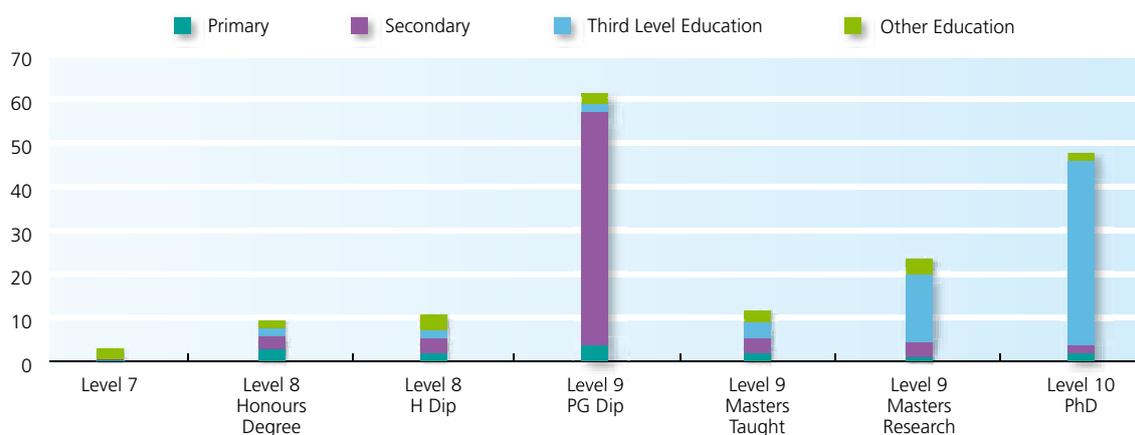
Data from the 2006 census of population also indicate that the highest percentage of those with a third-level qualification in the humanities are employed as teachers (17%). It is also clear from *What Do Graduates Do? The Class of 2007* that the education sector attracts a relatively high proportion of AHSS graduates. Figure 6 (below) indicates the percentage of all respondents (regardless of discipline) who entered the education sector in the Republic of Ireland after they had qualified.

Such figures are relatively high for education. However, even if so, they are often taken for granted, if only because teachers are one of the great constants of Irish society. The wider role of teachers in social and economic progress is real, if at times, understated. Moreover, as cited in submissions to the FAHSS, as shapers of the "attitudes, values, opinions and knowledge base of school children", they are essential to the wider success of strategies and programmes that are being pursued at third level.

30 HEA (2009) *What do Graduates Do? The Class of 2007*

31 Census of Population Data, Education (Table 29), available at [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)

**Figure 6: Percentage of 2007 Respondents who Entered the Education Sector By Award Level**



Source: HEA (2009) *What do Graduates Do? The Class of 2007*

While the AHSS continue to make major contributions to the training of different types of professionals, particularly teachers, they also provide sizeable numbers to areas that are at the forefront of more mainstream economic development. These areas include financial services and tourism as well as more recent opportunities in what are collectively termed the ‘creative industries’. The Gross Value Added (GVA) of these sectors is seen in the impact that they make on Exchequer returns, notably through corporation tax (see Table 3 overleaf).<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> GVA is a measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area or sector of an economy (GVA + taxes on products – subsidies on products = GDP).

**Table 3: At A Glance—the Growth and Value of the Services Sector to the Irish Economy**

		1980	2007
Services	Ireland: % of World's Share of Export Services	0.36%	2.7%
		1997	2007
	Gross Value Added (GVA) – Ireland	€60 billion	€170 billion
	Gross Value Added (GVA) – Ireland; Services Sector	€34 billion	€109 billion
		2006	
Financial Services	Corporation Tax	€1.1 billion to the Economy	
		2006	
Wider Arts Sector	Gross Value Added (GVA) – Ireland	€782 M, 0.5%	16,689 direct jobs, 0.8% of total jobs
		2006	
Creative Industries	GVA	€5.5 bn, 3.5%	60,855 direct jobs, 3% of total jobs
Tourism		Employment – estimated 200,000	€6.3 billion to the economy
	Gross Value Added (GVA) – Ireland	€3.54 billion	
		2007	
Entertainment	Irish Entertainment and Media Industry	Estimated worth €4.4 Billion	
	Irish Film Industry	Audio visual Content Production sector worth €557.3 million/0.3% GDP, employing 7000 individuals	

Source: Indecon, *Assessment of Economic Impact of the Arts in Ireland (2009)*, Forfás *Catching the Wave (2008)*, Fáilte Ireland, *Tourism Facts 2008* and Irish Film Board submission to FAHSS.

Table 3 highlights specific sectors in which the AHSS bring added value. These include the following.

## Focus on Financial Services

As Table 3 indicates, financial services accounted for €1.1 billion in corporation tax in 2006. The sector provides employment and a large number of high-value, high-skilled opportunities. On a general level, the AHSS contribute to the area by assisting with the development of new products by understanding business development and promotion and by ensuring customer satisfaction through improved models of supply and service. For these services, in addition to specialist training, the type of generic skills which are promoted through AHSS programmes are often more important than more specialist technical knowledge. As one employer commented to the FAHSS Employer Survey, graduates in this area 'tend to have had a good overall introduction to the more social side of what a business requires. Also they would have acquired business acumen while studying. These skills are equally important to technical skills.'

## Focus on Tourism

The tourism industry remains one of Ireland's most important sectors, contributing approximately €6 billion to the economy (or 3.7% of GNP) and employing some 200,000 people in 2008.<sup>33</sup> It is also an important source of government revenue. In 2008, the tourism industry accounted for 3.7% of all tax revenue.<sup>34</sup>

The vitality of the sector depends on a variety of people with a variety of expertise, including those with specialist training in AHSS fields such as genealogy, history, archaeology, art, foreign languages, literature, drama, music, entertainment and folklore, all of which are central to the development of Ireland's tourist services and attractions.

Participation in theatre, dance, music and other performing arts are also vital to the calendar of festivals that have become a staple part of Ireland's tourism industry. For example, the Galway Arts Festival is estimated to have generated €25 million for the local economy this year. The three U2 concerts that took place in Dublin in July 2009 generated some €50 million each night for the city's economy while the annual Kilkenny Arts Festival was worth an estimated €7 million to the local economy last year.<sup>35</sup> Such events highlight the distinctive role which the culture of the AHSS make to both the wider economy and the enjoyment by the community of its own sense of place, past and present.

In 2008, the importance of culture was emphasised by Finbarr Bradley and James Kennelly in *Capitalising on Culture, Competing on Difference* (2008). They argue that culture, tradition and identity are powerful resources for innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship and global advantage. Moreover, they suggest that in a globalised world, 'the local seems to matter more than ever' and that a dynamic economy is driven by culture.<sup>36</sup> This is especially important as Ireland

33 Fáilte Ireland, *Tourism Facts 2008*, 1. The figure of 200,000 employed within the sector is an estimate based on a Fáilte Ireland survey. On tourism see also EGFSN (2008), *All-Island Skills Study* 132–4.

34 Fáilte Ireland, *Tourism Facts 2008*, 1. The Indecon report *Assessment of Economic Impact of the Arts in Ireland* (2009) also references the economic importance of cultural tourism to the Irish Economy.

35 Parsons, M '10-day Kilkenny Arts Festival to Generate €8M' in *The Irish Times*, 7 August 2009.

36 Bradley, F and Kennelly, J (2008), *Capitalising on Culture, Competing on Difference: Innovation, Learning and Sense of Place in a Globalising Ireland*, 3. The authors further state that 'A clear emerging paradox is that, with globalization, culture and geographical location are becoming more rather than less important.' Ibid: 4.

promotes itself as a cultural destination to new markets such as China, India and Japan.

### Focus on the Creative Industries

The creative industries include interactive television, on-line educational provision, multi-platform entertainment, computer games, web design and the development of assistive technologies, all of which rely as much on the supply of AHSS graduates as they do on graduates with an expertise in SET. They also derive an increasing economic return from the creation of intellectual property in various forms, such as games, music, books and films, or from the provision of creative services, such as advertising, public relations and marketing.

In 2006 the European Commission calculated that the 'creative industries' generated €654 billion within the EU, averaging 2.6% of GDP across 30 countries surveyed (2003) and with growth of 19.7% between 1999 and 2003. Ireland was ranked eighteenth in the study with a contribution of 1.7% to GDP.<sup>37</sup> It is estimated that the creative industries accounted for 3.5% of GVA in 2006 and accounted for 3% of the total number of jobs in the economy<sup>38</sup>. In Ireland, it is estimated that

- for 2007, the entertainment and media market was worth \$4.4 billion, a growth of 10% on the previous year,<sup>39</sup> and that

37 See Marcus, C (2005), *Future of Creative Industries: Implications for Research Policy* and Forfás (2009) *Skills in Creativity, Design and Innovation*, 26-27

38 Indecon (2009) *Assessment of Economic Impact of the Arts*, 37

39 According to the latest PwC Entertainment and Media Outlook, the industry will recover from the current downturn and will be worth \$5.9 billion in 2012; cited in Slattery, L 'Irish Media to Grow Again by 2011' in *The Irish Times*, 8 July 2009.

- in 2005, the arts sector provided 2.5% of all employment in Ireland, the vast majority in full-time jobs. This is slightly above the EU27 average of 2.4%.<sup>40</sup>

Indecon International Economic Consultants have undertaken a significant exercise in assessing the economic impact of the Arts in Ireland and in November 2009 submitted their report to the Arts Council. In this report, it is estimated that

- in 2006, the total gross value added of the wider arts sector to the national economy was €782m or 0.5% of Gross Value Added.

The growing recognition of the importance of the creative sector has also been highlighted as part of the FAHSS process. As put in an FAHSS submission, in Northern Ireland,

The creative industries are increasingly recognised for their growth potential and contribution to the economy. In Northern Ireland we estimate there are over 2,500 creative enterprises employing some 34,600 people (2005 estimates). This represents 4.7% of total employment. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure has a joint target with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry to grow the creative industries in Northern Ireland by up to 15% by 2011.

The economic attractiveness of places that are culturally rich and dynamic has also been argued by commentators such as Richard Florida. Florida suggests that the 'creative class' or 'thought leadership' is central to innovation and economic progress and that they produce new forms or

40 EU Labour Force Survey 2005.

designs that are readily transferable and broadly useful – such as designing a product that can be widely made, sold and used; coming up with a theorem or strategy that can be applied in many cases; or composing music that can be performed again and again <sup>41</sup>.

Such ideas are central to the further development of an economy that must be flexible and globalised.

## Comment

The impact of the AHSS on niche sectors, such as those referenced above, is clear. So is the wider impact of the AHSS on professions such as teaching even if in both cases, this is presented in terms of numbers engaged and revenues generated.

However, the data that are cited above underline the fact that the AHSS are a consistently strengthening preference among students at all levels within Ireland's higher education system. As such, they suggest that the AHSS are providing an attractive portal towards increasing rates of participation in the system as a whole and as a result, towards developing core abilities to learn, think critically and apply judgement.

While the reasons for the relatively high interest in the AHSS are not given in official data bases, it is clear that students may be attracted to the area by an interest in a particular discipline. However, AHSS students will graduate with a wide set of skills that are crucial for social as well as economic development and impact. While there is a strong argument that a particular discipline of choice is not critical for these purposes, what is important is

the fact of participation in the first instance, and the quantifiable encouragement which the AHSS give to make this possible for the system as a whole and as such, to realise national strategies.

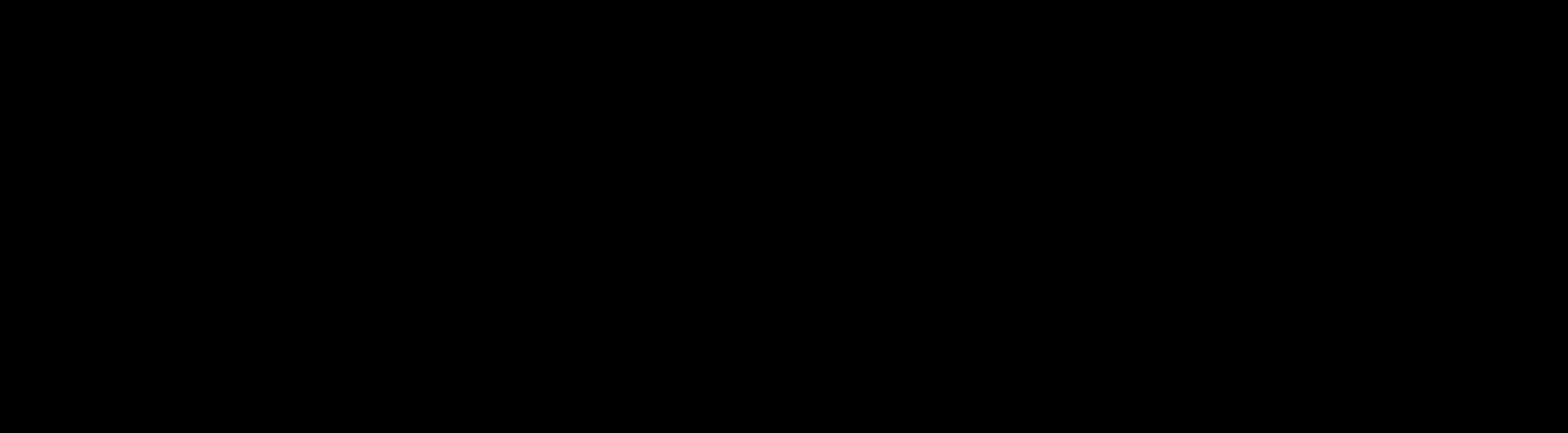
The preference for AHSS subjects and the impact of the AHSS on the world of work underline the point.

It also serves as a reminder that economic recovery cannot be measured just by what is tangible or 'relevant'. To do so is to overlook the essential and intrinsic character of learning and training which are basic to such outputs in the first place. We may be fascinated by the need to produce new gadgets or new patents. But we cannot overlook the underlying conditions that enable such initiatives to evolve in the first place.

Ireland's industrialised culture is relatively recent and it has been accompanied by new social as well as economic challenges. These include not only shifts in values and expectations, and a more diversified and multicultural society, but also the impact of new technologies as new means for the distribution of information.

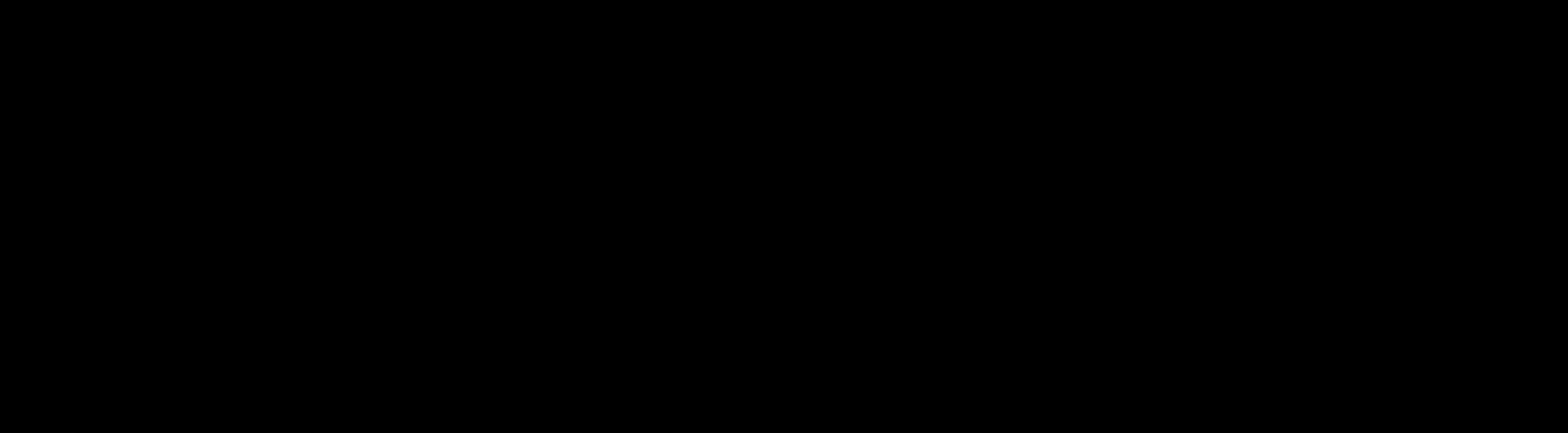
Just as the AHSS are an essential bedrock for skills, they are also crucial as guides towards the explanation and resolution of social and cultural challenges and as mediators of difference.

<sup>41</sup> Florida, R (2002), *The Rise of the Creative Class*.



## Part II: Delivery

Princeton University in the United States has recently expanded its Arts departments. You will not be able to get a degree in electrical engineering from Princeton without having followed a class in drama. The reasoning is that anyone can acquire skills, but the competitive edge is in creativity (Richard Tol).<sup>42</sup>



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3

Life  
Skills

# 3

## Life Skills

For the student, patterns and preferences suggest that higher education is often seen as an opportunity to continue in education, learning more about a specific area with less emphasis on employment. For employers, higher education is primarily seen as a preparation for the world of work.<sup>43</sup> In recent years, the structures of degree programmes are trying to reconcile these perceptions and partly as a result, these programmes have undergone significant change.

## Programme Structures, Learning and Skills

At undergraduate level, while the structure of the degree is influenced by whether or not the student's discipline is 'single subject', or the programme has a professional focus, modularisation provides opportunities to study outside a student's core interest. It has also promoted a new level of flexibility in both the structures and delivery of degrees. Programmes such as UCD *Horizons* ([www.ucd.ie](http://www.ucd.ie)), the *Broad Curriculum* at TCD ([www.tcd.ie](http://www.tcd.ie)) and GMIT's *Keeping Pace with Change* are examples of flexible curricula.

In some universities outside Ireland, such wide-ranging programmes have also been used to wider ends. In Princeton, for example,

In their first two years, students in the engineering program fulfil requirements in mathematics, physics, chemistry and computer science, as well as taking a freshman writing seminar. Engineering at Princeton is taught within the context of a liberal arts approach to education. Engineering students are required to complete at least seven Princeton courses in the humanities and social sciences. Because engineering disciplines evolve and change,

<sup>43</sup> Peter D. Hart Research Associates Inc. has carried out a survey of employers and recent college graduates in the U.S. to answer the question 'how should colleges prepare students to succeed in today's global economy?' Focus groups were held with employers and graduates prior to the development of the survey. Discussions at the focus groups demonstrated this dichotomy: while graduates recognise that third-level qualifications are important to prepare for the market place, they placed a heavier emphasis on third level as a full educational process. The survey results are available at [www.aacu.org](http://www.aacu.org), the website of the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

much of the teaching of engineering and applied science at Princeton is directed toward mastering fundamental principles: the *why* and not just the *how to*.<sup>44</sup>

In Ireland a recent report has suggested that individuals who can combine discipline-specific technical knowledge with entrepreneurial skills and in any event, an ability to think creatively, will be more sought after in the future.<sup>45</sup> A syllabus which facilitates such skills spreads has been incorporated into a number of degree programmes, including those in the Centre of Bioethical Research and Analysis (COBRA) at NUIG,<sup>46</sup> the Business Information Systems degree course in UCC,<sup>47</sup> and the Management Science and Information Systems Studies course in TCD.<sup>48</sup>

Whether or not student programmes are discipline-focused, their changing nature is especially evident at post-graduate level where there is also a recognised need for

- 'generic' or transferable skills<sup>49</sup>
- quality research supervision
- changes in the examination of the thesis
- internationally competitive doctoral programmes, and
- a new focus on employability and career development in areas such as research management/administration, technology transfer and entrepreneurship.

In part, these developments are being driven by the growing impact of the Bologna process which seeks to place the student at the centre of both a high-quality research experience and an appropriate career path.

At national level, these initiatives have been facilitated by

- the *Strategic Innovation Fund, 2006-2013* (SIF), established in December 2005 to promote among other objectives, flexible learning initiatives that can be used to up-skill the workforce.
- a recognition by the IRCHSS, IRCSET and the PRTLTI that there is a place for training and skills in their funded initiatives,
- the promotion within our HEIs of an improved and more flexible graduate education system (*Fourth Level Ireland*), and
- the funding of structured Ph.D. programmes to promote a high level of collaboration

44 <http://www.princeton.edu/admission/whatsdistinctive/>.

45 See Expert Group on Future Skills Needs at [www.skillsireland.com](http://www.skillsireland.com).

46 COBRA is located within the Department of Philosophy at NUIG but links with other departments in the faculties of Medicine, Science and Engineering as well as Arts. Teaching in professional ethics is provided through the Centre for a broad range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as well as for professionals outside the university.

47 Business Information Systems students study a mix of business subjects such as economics, accounting, management and marketing, alongside a range of IT-related subjects such as programming, web development, networking, systems analysis and database development.

48 This programme is designed to bridge gaps between business, information technology and management science.

49 For these purposes, there is no definitive list of generic skills. The generic skills typically associated with third-level education include high-level skills in written and oral communication; critical and analytical thinking; problem-solving; teamwork; independent learning and information literacy.

between institutions, to recognise the importance of entrepreneurship and management training, and to assist the conversion of research, development and innovation into commercialised services.<sup>50</sup>

As a result, specific programmes have been funded towards the widest impact.

One such example is the Graduate Research Education Programme (GREP). In 2007 the IRCHSS and the IRCSET issued a joint call for GREP applications in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, technology and engineering. A total of five proposals were recommended for funding by the two Councils: two by IRCSET, two by IRCHSS and one which was co-funded by the two Councils. Four examples of such co-operative programmes are highlighted below, each of which brings its own added dimension to inter-disciplinarity and institutional collaboration.

#### Texts, Contexts, Cultures

Launched in November 2008, Texts, Contexts, Cultures is an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in the arts and humanities that brings together three leading research hubs: the Moore Institute, NUIG; the Long Room Hub, TCD; and the Graduate School of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies, and Social Sciences in UCC. While the programme provides students with a four-year structured Ph.D. course in their chosen discipline, it is also designed to foster knowledge and familiarity with new technologies and to provide professional placements that are relevant to the student's specialist area.

#### Masters in Development Practice

The MacArthur Foundation funds a Masters in Development Practice in various parts of the world. UCD and TCD, along with other partners, have successfully obtained funding as part of this programme. The first intake of students will be in 2010. The programme links UCD and TCD, the National University of Rwanda, the Ethical Globalisation Initiative, Earthmind, Kimmage Manor and Trócaire to deliver a cutting edge and 'hands on' applied education and training programme. Trócaire staff and the staff of Kimmage Manor will be involved in the delivery of practical modules. The possibility of other NGOs becoming involved at a later stage is also being examined.

The programme includes two internships: one based at the University of Rwanda and the other with an international organization (such as the International Labour Organization or the United Nations Development Programme in Geneva). This will be followed by a brief period at the Angie Brooks International Studies Centre in Liberia.

#### The Graduate School of Creative Arts (GradCAM)

The Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media (GradCAM) is an all-island initiative, funded under Cycle 4 of the PRTL. It is a collaboration between NCAD, DIT, IADT and UU as a graduate school for doctoral research in the creative arts and media within a practice-based framework. The programme also has strong links with industry and seeks to foster policy-relevant research that will inform decision-makers in the cultural and creative industries, as well as in national institutions.

<sup>50</sup> HEA, PRTL Cycle 5: Call for Proposals—Strategy, Objectives and Guiding Principles

### PhD in Global Human Development

The PhD Program in Global Human Development is being jointly offered by UCD and the University of Dar-Es-Salaam in Tanzania. The partnerships in the program will be expanded via Erasmus Mundus funding to the members of Universitas-21 and their East African partners. Under the programme, students from non-EU countries will be able to conduct their research in their home countries, thus allowing them to keep their own social networks, preventing brain drain and enabling real knowledge transfer back to their own institutions.

The development of such instruments of co-operation has derived added strength from all-Ireland networks including:

- The *Humanities Serving Irish Society* project (PRTL Cycle 4) which links NUIG, QUB, UU, UCD, UCC, DCU, NUIM, TCD, UL, SPCD, DKIT and the RIA. The centrepiece of the project is the *Digital Humanities Observatory*, hosted by the RIA.
- Dundalk Institute of Technology's *B.A. in Youth Work* is the first programme on the island to receive the endorsement of the North–South Educational and Training Standards Committee. The course is the only one of its kind leading to a professional qualification in youth work on the island of Ireland.
- All-Ireland collaboration is also pursued through *ScoTens* (the Standing Conference on Teacher Education) in which all colleges of education on the island participate. This is jointly funded by the Department of Education and Skills in the Republic of Ireland and the Department of Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland.

Both the Royal Irish Academy of Music and the RIA are institutions which also promote a variety of initiatives on an all-island basis.

Irish HEIs have also established a number of strategic alliances to co-operate along institutional as well as programmatic lines.<sup>51</sup> At institutional level, in the Republic of Ireland, the Irish Universities Association (IUA) has developed a network to underpin such initiatives and to ensure that structured Ph.D. programmes can be developed in coherent ways between, as well as within, institutions.

However, at institutional level, there are unresolved issues in relation to weighting the AHSS modules of wide curricula. For example, in some cases, an 'arts' module can earn a student as little as half the number of credits of a SET module requiring less contact hours. Such a culture must be reviewed to ensure that all learning opportunities afforded by interdisciplinary opportunities are fully recognised when credits are being assigned.

### Proposal for Progress

In developing interdisciplinary syllabi, the weighting of AHSS modules, including languages, must be equal to those of other course components.

On an inter-institutional level, co-operation facilitates the transferability of credit-based modules under the ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System).<sup>52</sup> However, the teaching of

51 Examples include the Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA), the UCD/TCD Innovation Alliance, the *Lionra Agreement* and the North West Gateway Strategic Alliance (NWGSA).

52 IUA News ([http://www.iua.ie/media-and-events/iua-e-news/dec\\_07/4th-level-ireland.html](http://www.iua.ie/media-and-events/iua-e-news/dec_07/4th-level-ireland.html)). See also European Commission, Education and Training ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm)).

any discipline reflects the culture of the individual institutions and as such, it varies from place to place. While this is to be expected, it has been suggested to FAHSS that despite inter-institutional strategies and alliances, it can lead to duplication of resources, across the third level system as a whole, especially at undergraduate level.

**Proposal for Progress**

Graduate and undergraduate study in the AHSS should be structured in ways which can enable students to take modules in any partnered institution within a strategic alliance.

While FAHSS recognises that this raises wider issues, it remains the case that as they strive to achieve better critical mass and excellence, HEIs will benefit not only by adopting a more focussed approach to developing their own particular strengths but by supplementing these strengths with those of their partners.

In any event, certain aspects of the content and structure of existing syllabi are weak.

Although Ireland is one of the most open and globalised countries in the world, programmes which provide knowledge about other parts of the world are limited. More specifically, foreign-language students account for only 3% and 2%, respectively, of full-time undergraduates in Irish universities and institutes of technology.<sup>53</sup> In addition to the relatively low take-up in foreign languages, the number of languages that can be studied is limited.

<sup>53</sup> HEA, 2007-08 Statistics.

- When asked what would be required of AHSS graduates over the next decade employers repeatedly commented that foreign language ability will become more important.
- In addition 30% of those who answered the question on skills and training in the FAHSS Graduate Careers Survey indicated that they found foreign languages ‘useful’ but that they had not been included as part of their courses.

Some also suggested that the development of future trade links depends in part on knowledge of the languages and customs of India, China, South America, the Middle East and Africa and that the AHSS are crucial in strengthening such links.

**Proposal for Progress**

Given the acknowledged strength and reputation of the AHSS in Ireland, the Irish educational system should proactively develop the country as a portal for programmes in which linguistic and intercultural fluency can be promoted and supported more explicitly.

Having regard to the importance of a more wide-ranging menu of opportunities for students, especially at graduate level, some respondents to the two FAHSS surveys also observed that placements (including summer placements) outside the lecture room can be advantageous in preparing students for the workplace as well as address a perceived distance between academia and the workplace.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> In the FAHSS Graduate Recruitment Survey, 93% of those employers who answered indicated that there was scope for improvement in the third-level education/vocational training of AHSS graduates and that the introduction of work-placement modules might help to promote this. The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (2007) has also observed that links between industry and the AHSS are seen to be weak.

One employer commented as follows:

Working across both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland I engage with third-level institutions. The Northern Ireland colleges have a much bigger focus on work placement and experience. Republic of Ireland colleges need to introduce more practical experience to their courses in these areas in particular... [they] seem to focus work placements on IT/ Eng courses only.<sup>55</sup>

The recent statement on education and training from the National Competitiveness Council has also recommended that where appropriate, new graduates should be encouraged to make early contributions to the commercial aspects of their research and play an active role in research commercialisation and technology transfer.<sup>56</sup>

Such views were also reflected at the FAHSS Consultative Forum (January 2009). While some delegates observed that the value of placement depended on the discipline, it can open up

opportunities for students in particular areas of the AHSS. Placements are currently compulsory components of many programmes in the AHSS including business, early childhood studies, applied social studies and education. While significant progress has been made in developing placement modules, a more systematic approach is required, especially *vis-à-vis* the public sector where there has been a historic and unfortunate absence of short-term placements.

This is all part of providing 'work ready' skills to improve the transition from third and fourth level to the workplace.

#### Proposal for Progress

Degree structures should allow for placement outside the lecture room. Such modules would ensure that graduates will acquire a deeper understanding of the workplace and its ethos, develop a sense of how skills can be applied in a practical manner, and enhance career prospects for graduates. They should also include training in skills that can underpin entrepreneurship.

Respondents to the FAHSS Graduate Survey also highlighted the importance of ICT skills but that more often than not, they were not part of their curricula, especially at undergraduate level. According to one employer who responded to the FAHSS Employer Survey:

There is a huge shortage of IT staff in the country. I have been recruiting IT staff for the last 10 years, and have had to travel to Eastern Europe and India to source candidates. I think if there were some cross training or specific post graduate IT courses available to humanities, arts students etc, they could

55 FAHSS Graduate Recruitment Survey.

56 National Competitiveness Council (2009), *Statement on Education and Training*, 32. This report echoes similar findings of the HEA and the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs survey of multinational employers in Ireland in 2007. The survey was established to benchmark Irish graduates from the higher education system against graduates from other countries. Recommendations arising from the survey included the introduction of more placements to third level courses, the need for Irish students to have better management and business knowledge and more continuous assessment in third and fourth level courses with particular focus on building team skills and confidence. The Forás report on *Skills in Creativity, Design and Innovation* (November 2009) also points to this lack of interaction between science, engineering and technology and the humanities and social sciences, in particular business and makes a number of recommendations of how this gap can be closed including industry placement for PhD students and more cross disciplinary work being undertaken in HEIs.

potentially fill some of our skills shortages that we are currently experiencing.

**Proposal for Progress**

Curricula should incorporate ICT training in all AHSS programmes, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Such challenges both inside and outside the classroom come not only from the practical aspects of professional training. As one submission suggested, ‘Whether supporting volunteering among students, integrating community into teaching or researching social needs’, modules which are apart from the lecture room also ‘reinvigorate the **civic** mission of higher education in Ireland by engaging [students] with the wider community’. To this end, NUI Galway runs a particularly strong *Community Knowledge Initiative* to foster links between the community and the university.

The underlying assumption here is clear: that the wider social and civic environment is central to economic success. Indeed, as pointed out by the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), ‘Recognition of this interdependence is essential if Ireland is to develop and succeed over the longer term and this calls for a holistic and imaginative response’.<sup>57</sup> The needs of the business world and those who promote cultural literacy and competence through the AHSS are not mutually exclusive.

Thus, the rationale for addressing the educational needs of the adult population extends beyond the economic need for a highly skilled workforce to include also the wider social and educational benefits of training. Programme structures should reflect this diversity.

So should our commitment to lifelong learning the importance of which is being further highlighted by the current emphasis on up-skilling and ‘second chance’ education and training. There are some examples nationally where the further and higher education sectors have come together to co-design modules supporting the successful transition of students from further education to the first or subsequent year of a higher education course. However, there is scope for more collaboration and sharing of resources between the two sectors, especially in the co-design and delivery of courses which target the return to education and training of adult learners.



<sup>57</sup> IBEC (2006), *Focus 2010*, 11.

#### Proposal for Progress

Given the renewed emphasis on continuing professional development, the profile of 'second chance' education needs to be strengthened.

#### Proposal for Progress

The Higher Education Authority should work with HEIs to ensure a broader range of entry routes, more flexible models of programme delivery and review the role and organisation of part-time courses to ensure that both access and content are suited to those who want to participate.

### Comment

The generic skills that are provided by the AHSS cross all areas, impact on all areas, and are central to the dynamic and vitality of the economy as a whole. They provide an expertise that is generic in form and direct in impact. This has been echoed in comments from employers who were interviewed by FAHSS as part of this exercise.

It also serves as a reminder that economic recovery cannot be measured just by what is tangible or 'relevant'. To do so is to overlook the essential and intrinsic character of learning and training which are basic to output in the first place. We may be fascinated by the need to produce new gadgets or new patents. But we cannot overlook the underlying conditions that enable such activities to evolve in the first place.

Ireland's industrialised culture is relatively recent. However, it has been accompanied by new social as well as economic challenges. These include shifts in values and expectations, a more diversified and multicultural society, and the impact of

new technologies as new means for distributing knowledge.

As already argued, in such circumstances, the AHSS are crucial mediators of difference. For these reasons, a number of submissions have re-emphasised the powerful role of the AHSS, which in Grayling's words,

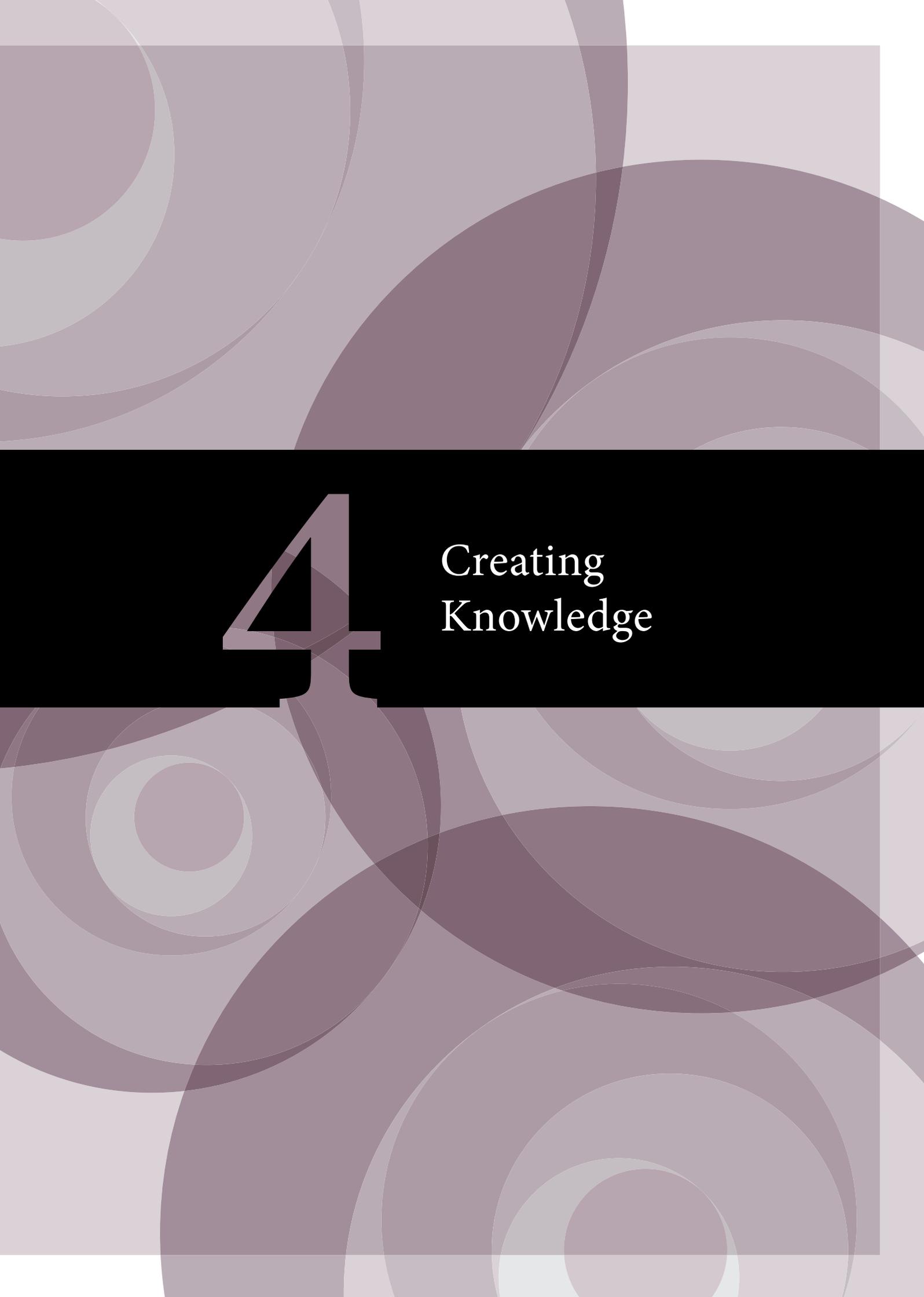
promises to produce a greater proportion of people who are more than mere foot-soldiers in the economic struggle, by helping them both to get and to give more in their social and cultural experience, and to have lives more fulfilling and participatory both in work and outside it – especially in the amenities of social intercourse, and in the responsibilities of civic and political engagement.<sup>58</sup>

#### Proposal for Progress

Institutions should design a mandatory undergraduate course in the AHSS which would highlight cross-disciplinarity as well as the differing methodologies and character of various AHSS disciplines. Such courses might include non-staff teachers and persons of experience from the wider community. While they might be introduced initially on a pilot basis and reflect the culture of individual institutions, they should be implemented as a mandatory module of the curriculum at undergraduate level within 2 years of being launched.

<sup>58</sup> Grayling, A.C., (2002), 157-8.





# 4

## Creating Knowledge

# 4

## Creating Knowledge

In recent years, investment in research in Ireland's third-level institutions has been a feature of various programmes and initiatives (see Appendix XIII). It has also been promoted through successive national initiatives such as the IRCHSS (on a permanent basis since 2000) and the PRTLTI (since 1998). As a result of these initiatives, the research landscape of higher education and in particular that of the AHSS in Ireland has been fundamentally altered.

### Funding AHSS Research

Within the research envelope, the importance of investment in the AHSS has been recognised mainly through the PRTLTI and the IRCHSS. To a great extent, AHSS scholars rely on the direct government funding which is provided from these two sources to seed-fund and sustain their work.

To date the PRTLTI has allocated a total of €865 million (consisting mainly of Exchequer and significant private funds) to strengthen national research capabilities by investing in excellence and physical infrastructure. The ultimate aim of the programme is to consolidate Ireland's position as a leading hub for carrying out world-class research and development. Awards to AHSS projects under the PRTLTI have increased under the various cycles. However, funding for the creative arts was not awarded until cycle 4. Given the arguments that have been made in previous chapters, funding in this area must increase, not least because of the low base-point from which it has to grow to match the demands that are being made on it.

The PRTLTI has resulted in the establishment of a number of research institutes in the AHSS.<sup>59</sup> It is complemented by IRCHSS schemes which deal with postgraduate scholarships (since 1999), postdoctoral fellowships (since 2000), research and senior fellowships (since 2001) and thematic research project grants (since 2003) (see Appendix XV). This

<sup>59</sup> Examples of research centres in the AHSS funded under the PRTLTI include the Humanities Institute of Ireland (HII), funded under Cycle 3 (lead: UCD; partner: SPD); the Geary Institute, funded under Cycles 1, 3 and 4 (lead: UCD; partners: TCD & NUIM) and An Foras Feasa, a constituent part of the HSIS project, funded under Cycle 4, which is a partnership between NUIM, DCU, DKIT, and SPD. For further details on the HSS projects funded under PRTLTI see Appendix XIV.

funding has also attracted a number of high profile scholars to undertake their research in Ireland.

Between 2000 and 2008, funding for the IRCHSS increased from €1.6 million to €12.5 million (see Appendix XIII, Table 4). The existence of such a dedicated forum to promote the humanities and social sciences has had a positive impact on research in these areas, as well as introduced and promoted links to international networks and funding opportunities.

It has also had a particularly positive impact on certain disciplines. For example, the increase in the number of those who are pursuing PhD programmes in economics and law has coincided with funding which the IRCHSS was able to make available for students who might otherwise have left an academic track. Numbers studying law on a full-time basis at PhD level in the university sector have also increased from 16 in 2000-1 to 123 in 2007-8.<sup>60</sup>

In that these funding streams have developed a regime of international peer review, they also act as an objective mechanism for allocating resources as well as provide benchmarks against which excellence in the AHSS can be assessed by international standards. These protocols have been essentially incorporated into the culture of AHSS research in general with beneficial effects for both AHSS researchers and HEIs.

For all the accepted importance of both the PRTL and the IRCHSS in promoting research, their remit for research in the creative arts is either non-existent or limited. It was not until cycle 4 of the PRTL (2007) that the creative arts were successfully

funded while the remit of the IRCHSS and the Arts Council does not include funding for research in the creative arts. This is an anomalous position for a dynamic and growing area within the research community and the economy at large.

#### Proposal for Progress

The Arts Council and the IRCHSS should meet under the aegis of the HEA with a view to identifying a menu of initiatives to fund research in the creative arts and whether by joint-funding, or concentration on a single agency, publish conclusions for take-up in the academic year 2011-12.

## Collaboration in Research

Within the world of research, many of the relevant 'drivers of change' which impact on contemporary society are best understood within an holistic approach which involves all disciplines. As examples, the FAHSS Consultative Forum (January 2009) referred to economic instability, climate change, population movements, food safety and poverty as issues which do not lend themselves to merely technical or uni-sectoral solutions. While such issues often involve a fundamental re-thinking of assumptions that are sometimes taken for granted about society, governance and economic values, effective and pragmatic solutions are possible only through a culture of collaboration.

This value of this approach has been recognized in the EU's Lund Declaration (July 2009). This declaration emerged after delegates at the 'New Worlds – New Solutions' conference outlined Europe's future research requirements to 2025.

<sup>60</sup> HEA Statistics.

The declaration states that

European Research must focus on the Grand Challenges of our time moving beyond current rigid thematic approaches. This calls for a new deal among European Institutions and member states in which European and National instruments are well aligned and cooperation builds on transparency and trust<sup>61</sup>

In recent years Irish AHSS researchers have been developing such collaborations both within, and between, institutions and in turn, between Irish and international partners. Such collaborations can assist mobility at all levels of the system, from that of the student to that of the most experienced researcher. It can also foster research and career paths which link the academic community, the civil and public service, and NGOs.

At a national level in Ireland, collaboration in research was spearheaded through the PRTLII (primarily through funded research institutes)<sup>62</sup> and the IRCHSS (through collaboration between individuals on a designated theme). A number of projects that are funded in this way are listed in Appendix XIV. Some of these, such as *Humanities Serving Irish Society* (HSIS), are being pursued on an all-island basis and include the following:

**‘Embodying the imagined community: the role of collective participation in the transformation of Irish identities’**

This project at UL and QUB is examining the implications of ‘collective events.’ These events are not only key signifiers of Irish national consciousness but can provide perspectives on various ways in which Irishness is imagined and transformed, as well as on the processes by which people come to an understanding of Ireland and Irishness. The project is both practically and theoretically innovative, elucidating both the lived reality and the consequences of collective participation.

Within the Republic of Ireland, key collaborations include *An Foras Feasa* (PRTLII cycle 4, 2006), an inter-institutional and cross-disciplinary Institute for Research in Irish Historical and Cultural Traditions. This is a consortium which brings together staff from Humanities and Computer Science departments in NUIM, DCU, DKIT and SPCD and supports individual and collaborative research projects in the following four research streams and research networks: ICT: Innovation and the Humanities; Multiculturalism and Multilingualism: Textual Analysis and Linguistic Change; Ireland and Europe; and Cultural Heritage and Social Capital in a Global Context.

*An Foras Feasa* will also advance the generation and utilisation of interactive media by its emphasis on the incorporation of information and communication technology into the study of the humanities. It is also an integral part of the *Humanities Serving Irish Society* initiative.

61 The Lund Declaration (July 2009) available at [www.se2009.eu/polopoly\\_fs/1.8460!menu/standard/file/lund\\_declaration\\_final\\_version\\_9\\_july.pdf](http://www.se2009.eu/polopoly_fs/1.8460!menu/standard/file/lund_declaration_final_version_9_july.pdf).

62 See Appendix XIV.

## International Collaboration: Enhancing Ireland's Reputation

International collaborations also enhance research networks and funding. Some of these projects are funded at EU level, especially under the EU Framework Programme (FP), and include the following:

- Under FP6 (2002-6), there were 18 Irish partners in AHSS projects as well as 2 others where Irish researchers are coordinators. Ireland is currently participating in 3 projects under the first call of FP7 (see Appendix XVI).
- Irish AHSS researchers are also active in the two EU ERA-Nets, HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area; [www.hera.org](http://www.hera.org)) and NORFACE (New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Co-operation in Europe; [www.norface.org](http://www.norface.org)), both of which the IRCHSS helped to establish.
- Under NORFACE, Irish AHSS researchers are participating in 19 projects which were funded between 2005 and 2007.
- Since January 2009, there have been 73 applications with Irish participation under the Joint Research Programmes (JRP) for HERA. These have had varying degrees of Irish participation: 20 with an Irish project leader, 48 with Irish principal investigators, and 4 with Irish associated partners. The final outcome of the JRP is due for publication in December 2009 (see Appendix XVI).<sup>63</sup>

- Irish participation in the *Marie Curie* and *Leonardo* programmes is also high, underlining the international reputation of Irish researchers in the HSS and promoting Ireland as a destination for researchers. In 2009, the IRCHSS was awarded €2.7m in external funding (FP7 Marie Curie COFUND) to implement an international mobility postdoctoral scheme. This award is the second largest award made to an Irish applicant in FP7.

In a wider context, the Irish Aid Programme also supports international collaborations. The Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (RCB) brings together all nine universities on the island of Ireland and four in Sub-Saharan Africa in a unique, high-level partnership to develop a coordinated approach to RCB in higher-education institutions.

The Egalitarian World Initiative (EWI) is another example of how Irish researchers are looking beyond the EU to develop research partnerships as well as build older relationships.

### The Egalitarian World Initiative (UCD)

The EWI is an example of how research, teaching and outreach can interact. The EWI is currently hosted by the Equality Studies Centre at UCD. The EU has recognised the potential of the EWI by awarding its prestigious Marie Curie Transfer of Knowledge award for a four-year programme (2006-2010) entitled An Egalitarian and Socially Inclusive Europe (ESIE). This is designed to enhance institutional capacity in equality, social justice and human rights theory and methodology. Seven universities in the EU, including Oxford and Cambridge, are partners in this innovative project. Under ESIE, a total of 12 Marie Curie Fellows,

63 Information obtained directly from the IRCHSS.

recognised experts from universities and research centres in the EU, the United States, and Pakistan have been recruited to spend periods of up to 12 months working with the EWI network, the thematic research clusters, and doctoral students delivering courses, running workshops, undertaking research and helping to develop thematic networks. In addition, fifteen members of the EWI network, all UCD academic staff from a variety of disciplines, are spending three months at one of seven partner universities in Europe developing their knowledge of egalitarian theory and methodologies with a view to transferring that knowledge to colleagues, doctoral students and the EWI network on their return.

Programmes such as the EWI, as well as the Masters in Development Practice (Ireland and Rwanda), the PhD in Global Human Development (Ireland and Tanzania) which have been discussed in chapters 2 and 3, reinforce how in developing its research culture, Ireland can build on its under-used and unique connections outside the EU to the mutual benefit of Ireland and these countries, especially in Africa and Asia. Given that Ireland has exportable experience in the broad area of the knowledge economy, especially in the AHSS, and a developing capacity to deliver this in virtual as well as in physical terms, its reputation enhances this capacity.

Linking the national and the international, funding which has been awarded through instruments such as the PRTLTI and the IRCHSS has often been used to seed further phases of the designated project at EU level.<sup>64</sup> One such example of this is the Thomas Moore Hypermedia Archive, based at NUIG.

<sup>64</sup> For a list of examples of leverage funding to projects provided by the IRCHSS, see Appendix XV.

#### Thomas Moore Hypermedia Archive

In 2004 NUIG was awarded an IRCHSS project award to establish The Thomas Moore Hypermedia Archive. Seed-funding from the IRCHSS enabled the development of an archive which has attracted researchers from all over the world. To consolidate its team of researchers, NUIG later secured over €1 million in Marie Curie Mobility funding. The principal investigator of the project says:

‘The expertise we wanted wasn’t available locally. But I knew it existed in other institutes worldwide. So the idea was to bring people to Galway to teach us how to do these kinds of things, and establish a national centre for pioneering research. It was an ideal mixture of national and EU funding agencies working well.’

The relative success of such initiatives suggests that Irish AHSS researches are more than capable of competing successfully for EU resources provided that at domestic level, arrangements exist for strategic seed-funding.

### Research and Teaching

The link between research and teaching is also crucial. Both the IRCHSS and the PRTLTI require that those who apply for funding indicate what impact their research will have on teaching.

The Strategic Innovation Fund is also funding the National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL) as an initiative to promote greater interaction between teaching and research.

### National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning

The National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL) is a collaborative project between UCC (lead), CIT, NUIG, TCD, and WIT. It is funded under Cycle 1 of the Strategic Innovation Fund to promote the integration of teaching and research through innovation, development, and good practice. In particular it seeks to encourage 'research-led teaching', as informed by the research interests of academic staff; 'research-oriented teaching', as that which gives students an understanding of research methods; 'research-based teaching', as teaching that requires students to conduct research themselves; and 'research-informed teaching', which is designed and adapted on the basis of the results of systematic enquiry into the educational process.

The National Academy works with Irish HEIs to develop and implement policy and practices aimed at enhancing the student learning experience at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It also supports institutions through investigation and dissemination of national and international examples and models of good practice.

Despite such initiatives, it has been suggested to FAHSS that at institutional level, the link between research and teaching could be stronger. It is often the case that most principal investigators do not teach for the duration of their research grant. If and where they are replaced, their teaching slots are usually assigned to junior, contract or relatively inexperienced personnel. That such absences from the lecture room can be prolonged over some years serves neither the potential of the institution itself nor those students, especially at undergraduate level, who are central to it.

### Proposal for Progress

There should be a clearer stress on the links between teaching and research, as well as an immediate end to the practice where principal and/or associate research investigators are not obliged to teach at undergraduate level over prolonged periods of time.

## AHSS Research and Evidence-Based Policy

While all graduates contribute to society as engaged citizens, AHSS researchers can draw on their particular training to

- challenge and explain economic, demographic, political and social change through analysis and debate from different perspectives
- offer innovative and creative solutions to current challenges, especially their social and cultural implications,
- contribute by informing public debate, and
- offer relevant evidence, analysis and interpretation of legislation.

Research in the AHSS is essential for evidence-based policy-making.

However, research has to inform policy-making in a proactive as opposed to a casual way. In 2008 the British Academy addressed this issue in its report, *Punching Our Weight: the Humanities and Social Sciences in Public Policy Making*. This report makes a number of suggestions to maximise the results of AHSS research, including better forward-planning by government departments to fund longer-term

research, peer-reviewing research done on behalf of government departments, and ensuring that researchers have access to public service networking to share their research. It also recommended that the number of inter-disciplinary centres which focus on public policy should be increased.<sup>65</sup>

In focusing on the disjuncture between research and its application to policy making, *Punching Our Weight* referred to a problem that is not unique to any one country. Given the dramatic increase in AHSS research in recent years, this research should not exist in an exclusive world especially given the potential of the AHSS to inform civic decisions that affect civic decisions that affect how and where people live.

#### Proposal for Progress

In order to facilitate more active dialogue between academia and policy-makers, public servants and HEI-based researchers should be encouraged to take a more active role in developing creative alliances between education institutions, businesses, and the public and civil service. The HEA should manage a rolling forum in order to develop and implement such links.

Government departments should set and publish targets for two-way secondments with HEIs, and research organisations and institutes so as to correlate the expertise of the higher education sector with the civil and public service.

65 British Academy, (2008), *Punching Our Weight – The Humanities and Social Sciences in Public Policy Making*, 49-51.

## Indicating Impacts

While the basis on which research projects are initially assessed is well developed in Ireland, measurements of activity and impact are not as clear. The relative underdevelopment of metrics of output and impact do not serve the objectives or accountability of funders. Neither do they serve those of individual researchers who for their own reasons, wish to improve the methods and criteria of assessment which affect the progress of their own careers as well as the award of research contracts from both inside and outside their institutions.

In a report prepared to the United States Congress in 1986, the Office of Technology Assessment argued that public expenditure on research and development cannot be assessed simply in terms of a return on investment. It suggested that the factors that need to be considered are too complex and subjective and the payoffs too diverse and unquantifiable.<sup>66</sup> In any event, research is funded not simply to generate money from patents and spin-offs but to improve the wider circumstances of society. In addition, outputs from R&D investment, for example, through new knowledge, skills and experience, are intangible and unquantifiable, and their benefits may not be realised for some years and their impact felt in entirely unrelated areas.<sup>67</sup>

FAHSS recognises that AHSS researchers study cultural and social issues that often have an influence that is broader than what impinges directly on their disciplines and that they need to

66 U.S. Congress (1986), Office of Technology Assessment, *Research Funding as an Investment: Can We Measure the Returns? A Technical Memorandum*, 9.

67 See Piric and Reeve (1997), 'Evaluation of Public Investment in R&D – Towards A Contingency Analysis'.

be evaluated accordingly. However, submissions made to FAHSS suggest that

- indicators for the AHSS have not been developed satisfactorily or where they do exist, have been developed within the context and cultures of other disciplines and with an incomplete understanding of, or regard for, the cultures of the AHSS, and
- recent attempts at EU level to develop a European research index in the humanities have not been developed in an effective or practical manner.

Developing criteria for measuring the distinctive impact of the AHSS is of critical importance. Within the debate of value for money and/or performance and peer-reviewed criteria for professional progression and promotion, appropriate metrics must be identified for measuring the impact of AHSS research. The RIA and the IRCHSS are currently consulting on appropriate benchmarks. A preliminary discussion of the key relevant issues was recently published by the IRCHSS/RIA in *Key Performance Indicators in Humanities Research in Ireland* (RIA and IRCHSS, June 2009).

#### Proposal for Progress

A system of relevant indicators must be developed and adopted by stakeholders to evaluate the quality of AHSS research as well as its impacts on both the teaching and research missions of our HEIs.

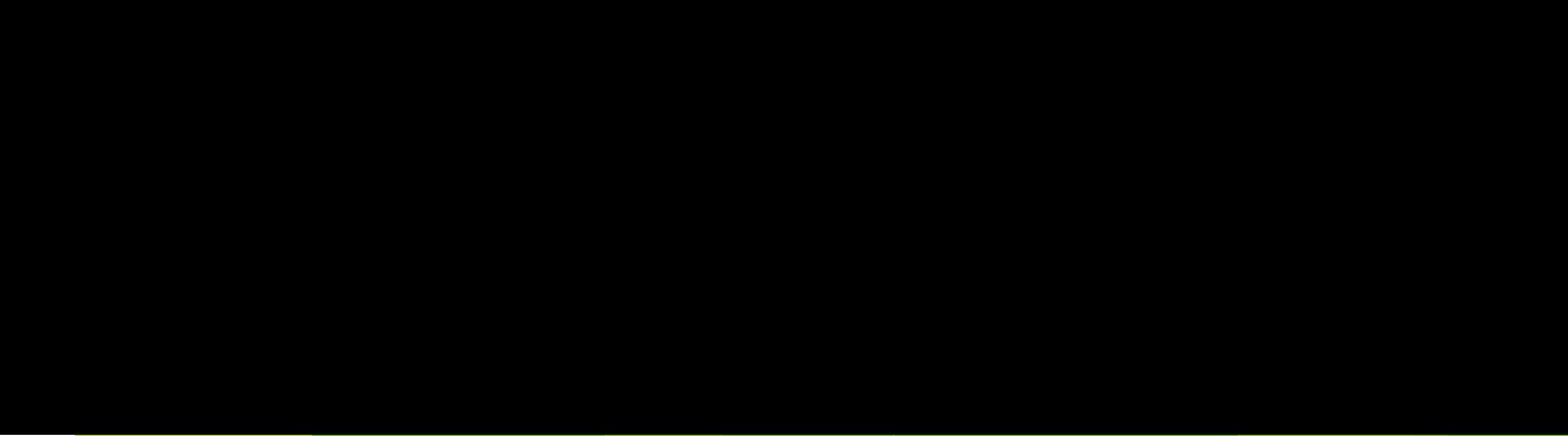
## Comment

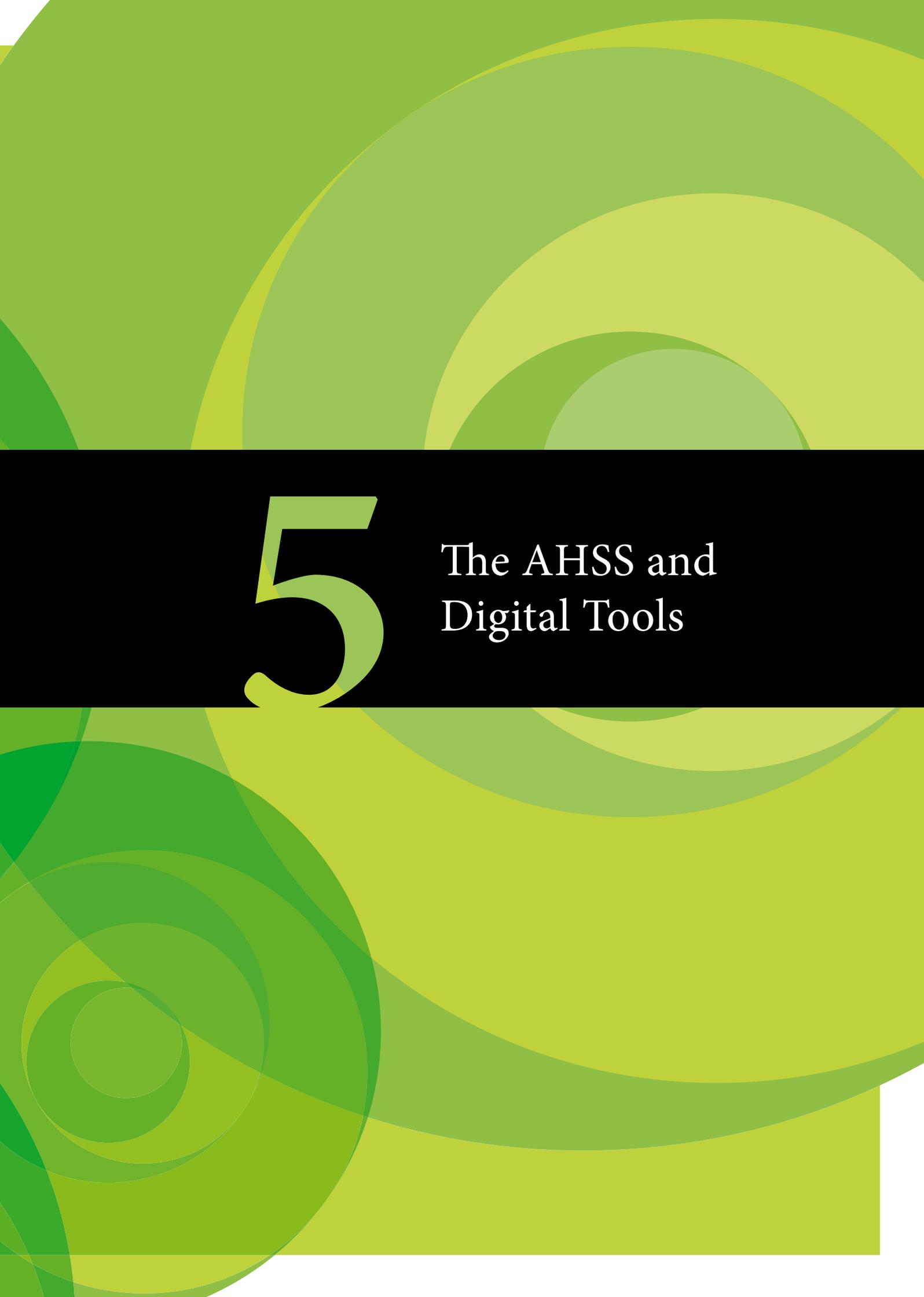
The impact of the IRCHSS on the culture and funding of HSS research has been direct and productive. As an entity, the Council has served the community and Ireland well and should continue to do so as the main funder of HSS research. However, in addition to funding research and advising on policy for the HSS, the IRCHSS should also fund research initiatives to sustain society as well as cultivate creativity. This approach by the Council would clarify and strengthen the profile for research in the AHSS.

In a research landscape that is changing both in terms of depth and range, the effectiveness in the delivery of these two important objectives for Ireland would be best served by being associating the Council within the **world of education** with the Higher Education Authority, and the Department of Education and Skills. Within the HEA an overarching umbrella which embeds graduate education and training and the AHSS funding should be developed to promote and enhance the capacity of higher education to drive learning, research and innovation from its own base and strengths.

#### Proposal for Progress

The strategic development of the impact of the IRCHSS will be best served by associating the Council within the world of education with the Higher Education Authority, and the Department of Education and Skills. This will also promote greater interaction among all agencies which promote the creation and development of knowledge and skills.



The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent circles in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. A solid black horizontal band runs across the middle of the page, serving as a backdrop for the title.

# 5

## The AHSS and Digital Tools

# 5

## The AHSS and Digital Tools

For AHSS researchers, the commitment and access to digitised sources is now more important than ever, all the more so in that such sources are for all researchers, and not just for those in a particular institution or discipline.

ICT creates new opportunities to promote the generic skills of the AHSS. It promotes collaborative research in new ways and enables the dissemination of research to wider audiences. By extending research networks on a virtual level, it also provides new opportunities for researchers to attach themselves to a particular project where it might otherwise not have been possible to do so. As such, technology has challenged the traditional tools which AHSS scholars use to teach and research.

### New Tools: Digitisation

In Ireland, there have been a number of important initiatives to harness the potential of e-learning and digitization. These include:

- the establishment of the Digital Hub Development Agency in 2003 to focus on digital content and technology enterprises.
- the establishment of the National Digital Research Centre in 2006 as a consortium of five higher education institutions with the support of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. This invests in applied digital technology research and seeks to bridge the gap between innovative digital research and its impact in the marketplace. In 2008 it allocated €3m to seven projects.<sup>68</sup>
- At a general policy level, a growing recognition of the importance of digitisation for both the preservation of Ireland's cultural heritage and the wider economy. This is reflected in the *National Development Plan 2007-2013* where there is also a commitment to invest €1,130 million to a programme which includes a commitment to widening access to and preserving Irish culture through a digitisation programme.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> [www.ndrc.ie](http://www.ndrc.ie).

<sup>69</sup> Government of Ireland, (2007) *National Development Plan 2007-2013: Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All*, 255.

*The Next Leap: Competitive Ireland in the Digital Era*, published by the Irish Institute for European Affairs (IIEA) in 2008 also identified Ireland's competitiveness in the digital sector as a priority area for research and enterprise. The impetus for the study came from the Irish Technology Leadership Group in the Silicon Valley after Ireland was no longer in the top five countries in the digital sector.<sup>70</sup> The report noted that

- failure to embrace the transition to the global digital environment would leave Ireland behind as companies would locate to cheaper locations
- people should be more conversant with digital technologies, and that
- Ireland should take the roll-out of the next generation broadband as a new beginning.

In June 2009 the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources also launched *Technology Actions to Support the Smart Society*. This listed actions that should be taken in a number of areas to place Ireland at the forefront of digital and clean technology. These actions included a proposed International Content Services Centre (ICSC) which would harness Ireland's reputation in three areas:

- digital creative arts (film, games, music and animation)
- modern communications technology, and
- legal and other professional services.

<sup>70</sup> See Ryan, Johnny, (2008), *The Next Leap: Competitive Ireland in the Digital Era*.

The proposed ICSC will also provide a centralised administrative centre for a range of services related to digital content and serve both multi-national interests as well as local indigenous players with global scale or ambition.<sup>71</sup> The establishment of the ICSC was also supported at the Global Economic Forum that took place in Farmleigh in September 2009.

It is clear from this proposal that AHSS graduates will be required to ensure the success of the ICSC. The role that the AHSS can play in this process has been described as follows in a submission to FAHSS:

digital media is a global industry with very simple inputs, namely: computers, the internet and people ... Creative, open, inventive and flexible individuals who are capable of working in groups to develop ideas and bring them to market are a prerequisite for our success. In that regard the contribution of the AHSS to the Digital Hub knowledge community is immense.

<sup>71</sup> Elsewhere, the importance of digitisation has not gone unnoticed. In the UK, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport published *Digital Britain* in June 2009. The report makes recommendations to establish the UK as a global centre for the creative industries in the digital age. It also signalled that the British government would publish a new framework for higher education 'which will set out how industrial activism and a sectoral focus will be applied in HE' and 'will be particularly significant for Digital Britain both as a very significant and growing sector in its own right and as vital underpinning for the wider economy'.

Within the AHSS, the role and potential of the creative arts are particularly crucial to the development of digitisation as both a creative and a teaching tool. From computer games to social networking, it is the creative arts that provide the content which attracts attention, provokes debate and generates profits. As put in a submission to FAHSS<sup>72</sup>:

The creative arts and understanding of natural behaviours are at the heart of developing the content, appearance, story, and realism of the gaming experience. An understanding of customer needs from the gaming experience is also a prerequisite for successful gaming, in addition to effective advertising and marketing that will maximise sales and distribution. Creative content is the driver of the success of entertainment sites such as YouTube and social networking sites such as FaceBook and MySpace. Consumers are not primarily concerned about the technology that supports these sites, but rather how these sites enable the user to connect, interact and engage socially in a virtual way.

## Digitisation and Managing Knowledge

At the level of the individual, most AHSS students are digitally literate. The vast majority of student assignments are no longer handwritten and AHSS students are instructed on how to access on-line sources and how to manipulate data from the time they enter college. Students must have a capacity to distinguish between authoritative information and good resources, and those which are unauthoritative and poor.

At the level of the project, new technologies are also enlarging the potential of, and managing the methods by which conclusions can be reached. For example, TCD and IBM are currently collaborating on digitising, transcribing and marking up for web publication a collection of depositions made after the outbreak of the 1641 rebellion. The 1641 Depositions are witness testimonies by nearly 4,000 Irish men and women and have been in TCD since 1741. With funding from the IRCHSS and the UK Arts, Humanities Research Council, the digitisation of these depositions will make this important source available to scholars all over the world. As they exist, the depositions are handwritten with the same word often spelt differently on the same page. Only the human brain can interpret such information. IBM wants to understand the mental process involved and simulate it with new and innovative technology.

<sup>72</sup> Embracing new media and in particular social networking websites to communicate key messages about Ireland's distinct cultural tradition to a wider and more diverse audience was also recommended at the Global Irish Economic Forum, held in September 2009.

### Proposal for Progress

More targeted initiatives should be put in place to allow private enterprise, including those in computer-based technologies, to interact with funding agencies and institutions to promote digitised projects in the AHSS.

Irish HEIs are also managing other digitisation projects. Examples include the Bridge-IT project (TCD)<sup>73</sup>, the Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive (UCD)<sup>74</sup>, CELT (UCC)<sup>75</sup> and Irish Script on Screen (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies)<sup>76</sup> which is digitising Irish manuscripts from a range of institutions within Ireland. Ireland's seven universities are also developing a national open-access repository system through the Irish Research eLibrary (IreL) which delivers on-line research publications, journals, databases, and indexing and abstracting services, as well as e-books. However, IreL is only available at present to users in universities.

73 The aim of this project is to create an online digital resource on ageing. The interactive, multimedia database will provide a research resource for scholars in a range of disciplines pertaining to ageing and social gerontology. See <http://www.tcd.ie/longroomhub/projects/ireland/#Bridge-IT>.

74 This was launched in 2005 and, as a component part of the Humanities Institute of Ireland, receives funding under Cycle 3 of the PRTL. The project, based in the UCD James Joyce Library, seeks to preserve and enhance access to elements of the university's main repositories through digitisation, as well as to carry out research pertaining to the use of digital media in a research environment. See <http://ivrla.ucd.ie>

75 Corpus of Electronic Texts (CELT) at UCC has a searchable online textbase with access to a thousand contemporary and historical documents from many areas, including literature and the other arts. See [www.ucc.ie/celt/](http://www.ucc.ie/celt/).

76 This project entails the digitisation of Irish manuscripts from a range of institutions within Ireland. See <http://www.isos.dias.ie/>.

In recent years, one of the most exciting developments in digital humanities is the establishment of the Digital Humanities Observatory.

### The Digital Humanities Observatory (DHO)

The DHO is a shared infrastructure among ten universities and research institutions in order to coordinate and promote e-resources in the arts and humanities. It represents a major milestone in the development of digital humanities (DH) in Ireland. Significant functions of the DHO are: to raise awareness of new forms of research enabled by humanities computing; to provide advice and training to researchers; to support PRTL-funded projects with DH elements, to develop and maintain an interactive database of digital humanities projects (see DRAPier at <http://dho.ie/drapier/>); to advise on sustainable technologies for the creation, management, publication, sharing and preservation of digital content, thus providing a solution to issues identified in the HEA/Forfás review, Research Infrastructure in Ireland – Building for Tomorrow. The DHO has established several new collaborations and represents an important linkage between research groups within Ireland and with counterparts abroad. It has also made significant progress in establishing standards and best practice for the area.



Digitisation initiatives have not been restricted to the higher education sector. Public libraries are also engaging with digitisation in order to improve their services for the community.

One submission to FAHSS states that

Developments in information technology present opportunities for cost-effective creation of digital collections of both printed and manuscript material and born digital items. The LAI supports the preservation of rare and fragile material and the care and preservation of digital objects. Irish Libraries of all kinds – public, special and academic have developed such projects.

There has been considerable activity in the area of digitisation in the library sector within Ireland. Relevant projects include ACTIVATE (2001)<sup>77</sup>, the project on Cultural Heritage (2003)<sup>78</sup> and the publication of a set of ‘best practice’ digitisation guidelines, *Our Cultural Heritage: Building the Gateway* (2004). The National Library of Ireland, the National Gallery and the National Archives also have extensive digitisation programmes.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>77</sup> The purpose of ACTIVATE is to explore the use of digitisation to improve access to cultural resources on the internet.

<sup>78</sup> This project consisted of the digitisation and online publication of local studies materials in local libraries, museums, and archives and to demonstrate the viability of a national digitisation strategy for important library holdings.

<sup>79</sup> The National Archives are currently working on the digitisation of the 1901 and 1911 census.

## Research and New Tools: Digitisation in an International Setting

Digitisation is a pan-national tool. Not least within the EU, this was recognised as part of the discussions on the development of the European Research Area. In 1997 the *European Task Force on Culture and Development* reported that the arts and culture

- were basic to the creative and cultural industries, the media, and the value added service of the telecommunications industry, and that
- they created national and international stocks of ideas or images which could be exploited by the creative and cultural industries.<sup>80</sup>

Of all initiatives, perhaps the establishment of the Ministerial Network for Valorising Activities (MINERVA) in 2002 to develop a European Digital Library was one of the more important. The general objectives of the network are to improve accessibility to European digital cultural resources, to link existing networks, promote the use of digital cultural resources, facilitate the exploitation of digitised cultural resources and provide clear rules for their use and re-use.

The digital libraries initiative is part of the Commission's *i2010 Strategy* for the digital economy. The aim of this project is to make all Europe's cultural resources and scientific records accessible to all, and preserve it for future generations. A further key goal is to develop *Europeana*, as a single access point for consulting digital copies of the materials held by libraries, museums, and archives.

<sup>80</sup> The European Task Force on Culture and Development (1998), *In From the Margins: A Contribution to the Debate on Culture and Development in Europe*.

For AHSS researchers, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) has emerged as a critical forum for both policy-making and funding.<sup>81</sup> In 2006 it was re-configured to co-ordinate strategic thinking and identify strategic goals for the digital humanities within the EU. As a result, a roadmap of projects was drawn up, including 6 in the AHSS. Of these, one each in the humanities and the social sciences, DARIAH and the ESS, were adopted by the IRCHSS for further development.

<sup>81</sup> The mission of the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) is to support a coherent and strategy-led approach to policy-making on research infrastructures in Europe, and to facilitate multilateral initiatives leading to the better use and development of research infrastructures at EU and international level. Following the formation of the group in 2002, the *European Roadmap for Research Infrastructures* was published in 2006. This report identified infrastructures for the longer-term needs of the European research communities. The first edition of the roadmap features thirty five proposals for new (or major upgrades of) facilities of pan-European interest, covering seven key research areas including environmental sciences, energy, materials sciences, astrophysics, astronomy, particle and nuclear physics; biomedical and life sciences; social sciences and the humanities, and computation and data treatment. Five projects were identified within the social sciences and humanities domain that were of sufficient maturity to warrant funding from the Research Infrastructures Programme in FP7 for their 'Preparatory Phase' development: CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives); CLARIN (Common Language Resources and Technology Initiative); DARIAH (Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities); ESS (The European Social Survey) and SHARE (Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe).

#### DARIAH and ESS

DARIAH ([www.dariah.eu](http://www.dariah.eu)) aims to establish an infrastructure for the long-term access to the humanities and cultural heritage of Europe. Preparatory work commenced in 2008 and will continue until 2010. DARIAH will connect scholarly data archives and repositories with cultural heritage for the arts and humanities across Europe, making scattered resources accessible collectively through the internet. In order to ensure that the progress of DARIAH is accessible to interested researchers, the IRCHSS hosts a National Steering Committee which consists of key stakeholders including the HEIs, libraries, major cultural bodies, the DHO, policy makers and the commercial sector.

The ESS ([www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)) is an academically-driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations. Now in its fourth round, the survey covers over 30 nations and employs the most rigorous methodologies. The survey is funded through the EU Framework Programmes, the European Science Foundation, and through national funding bodies in participating countries. The survey consists of a 'core' module which remains relatively constant from round to round, plus two or more 'rotating' modules, repeated at intervals. The core module monitors change and continuity in a range of social variables, including governance and efficacy; moral, political and social values; social exclusion, national, ethnic and religious allegiances; well-being, health and security; demographics and socio-economics.

#### Comment

Despite these developments at national, international and institutional level, the HEA/Forfás review, *Research Infrastructure in Ireland—Building for Tomorrow* (2007) found that there are a number of infrastructural deficits in this area. These include deficiencies in data management infrastructure, high-end computing capability and inadequate library provision.<sup>82</sup> They also include the need to develop a Trusted Digital Repository in audio-visual resources (already included for competition in PRTL 5) that will parallel what is already being achieved through the DHO for print and manuscript media.

For AHSS researchers who want to develop e-projects, there is also a lack of joined-up thinking in the roll-out of digitisation as a research tool and the relevant responsibility is spread over as many as six government departments.<sup>83</sup> This does not facilitate better and more efficient ways to pursue research. While at EU level, Ireland has been participating in the ESFRI process, it has no coherent policy at national level to apply, fund or monitor prioritised projects. No agency has overall financial responsibility for assessing or evaluating the roadmap agreed at EU level. As such, and in this crucial area, our ability to interact with the ESFRI roadmap is lopsided and inefficient and hampers the ability of AHSS researchers to benefit from the ESFRI process.

82 HEA/Forfás. (2007), *Research Infrastructure in Ireland – Building for Tomorrow*.

83 Taoiseach; Arts, Sports and Tourism; Education and Skills; Environment and Local Government; Communications, Marine and Natural Resources; Enterprise Trade and Employment.

#### Proposal for Progress

There should be one agency with a clear mandate to evolve and co-ordinate policy and funding on digitisation. For AHSS interests, the sectoral responsibility should be vested in the IRCHSS.

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# *Appendices*





# Appendix I: Terms of Reference

## General Objectives

The overall objective of the foresight exercise for the arts, humanities and social sciences (FAHSS) is to provide a comprehensive review of the contribution which a thriving humanities and social sciences sector can make to social and economic development; to review the current status, strengths and weaknesses of the arts, humanities and social sciences in Ireland and to chart a course for future development of the arts, humanities and social sciences so that it can make the best possible contribution to social and economic development with particular reference to the Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation 2007–2013 and the National Development Plan 2007–2013.

The exercise will make an objective assessment of the role of the arts, humanities and social sciences in interacting with current research and policy; map past and present research; identify strategic opportunities and the funding, supports and services necessary to support arts, humanities and social sciences research in Ireland.

The scope of the exercise will extend to all areas of the arts, humanities and social sciences, including business and law studies.

The process should be participatory and consensus-based and should ensure active and constructive input from all relevant stakeholders, and in particular from the arts, humanities and social sciences community. It should also connect with similar processes now in train in other countries.

## Key Activities

The foresight exercise will:

### (a) *Identify strengths and challenges*

- Conduct a thorough examination, involving fact finding and assessment, of all aspects of the economic and social role of the arts, humanities and social sciences in Ireland.

- Survey the arts, humanities and social sciences activity in Irish higher education and research and identify gaps in provision and research.
- Highlight challenges and opportunities through an objective assessment of the role of the arts, humanities and social sciences in interacting with current research and strategic policies.
- Establish, from higher-education institutions, their strategic aims for the arts, humanities and social sciences.
- For the institutes of technology in particular, assess how their arts, humanities and social sciences activity at local level contributes to the national agenda.
- Identify the end users of the knowledge created by arts, humanities and social sciences activity in Ireland and their needs.
- Identify areas of co-operation, both nationally and internationally, including links with Northern Ireland.

### (b) *Identify issues and propose solutions*

- Conduct a destinations report on humanities and social sciences postgraduate and post-doctoral researchers from the period 2000-2003.
- Monitor the arts, humanities and social sciences contribution to the evolution of the knowledge based economy and society in Ireland.
- Construct a definition of 'service' and 'knowledge' through engagement with the enterprise sector and associated government actors.
- Reflect on European developments in the arts, humanities and social sciences and seek to align Irish activities with European opportunities.
- Identify effective metrics of research output (both quantity and quality) which are consistent with national and international trends.

## APPENDIX II: List of AHSS Subjects

Since 2005 the HEA's presentation of statistics is aligned with the International Standard of Classification of Education (ISCED) which has been developed and used by the OECD and Eurostat to classify students' fields of study. Within this scheme of classification, the broad fields of study (level 1) have been categorized as AHSS for the purposes of this study:

Education Science,  
 Humanities and Arts  
 Social Science, Business & Law  
 Services\*  
 Combined Studies\*

*\*All of the sub-disciplines within the category 'services' have been assigned to the AHSS except for 'combined environmental protection', 'environmental protection technology', and 'natural environments and wildlife'. Within 'combined studies', the 'balanced combination of humanities/arts and social sciences/business/law' has been assigned to the AHSS, and 'balanced combination across different fields of education' to SET.*

The following table gives a list of the Fields of Study at Level 2 in the AHSS subject areas.

Education science	Humanities and Arts	Social Science Business and Law	Combined Services	Combined
Education science	Combined Arts & Humanities	Combined Social Science, Business and Law	Combined Personal Services	Balanced Combination of 'Humanities/ Arts' and 'Social Sciences Business/ Law
Training for pre-school teachers	Combined Arts	Combined Social and behavioural science	Hotel, restaurant and catering	
Training for teachers at basic levels	Fine arts	Psychology	Travel, tourism and leisure	
Training for teachers with subject specialisation	Music and performing arts	Sociology and cultural studies	Sports	

Education science	Humanities and Arts	Social Science Business and Law	Combined Services	Combined
Training for teachers of vocational subjects	Audio-visual techniques and media production	Political Science and civics	Domestic services	
	Design	Economics	Hair and beauty services	
	Craft skills	Combined Journalism and Information	Transport services	
	Combined Humanities	Journalism and reporting	Community sanitation services	
	Religion	Library, information, archive	Combined Security Services	
	Foreign languages	Combined Business and Administration	Protection of persons and property	
	Mother tongue	Wholesale and retail sales	Occupational health and safety	
	History and archaeology	Marketing and advertising	Military and defence	
	Philosophy and ethics	Finance, banking, insurance		
		Accounting and taxation		
		Management and administration		
		Secretarial and office work		
		Working life		
		Law		

## Appendix III: Terms of Reference for National Strategy for Higher Education

1. To consider the role of Irish higher education in the context of higher education's role in modern societies and, in particular, in the modern knowledge society.
2. Describe and analyse the current environment of Irish higher education including:
  - current system in terms of its student numbers, funding, funding models, organisational arrangements and the roles of the different public and private entities involved in the higher education and research domain;
  - the existing policy objectives;
  - identification and assessment of external factors likely to influence change in the sector (e.g. demographics, student mobility) and;
  - the international environment in which the Irish higher education system operates including the benchmarking of the system against relevant international comparators and higher education systems, processes and outcomes in other countries.
3. Having regard to the issues arising from 1 and 2 above, and from the process of consultation on those issues, to develop a vision and related set of national policy objectives for Irish higher education for the next 20 years with more focussed targets for the sector for the next five years.
4. Having regard to the outcomes of 3 above, and taking into account best international practice, identify the operational framework of the higher education system including the number and roles of institutions within it which will enable it to deliver on these policy objectives; recommend any changes required in the system of oversight and accountability that will support achievement of objectives; determine the level of resources required to achieve the stated objectives, look at the effectiveness of use of current resources, identify any potential for rationalisation or change to maximise the use of those resources and identify how any additional resource requirements can be met having particular regard to the difficult budgetary and economic climate that is in prospect in the medium term.

# Appendix IV: Other Foresight Exercises

1. The Academy of Finland and Tekes produced *Finnsight 2015 – The Outlook for Science, Technology and Society* (2005). The project took one year to complete through 10 panels and 120 experts.

The purpose of the exercise was to

- 1) Identify and explore the drivers that are expected to impact on Finnish business, industry and society
- 2) Identify the challenges faced by research and innovation activities
- 3) Identify areas of research and innovation competence that promote welfare in society as well as business and industry competitiveness

The drivers of change were identified as follows:

- A) Globalisation
- B) Demographic changes
- C) Science and technology
- D) Sustainable development
- E) Changes in knowledge and competence
- F) Changes in work and people's mental resources
- G) Changes in cultural environment
- H) Governance
- I) Safety and security

Panels were arranged around 10 themes related to the drivers of change identified above. The implications of each theme were considered on the future of Finnish society, what challenges would be created and how these would be met.

2. The British Academy report, *'That Full Complement of Riches': The Contributions of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences to the Nation's Wealth*, was completed in 2004. The bulk of the work was undertaken after widespread consultation by a review committee to identify the main areas of focus and to obtain evidence and illustrations of the contributions made by the arts,

humanities and social sciences. The committee then considered five questions

- How do the arts, humanities and social sciences contribute to cultural and economic enrichment?
- How do the arts, humanities and social sciences contribute to economic prosperity and well-being?
- How do the arts, humanities and social sciences contribute new knowledge and understanding of the major challenges facing both the UK and the wider world?
- How do the arts, humanities and social sciences contribute to public policy and debate?
- What are the benefits of an academic education in the arts, humanities and social sciences?

3. **European Science Foundation** published *Higher Education Looking Forward: Relations Between Higher Education and Society* (Strasbourg: ESF, 2007). This report contains 5 papers prepared as part of the ESF Forward Look on 'Higher Education Beyond 2010: resolving conflicting economic and social expectations' (HELF). The papers provide overviews of the state of knowledge, what we termed in the FAHSS 'As Is' and identified gaps in knowledge and suggest some of the elements of a future research agenda for an interdisciplinary investigation of the changing relationship between higher education and society.

The five themes were as follows:

- Higher education and the needs of the knowledge society
- Higher education and the achievement (or prevention) of equity and social justice
- Higher education and its communities: interconnections and interdependencies
- Steering and governance of higher education
- Differentiation and diversity

The papers were circulated at workshops and a conference for comment. After the closing conference was held in London a year following the commencement of the Forward Look and a further report was produced;

**4. European Science Foundation, *Higher Education Looking Forward: An Agenda for Future Research* (Strasbourg: ESF, 2008).** This was produced after the London Conference, taking on board comments made at that conference. The aim of the report is to propose an agenda for future research on the changing relationship between higher education and society, to suggest that this agenda may be more deserving of the attention of researchers from a wider range of social science fields than it has typically received, and to remind future researchers – from whatever backgrounds they come – that there is an existing body of theory and research on which future work should build. The Forward Look suggested that long term research in Higher Education on a pan European basis should be removed from short term considerations. A number of overarching questions were identified for a future research agenda for higher education.

**5. Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation, *Research 2015: A Basis for Prioritisation of Strategic Research* (Copenhagen: Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, 2008);**

This report was produced by the Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation as a result of a mapping exercise to identify strategic research needs created by societal and business development. The mapping, which was carried out between March and October 2007, received submissions from the general public, organisations, universities, companies and researchers.

Research Priorities were identified under the following headings:

- Energy, Climate and Environment
- Production and Technology

- Health and Prevention
- Innovation and Competitiveness
- Knowledge and Education
- People and Societal Design

It is intended to produce a similar catalogue every six years.

**6. Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, *A Radiant Future – Policies for Valorisation of the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2007)**

The paper recommends that the following for the promotion of humanities and social sciences research:

1. Plan socially relevant research
2. Ensure questions relating to specialist knowledge are clearly articulated
3. Plan more multidisciplinary research
4. Incorporate valorisation into strategic plan of the university
5. Encourage valorisation of HSS at universities
6. Include an assessment of the success of valorisation as part of the assessment of the research project.

**7. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Alternative Worlds: The Humanities in 2010: Report of the Working Group on the Future of the Humanities* (SSHRC, 2001).**

This Foresight was carried out over the period 1999 and 2000 and involved a consultation forum and a Working Group who were charged with assessing the state of humanities research and education in Canada, identifying major trends and challenges and recommending ways to strengthen and build humanities in the future. Guiding principles were established in the report, followed by a list of recommendations to the various stakeholders – humanities researchers, universities and funding bodies.

# Appendix V: Membership, Meetings and Briefings of FAHSS Working Group

**Professor Maurice J. Bric**, Chair of FAHSS Working Group, School of History and Archives, University College Dublin.

**Dr. Mary Canning**, Education Consultant, Chairperson of the Irish Committee of the European Cultural Foundation and member of the Higher Education Authority.

**Mr. Tim Conlon**, Director (Acting), Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

**Professor Jane Conroy**, Department of French, National University of Ireland, Galway.

**Ms. Anastasia Crickley**, Head of Department of Applied Social Studies, National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

**Mr. Jim Devine**, President, Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire.

**Professor Liam Downey**, Adjunct Professor, Department of Biology, National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

**Professor Caroline Fennell**, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Head of the Department of Law, University College Cork.

**Professor Ellen Hazelkorn**, Director of Research and Enterprise, and Dean of the Graduate School, Dublin Institute of Technology, and Director of the Higher Education Policy Research Unit (HEPRU).

**Dr. Eucharía Meehan**, Head of Research Programmes and Capital Programmes, HEA.

**Dr. Rory O'Donnell**, Director, National Economic and Social Council.

**Ms. Gina Quin**, Chief Executive, Dublin Chamber of Commerce.

**Dr. Simon Roberts**, Manager, European Design and Social Science Research Team, Intel Ireland.

**Professor Frances Ruane**, Director, Economic and Social Research Institute.

**Mr. Martin Shanahan**, Divisional Manager, Science, Technology and Human Capital Policy, Forfás.

**Professor Alan Smith**, UNESCO Chair, School of Education, University of Ulster.

## FAHSS Working Group Meetings

Meeting	Date
1	16 May 2008
2	10 June 2008
3	10 July 2008
4	3 October 2008
5	18 November 2008
6	28 May 2009
7	27 July 2009

Presentations made to the Working Group

Meeting 3: 10th July 2008: Presentation by Dr. Michelle Kearney, Forfás, entitled 'Sharing Our Future' on the Forfás socio-economic scenarios project.

Meeting 5: 18th November 2008: Presentation by Dr. Rory O'Donnell, NESD, on NESD's *FuturesIreland* project.

## Appendix VI: Membership of FAHSS Steering Committee



**Dr. Martin Curley** is Senior Principal Engineer and Global Director of IT Innovation, Intel Corporation, and Director of Intel Labs Europe.



**Sir Tim Lankester** is former president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford and former Permanent Secretary, UK Department of Education. He is an economist and has also served as deputy chairperson of the British Council.



**Professor Philippe Destatte** is Director General of the Destree Institute, Wallonia, Belgium.



**Professor Maurice Bric** is a historian at University College Dublin. He has served as chairperson of the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) and of the EU Framework Programme for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (FP7). He is the author of a number of publications on Irish and American history.



**Mr. Theo Dorgan** is a poet, member of Aosdána, Ireland and former member of the Arts Council.



**Mr. Michael Kelly** is Chair of the Higher Education Authority. He has also served as Deputy Secretary General of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and Secretary General of the Department of Health and Children.



**Dr. Mary Maples Dunn** is former president of Smith College and co-executive officer of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, U.S.A.



**Professor Gretty Mirdal** is Professor in Transcultural Clinical Psychology, at the University of Copenhagen. She is former Chairperson of the Standing Committee for the Humanities at the European Science Foundation and of the Scientific Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences of the Agence Nationale de la Recherche.

# Appendix VII: List of Institutions and Organisations who Made Submissions to FAHSS

An invitation for submissions to the FAHSS exercise was sent to a wide range of organisations and institutions selected from the IPA Yearbook and The Irish Times Top 1000 companies. Submissions were received from the following organisations and institutions.

## Organisations

Anthropological Association of Ireland  
Association of University Professors of French and Heads of Department of French in the United Kingdom and Ireland  
Association of Third-Level Teachers of German in Ireland  
Contemporary Music Centre  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, Northern Ireland  
Enterprise Ireland  
FÁS  
Forfás  
IDA Ireland  
Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC)  
Irish History On-line  
Health Research Board (HRB)  
Library Association of Ireland  
Marsh's Library  
The Arts Council of Ireland  
The Digital Hub Development Agency  
The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)  
The Heritage Council  
The Institute of Public Administration (IPA)  
The International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures  
The Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA)  
The Irish Museums' Association  
The National Concert Hall (NCH)  
The Psychological Association of Ireland (PSI)  
The Society for Musicology in Ireland (SMI)  
The Sociological Society of Ireland

## Higher Education Institutions

All Hallow's College  
Athlone Institute of Technology  
Carlow College  
Dublin City University  
Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies  
Dublin Institute of Technology  
Dundalk Institute of Technology  
Institute of Art, Design, and Technology, Dún Laoghaire  
Institute of Technology, Carlow  
Institute of Technology, Tralee  
Letterkenny Institute of Technology  
Limerick Institute of Technology  
Mary Immaculate College  
Mater Dei Institute of Education  
National College of Art and Design  
National College of Ireland  
National University of Ireland, Galway  
National University of Ireland, Maynooth  
Royal Irish Academy of Music  
St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra  
Tipperary Institute  
Trinity College Dublin  
University College Cork  
University College Dublin  
University of Limerick  
Waterford Institute of Technology

# Appendix VIII: FAHSS Graduate Recruitment Survey

**Higher Education Authority**

**Analysis of Survey of Employers of  
Graduates in the Arts, Humanities  
and Social Sciences**

**FGS Consulting**

**December 2008**



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## 1 Introduction and Background

### 1.1 Introduction

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) have set up a Foresight in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (FAHSS) exercise to review comprehensively the contribution of the arts, humanities and social sciences to Ireland's society and economy; to assess the strengths and weaknesses of these disciplines; and to chart a course for their future development within the higher education sector. The scope of the exercise covers all areas of the arts and humanities – including the creative arts, media, and culture – and the social sciences – including business and law. This initiative follows on from the report, *Advancing Humanities and Social Sciences Research in Ireland*, published by the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) in 2007.

### 1.2 Background to this Report

Graduates of higher education institutions within the Republic of Ireland have been contacted via email to take part in a survey which will complement the First Destinations Report carried out annually by the HEA and the survey of awardees carried out by the IRCHSS. This survey elicits graduates' views about their education in the arts, humanities and social sciences. The analysis of this survey is the subject of a separate report. An employer survey was run in tandem with the graduate survey in order to assess employers' views on graduates from arts, humanities and social sciences. The analysis of that survey is the subject of this report.

### 1.3 Sample Size and Reporting

175 employers responded to the survey. It should be noted that not every employer chose to answer every question, so sample sizes may differ between questions. The key themes covered in the survey analysis are:

- Employer characteristics;
- Employee characteristics;
- Benefits from employing arts, humanities and social sciences graduates;
- Skills and attributes that recruits bring to employers' organisations; and
- Areas for improvement in the third-level education of graduates in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

## 2 Employer Survey Results

### 2.1 Employer Characteristics

- Of the 175 employers surveyed, 142 answered questions in relation to their size and sector. Table 2.1 shows that the predominant firm size is fewer than 100 employees (44 percent) with considerable representation from firms with 101–500 employees and 5001+ employees.
- Education is the most popular sector in the employer survey, accounting for 21% of responses. The top three is completed by ‘other service activities’ and information and communication. The latest data on employment available from the Central Statistics Office shows that the education sector accounts for

7 percent of total in employment. The main sectors of employment are the wholesale and retail sector (15 percent), followed by other production industries and the business and financial services sector (both 14 percent, source: CSO Labour Market Statistics March–May 2008). The survey is therefore over-represented by the education sector.

- However the census of population data for 2006 shows that 21 percent of those employed in the education sector have a qualification in the humanities and arts. Also data from the annual HEA survey of graduates also indicates a higher proportion of graduates that enter the workforce, in the case of Bachelor’s degrees, of those who are employed, 15 percent are employed in education. The percentage rises considerably for those with a Doctorate.

**Table 2.1: Employers’ responses by size of firm**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Fewer than 100	44%	63
101 - 500 employees	20%	29
501 - 1000 employees	6%	9
1001 - 5000 employees	8%	12
5001 + employees	20%	29
Total	100%	142

**Table 2.2: Employers’ responses by sector**

	Percent	Number
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1%	2
Mining and quarrying	0%	0
Manufacturing	8%	12
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1%	2
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0%	0
Construction	3%	4
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	2%	3
Transporting and storage	0%	0
Accommodation and food service activities	6%	8
Information and communication	11%	15
Financial and insurance activities	8%	11
Real estate activities	0%	0
Professional, scientific and technical activities	10%	14
Administrative and support service activities	2%	3
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	2%	3
Education	21%	30
Human health and social work activities	4%	5
Arts, entertainment and recreation	5%	7
Other services activities	16%	23
Activities of extra-territorial organisations and bodies	0%	0
Total	100%	142

## 2.2 Employee Characteristics

- Employers were asked to explain why they have a preference for either graduates or postgraduates. 37 employers answered the question. A selection of responses which capture main opinions offered are:

*‘Most job descriptions agreed nationally require graduate qualifications.’*

*‘Majority of staff are postgraduate although it is not a prerequisite for employment.’*

*‘All lecturing staff would be required to have a minimum of a Master’s qualification for lecturing posts in the Institute.’*

*‘All our employees are graduates and three-quarters hold postgraduate qualifications, although not necessarily in relevant fields. The experience gained at Master’s level helps in a job which requires research and advocacy to be undertaken.’*

*‘Ideally we like to take on graduates that have either completed a relevant work placement or have up to 12 months’ experience in their field.’*

- Employers were also asked from where they draw their recruits through the question:

*‘Please indicate roughly what percentage of the workforce in your organisation is comprised of graduates and postgraduates from the following disciplines, e.g. the workforce consists of 20% graduates in the humanities.’*

Table 2.3 shows the average responses from each employer. The largest proportion is from science, engineering, and computer studies followed by the humanities. In addition the survey revealed that almost 60% of employers recruit graduates from outside of Ireland.

## 2.3 Benefits of Employing Graduates in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

- Employers were asked if they thought that graduates from the arts, humanities and social sciences bring distinctive qualities to their organisation. Just over half of the respondents stated that there were distinctive qualities. The following extracts from the survey highlight the distinctive qualities that those employers noted.

*‘Ability to communicate, especially written communication’*

*‘They bring ability to research, understand, and critique social problems and their related social policies. Graduates of social sciences can have the necessary understanding of the problems facing the target groups with whom, and for whom, they are working.’*

*‘Arts, humanities and social sciences do bring strong analytical experience from their college experience and most critically, the ability to present this research in a clear, concise and discursive argument.’*

**Table 2.3: Percentage of workforce comprised of graduates and postgraduates from selected disciplines**

Answer Options	Graduates (Response Average)	Post Graduates (Response Average)
Science/engineering/computer	30	17
Creative arts	11	7
Fine arts	8	2
Humanities	25	16
Social sciences	18	15
Law	6	4
Languages	10	9

*'Better people skills and at times client-facing skills'*

*'They bring an inquisitive mind and a strong work ethic.'*

*'These graduates tend to have had a good overall introduction to the more social side of what a business requires. Also they would have acquired business acumen while studying. These skills are equally important to technical skills.'*

*'They can have excellent communications skills, which is required within the sales operation.'*

*'They bring fresh thinking and innovative approaches to our business, particularly in marketing and planning, HR and IT.'*

## 2.4 Skills and Attributes that Recruits Bring to Employers' Organisations

Table 2.4 overleaf outlines the skills, attributes, knowledge, and competencies that honours graduates from each discipline bring to employers' organisations (the same question is asked about postgraduates and is presented as an annex). Each cell in the table shows the percentage of employers that stated their employees had the skills in question. For example 67 percent of employers cited science/engineering/computer science and medicine graduates as bringing discipline-specific knowledge to their organisation. Taking each discipline in turn, the top three key skills that employers cited are:

- Science/engineering/computer science and medicine graduates
  - Analysis and decision-making (80% of employers)
  - Ability to utilise academic attainment within work (78% of employers)
  - Critical and analytical thinking (76% of employers)

- Creative arts
  - Creativity and innovation (76% of employers)
  - Adaptability (68% of employers)
  - Self-confidence/interpersonal skills (64% of employers)
- Fine arts
  - Interpersonal skills (100% of employers)
  - Creativity and innovation (100% of employers)
  - Self-motivation/presentation skills (80% of employers)
- Humanities
  - Communication skills (82% of employers)
  - Interpersonal skills (80% of employers)
  - Adaptability (73% of employers)
- Social sciences
  - Interpersonal skills (81% of employers)
  - Adaptability (78% of employers)
  - Communication skills, independent and critical judgement, and flexibility (72% of employers)
- Law
  - Critical and analytical thinking (67% of employers)
  - Ability to utilise academic attainment within work environment (67% of employers)
  - Discipline-specific knowledge, research skills, independent and critical judgement (62% of employers)
- Languages
  - Communication skills (79% of employers)
  - Interpersonal skills (75% of employers)
  - Flexibility (75% of employers)

**Table 2.4: What skills/attributes/knowledge/competencies do graduate recruits from each of the following disciplines bring to your company or organisation? Percentage of employers who said they recruited from each discipline**

	Science/engineering/ computer science/medicine	Creative arts	Fine arts	Humanities	Social sciences	Law	Languages
Answer Options							
Discipline-specific knowledge	67	52	67	41	56	62	39
Interpersonal skills	57	44	100	80	61	57	75
Understanding clients' needs	48	40	53	48	50	33	39
Adaptability	65	68	73	73	78	73	64
Communication skills	54	52	60	62	72	52	70
Critical & analytical thinking	76	36	67	57	64	67	32
Presentation skills	41	60	60	57	56	52	43
Research skills	39	40	47	48	53	62	32
Craft/technical skills	61	48	60	20	16	24	18
Creativity and innovation	61	76	100	57	47	33	43
Self-confidence	39	54	60	55	59	52	54
Independent and critical judgement	54	36	73	61	72	62	36
Self-motivation	57	52	60	52	50	52	54
Flexibility	43	56	73	70	72	38	75
Time management	59	44	67	39	41	33	36
Networking	43	56	67	41	59	52	39
Project management	57	40	67	34	47	38	18
Analysis and decision-making	60	48	60	50	66	57	29
Breadth of education / vocational training	39	44	60	45	53	33	43
Ability to utilise academic attainment within work	78	56	53	64	69	67	64

**Table 2.5: Perceived advantages of recruiting graduates with higher degrees over honours degrees**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Specialist knowledge	56.9%	33
Research/analytical skills	51.7%	30
Future potential	29.3%	17
Maturity	37.9%	22
IT skills	12.1%	7
No difference	20.7%	12

### 2.4.1 Perceived Advantages of Higher Degree Graduates Over Honours Degrees

- Employers were asked for their views on any perceived advantages of recruiting graduates with higher degrees over honours degrees. Over half cited specialist knowledge and research/analytical skills as advantages while one in five did not perceive a difference (table 2.5)

### 2.5 Areas for Improvement in Third-Level Education of Graduates in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

- Half of the employers answered the question in relation to whether there was room for improvement in the third-level education/vocational training of graduates in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Almost all who answered (93 percent) stated that there was room for improvement. Of those employers that expanded on their answer, the resounding view offered was that 'work ready' skills could be improved to ease the transition from study to work. The extracts below capture the main points:

*'For the social sciences there should be more placement and work experience modules. Some IT training would be desirable.'*

*'Working across both NI and ROI I engage with third-level institutions. The NI colleges have a much bigger focus on work placement and experience. ROI colleges need to introduce more practical experience to their courses in these areas in particular. ROI seem to focus work placements on IT/Eng courses only.'*

*'They often have no idea of the fundamental skills their disciplines impart that employers would find useful.'*

*'Need to have graduates who incorporate an element of practical work as part of their studies. On the job experience is very useful to gain knowledge.'*

*'Would like to see more work placements as part of the educational programme'*

*'Most graduates from traditional schools of Arts and Law are ill equipped for the transition to work. Most have no experience of working in teams, of understanding the broader issues around a question, a declining standard of written English and no experience presenting and debating issues.'*

*'Integrating work placements as part of students' degrees would be beneficial to them.'*

- When asked how the skills/knowledge/competencies/attributes required of graduates from the arts, humanities and social sciences to work in your sector of employment will change over the next decade, ICT skills featured regularly in employers' comments (of the 51 employers who commented, close to one-third cited ICT skills). Foreign language ability was another issue that employers cited as becoming potentially more important over the next decade.

## 3 Concluding Remarks

- Several employers took the opportunity to make some final remarks on the survey. A selection of these are presented below by way of a conclusion.

*'Postgraduates in university and just out of university don't understand the real world at all. Introducing more industry or entrepreneurship into postgraduate courses could help with that.'*

*'The technical and writing skills of graduates coming out of the Irish undergraduate programmes are quite weak. The skill levels in this area from graduate programmes depend on the programmes themselves. The same is true for technical and research skills.'*

*‘Those that completed co-op /work experience during their college course seem to have an advantage when they start work with a company over those that completed 4 years in theory only. I think every college /university should have co-op as part of their course.’*

*‘Graduates of these disciplines will always bring with them the soft skills necessary to develop professional knowledge by being analytical and creative. These, combined with the “hard skills” of science and technology, are vital in a knowledge-based economy.’*

**Appendix 1: What skills/attributes/knowledge/competencies do postgraduate recruits from each of the following disciplines bring to your company or organisation? Percentage of employers who said that they recruited from each discipline.**

Answer Options	Science/engineering/computer science/medicine	Creative arts	Fine arts	Humanities	Social sciences	Law	Languages
Discipline-specific knowledge	48	60	70	39	58	50	44
Interpersonal skills	42	73	100	70	63	64	69
Understanding clients' needs	48	53	60	43	63	64	38
Adaptability	52	53	70	74	50	50	50
Communication skills	55	60	80	80	58	64	69
Critical & analytical thinking	61	53	70	57	63	64	50
Presentation skills	48	67	90	65	63	71	63
Research skills	61	47	50	61	54	50	44
Craft/technical skills	42	40	60	26	21	36	19
Creativity and innovation	55	73	90	52	46	57	50
Self-confidence	48	73	90	65	58	64	56
Independent and critical judgement	58	53	60	48	54	57	38
Self-motivation	52	67	80	65	58	57	44
Flexibility	48	60	90	65	63	57	50
Time management	52	60	80	52	54	50	50
Networking	39	47	60	39	38	50	25
Project management	58	47	70	48	50	50	31
Analysis and decision-making	70	67	70	65	63	71	50
Breadth of education / vocational training	48	67	70	57	50	50	50
Ability to utilise academic attainment within work environment	61	67	70	61	58	71	50

# Appendix IX: FAHSS Graduate Careers Survey

**Higher Education Authority**

**Analysis of Survey of Graduates  
in the Arts, Humanities and  
Social Sciences**

**FGS Consulting**

**December 2008**



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## 1 Introduction and Background

### 1.1 Introduction

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) have set up a Foresight in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (FAHSS) exercise to review comprehensively the contribution of the arts, humanities and social sciences to Ireland's society and economy; to assess the strengths and weaknesses of these disciplines; and to chart a course for their future development within the higher education sector. The scope of the exercise covers all areas of the arts and humanities – including the creative arts, media, and culture – and the social sciences – including business and law. This initiative follows on from the report, *Advancing Humanities and Social Sciences Research in Ireland*, published by the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) in 2007.

### 1.2 Background to this Report

Graduates of higher education institutions within the Republic of Ireland have been contacted via email through the alumni offices, graduate studies offices, or through nominated contact points within their alma mater to take part in a survey to assess their views on issues such as elements of their course of study that they have found useful in their career, their employment situation, and their general level of satisfaction. An employers' survey was also conducted to assess employers' views on graduates from the arts, humanities and social sciences. The results from the survey of employers are the subject of a separate report.

FGS Consulting was appointed in October 2008 to undertake analysis of the survey responses. The purpose of the survey is to create a report that will complement the First Destinations Report carried out annually by the HEA and the survey of awardees currently being carried out by the IRCHSS.

### 1.3 Our Approach

Our approach to this assignment has involved both 'cleaning' data and analysis of the results in SPSS under key themes. The key themes are:

- Graduate Characteristics
- Qualification Details
- Qualification Obtained
- Funding Sources, Mode of Study, & Geography
- Course Elements and Skills Gained
- Further Study
- Current Economic Status
- Appropriateness of Respondents' Third-Level Education
- Career Satisfaction
- Graduates' Concluding Comments
- Employer Survey Results.

## 1.4 Sample Size and Reporting

There were 932 respondents to the graduate survey, although it should be noted that not all questions were answered by all respondents and some questions offered the opportunity to select more than one option. The report structure follows the themes outlined above. Where practical, results are disaggregated into doctoral graduates, Master's graduates, and Bachelor's graduates. 'Other/not stated' relates to respondents who answered questions but did not identify their current level of attainment. These respondents have been excluded from the graphs throughout the report. There is a reasonably even spread of respondents between each level of qualification, as shown in the table below.

**Table 1.1: Sample Size – Survey of Graduates**

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Sample	164	196	224	348	932
%	17.6	21.0	24.0	37.3	100

## 2 Graduate Characteristics

- Across all levels of study, the gender breakdown is reasonably similar with females accounting for approximately two-thirds of responses. Student numbers from the HEA would indicate that female enrolments in the AHSS account for 62 percent of AHSS enrolments and 55 percent of total enrolments (2006/07 figures).
- The vast majority of respondents are Irish but there is a noticeable difference in nationality across levels of study with 19% of graduates holding a doctorate coming from outside Ireland compared to 5% of graduates holding a Bachelor's degree. The 'non-Irish' Ph.D. graduates are predominantly from the U.K. (6%) with other EU countries making up most of the balance, and 2% from America. HEA statistics for full-time students in the university sector indicate that 88 percent of students are from the island of Ireland with 1.3 percent of students from the U.K. (excluding N. Ireland).

- Country of residence figures show slightly different trends than the nationality figures, particularly at Ph.D. level. For example 73 percent of graduates holding a doctorate live in Ireland, suggesting a degree of 'leakage' once studies have been completed.
- Membership of professional bodies is relatively low with fewer than 3 in 10 respondents being members of a professional body. Again the trend differs across levels of study with considerably more respondents holding a doctorate (34%) being in a professional body than those holding a Bachelor's degree (17%).
- The graduates in the survey belong to a wide and varied list of professional bodies. 89 different organisations have been listed by respondents reflecting the diverse employment activities undertaken by graduates in the arts, humanities and social sciences. The most popular professional bodies are the Psychological Society of Ireland (20 members), the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ireland (12 members), the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (11 members), and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (11 members).

**Figure 2.1: Gender breakdown by level of most recent qualification**

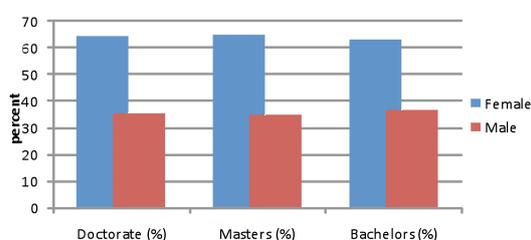


Figure 2.2: Respondent's nationality

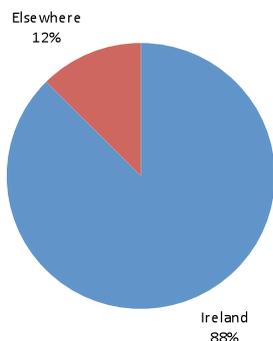


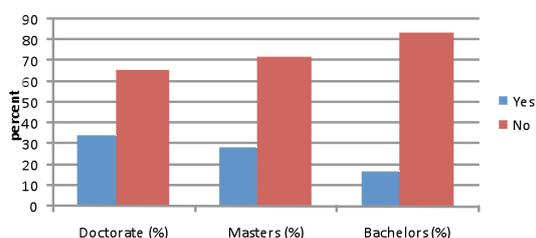
Table 2.1: Nationality by level of study

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
American	2	2	0	2	2
Australian	0	1	0	0	0
Canadian	0	1	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0	1	0
Danish	1	1	0	0	0
Dutch	1	1	0	0	0
French	2	2	0	0	1
German	3	0	0	1	1
Greek	0	1	0	0	0
Hungarian	0	1	0	0	0
Indian	0	0	0	1	0
Irish	81	88	95	86	88
Israeli	1	1	0	1	1
Italian	2	1	0	1	1
Japanese	0	1	0	0	0
Norwegian	0	1	0	0	0
Romanian	0	1	0	0	0
Spanish	0	1	1	1	1
Swedish	1	1	0	1	0
Ukrainian	0	1	0	0	0
UK	6	1	2	1	2
Other	0	0	0	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Sample</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>932</b>

Table 2.2: Country of residence

	Doctorate (%)	Masters (%)	Bachelors (%)	Other/Not Stated (%)	TOTAL (%)
Ireland	73	88	95	73	89
UK	14	3	4	5	6
Other	13	9	1	22	5
Sample (number)	164	196	218	395	885

Figure 2.3: Membership of professional bodies



**Table 2.3: Professional body membership**

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Post Primary School Music Teacher	0	0	1	1	2
Internet Service Providers' Association	0	1	0	0	1
International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering	0	0	0	2	2
Sociological Association of Ireland	1	4	1	1	7
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development	1	3	1	6	11
Institute of Physics	1	0	0	0	1
Chartered Insurance Institute	0	0	0	1	1
Royal Society of Chemistry	0	2	0	0	2
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants	0	0	5	6	11
Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ireland	1	2	4	5	12
Contact Centre Management Association	0	0	1	0	1
Assoc. of Hispanists of Great Britain & Ireland	1	0	0	0	1
Art Teachers Association of Ireland	0	0	1	2	3
Visual Artist Ireland	0	4	3	2	9
Psychological Society of Ireland	12	4	0	4	20
American Musicological Society	2	0	0	0	2
Institute of Designers in Ireland	0	0	2	0	2
Library Association of Ireland	1	0	0	3	4
Institute of Actuaries	0	0	0	1	1
International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language	0	1	0	0	1
The National Society for Education in Art and Design	0	1	0	0	1
Association Typographique Internationale	0	0	1	0	1
City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee	0	0	1	0	1
Agricultural Science Association	0	1	0	0	1
Academy of Medical Laboratory Sciences	1	0	0	0	1
Geographical Society of Ireland	0	0	0	1	1
Bar Council	1	3	0	4	8
Project Management Institute	0	0	0	1	1
Public Relations Institute of Ireland	0	2	0	6	8
Irish Association of American Studies	1	0	0	0	1
National Union of Journalists	0	2	0	0	2
Insurance Institute of Ireland	0	0	0	1	1
Institute of Management Consultants and Advisors	0	1	0	0	1
Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineering	0	0	0	1	1
Sales Institute of Ireland	0	0	0	2	2
Chartered Institute of Management Accountants	0	3	0	1	4
Engineers Ireland	1	1	0	0	2
Australian College of Mental Health Nurses Inc	0	0	0	1	1
Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors	0	0	2	1	3
Dairy Executive Association	0	0	1	0	1
Certified Public Accountants	0	0	1	2	3
Institute of Accounting Technicians in Ireland	0	0	0	1	1
Teaching Council	0	4	0	3	7
Institute of Biology	0	0	0	1	1
Institute of Internal Auditors	0	0	1	0	1
Institute of Civil Engineers	0	0	0	1	1
Irish National Teachers Organisation	0	3	1	3	7
Royal Aeronautical Society	1	0	0	0	1
Society of Indexers	0	1	0	0	1
Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association	1	1	0	0	2
Association of Irish Art Historians	0	0	0	1	1
Chamber of Commerce	0	0	1	0	1
Bankers Institute of Ireland	0	1	0	1	2
Strategic Planning Society	0	1	0	0	1
British International Studies Association	0	0	0	1	1
College Art Association	0	0	0	1	1

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education	0	0	0	1	1
Irish Grassland Association	0	0	0	1	1
Higher Education Academy	0	0	0	1	1
Irish Council for Civil Liberties	1	0	0	0	1
Institute of Fundraising	1	0	0	0	1
Irish Insurance Federation	0	0	0	1	1
Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland	2	0	0	0	2
Irish Federation of University Teachers	1	0	0	0	1
Health Profession Council	0	0	1	0	1
Society of Archivists, Ireland	0	1	0	0	1
Society of Christian Ethics	1	0	0	0	1
Soil Science Society of Ireland	1	0	0	0	1
Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland	1	0	0	1	2
American Political Science Association	1	0	0	0	1
American Historical Association	0	1	0	0	1
Irish Text Society	1	0	0	0	1
Irish Institute of Advocates	0	0	0	1	1
Association of Third Level Teachers of German in Ireland	1	0	0	1	2
Irish Social Policy Association	1	0	0	0	1
South African Institute for Computer Scientists and Information Technologists	1	0	0	0	1
Academy of Management	1	0	0	0	1
Modern Language Association	1	0	0	0	1
Irish Geographers	1	0	0	0	1
Sociological Association of Ireland	0	1	0	0	1
European and Irish Sociological Associations	0	0	0	1	1
British Philosophical Association	1	0	0	0	1
Political Studies Association of Ireland	1	0	0	0	1
American Anthropological Association	1	0	0	0	1
Nurses & Midwifery Council	0	0	0	1	1
Institute of Guidance Counsellors (Ireland)	0	0	0	1	1
Marketing Institute of Ireland	0	0	0	1	1
British Society for the Philosophy of Science	0	0	0	1	1
International Society for Military Law and the Law of War	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>204</b>

Note: Figures highlighted in blue represent professional bodies that were cited over 5 times

### 3 Qualification Details

#### 3.1 Qualification Obtained

- Table 3.1 shows that the respondents to the survey have graduated relatively recently. 40 percent of total graduates in the sample gained their current qualification in the first half of this decade.

- Table 3.2 below shows the disciplines studied for respondents' most recent courses, with the three most popular in each level of study shaded. The subjects listed in the table were offered as choices in the survey design with an option for 'other subject'. It has not been possible to 'drill down' into the other group to reclassify some of those responses into subjects and so the 'other' group accounts for one-third of total subjects undertaken.

Table 3.1: Year in which current qualification was achieved by level of study, percent

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
2008	29	14	20	20	21
2007	12	11	21	14	15
2006	15	12	20	16	16
2000-2005	38	53	31	36	40
Pre 2000	5	10	8	13	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Sample</i>	164	195	224	83	666

- Management and business disciplines are a popular choice of subject for respondents holding a Bachelor's degree, accounting for 17%. Fine arts are the second most popular known choice among graduates holding Bachelor's degrees. HEA statistics for 2006/07 indicate business and administration is one of the most popular areas for students studying in the AHSS at both undergraduate and postgraduate level (2006/07 statistics).
- Management and business disciplines are also a popular choice for respondents holding a Master's degree, accounting for 15% of the total.
- Amongst respondents holding a Ph.D., history and English were the two most popular disciplines, accounting for close to one-third of the total subject choice.

**Table 3.2: Discipline studied by level of award, percentage of total**

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Anthropology	1	0	0	2	0
Archaeology	5	1	4	2	3
Audio-visual techniques and media production	0	1	0	2	0
Celtic studies	5	0	0	0	1
Classics	3	0	0	0	1
Craft skills	0	0	2	0	0
Cultural studies	0	1	2	0	1
Design	0	3	10	4	4
Economics	6	6	4	0	5
Education	0	9	8	23	8
English studies	13	4	3	4	6
Environmental studies	0	1	1	0	0
Film studies	1	3	0	4	2
Fine arts	0	1	14	4	5
French studies	2	6	1	0	3
Germanic studies	1	1	1	0	1
Government & political science	8	6	2	0	5
History	15	8	12	0	10
International development	1	3	0	2	1
Irish language studies	4	2	0	4	2
Languages, linguistics and literatures	5	5	2	0	3
Law	6	3	3	9	5
Library & information studies	1	2	0	4	1
Management & business	3	15	17	26	13
Media & communications	0	6	3	0	3
Music and performing arts	1	2	3	2	2
Musicology	2	0	1	0	1
Psychology	9	1	3	6	4
Social and economic geography	2	0	0	0	0
Social policy and social work	0	0	3	0	1
Sociology	6	8	4	0	5
Theatre studies	0	2	0	0	1
Theology	1	1	1	0	1
Other	13	20	48	57	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100

*Note: Figures highlighted in blue represent the three most popular responses*

### 3.2 Funding Sources, Mode of Study and Geography

- Almost half of all courses have been funded by participants with a relatively even split between the third-level grant, the IRCHSS, and other sources of funding.
- A large majority of Ph.D. degrees have been funded through the IRCHSS. For all other levels the main source of funding is 'self'. Master's graduates are the most likely group to self-fund, with 61% doing so, compared to the average of 46%.
- The majority of graduates undertook their studies full-time. There are some differences between levels of study, the most significant of which is in the 'other/not stated' category where there was a closer split between full-time and part-time study (56% full-time, 44% part-time).
- Trinity College Dublin was the most popular location for doctoral studies amongst respondents, with one-third of respondents holding a Ph.D. having studied there. The geographical location of other levels of study is reasonably evenly split across locations.

Figure 3.1: Funding sources, total respondents

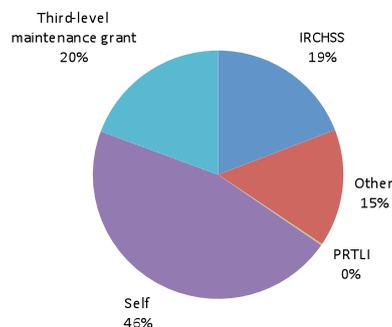


Figure 3.2: Sources of funding by level of study

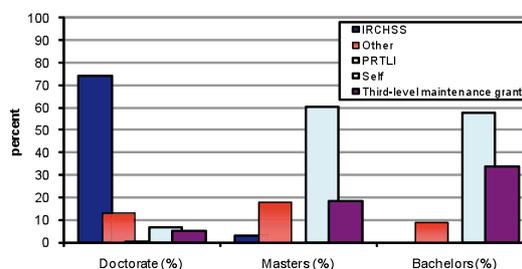
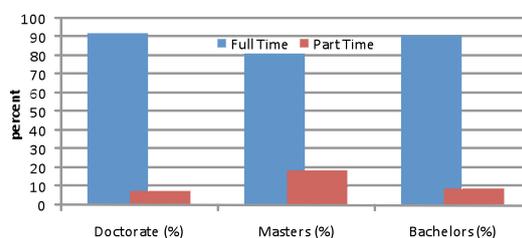


Figure 3.3: Mode of study



**Table 3.3: Institution by level of study, percent**

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Athlone Institute of Technology	0	0	0	0	0
Cork Institute of Technology	0	0	0	0	0
Crawford Municipal School of Art, Dublin Business School	0	0	2	0	1
Dublin City University	3	5	3	0	2
Dublin Institute for Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Dublin Institute of Technology	0	7	1	1	2
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art,	0	0	9	0	2
Dundalk Institute of Technology	0	3	15	2	5
Galway-Mayo Institute of	0	1	0	0	0
Griffith College, Dublin	0	1	0	0	0
Institute of Technology, Carlow	0	0	0	0	0
Institute of Technology, Tallaght	1	1	5	1	2
Institute of Technology, Tralee	0	1	0	0	0
Limerick Institute of Technology	0	1	0	0	0
Mary Immaculate College	0	0	1	0	0
National College of Art and Design	0	1	13	1	4
National College of Ireland	0	0	1	0	0
NUI Galway	5	7	4	2	4
NUI Maynooth	9	4	2	1	3
Queen's University, Belfast	2	0	0	0	1
Royal College of Surgeons in	1	0	0	0	0
St. Mary's, Marino	0	0	0	0	0
St. Patrick's College, Carlow	0	0	0	0	0
St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra	0	3	5	1	2
The Honourable Society of Kings	0	0	1	1	0
Trinity College Dublin	32	6	4	1	8
University College Cork	9	17	12	2	9
University College Dublin	18	15	4	3	9
University of Limerick	8	13	8	1	6
University of Ulster	1	1	0	1	1
Waterford Institute of Technology	1	0	1	0	0
Other	11	16	4	6	9
Unknown	0	1	0	75	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Sample</i>	164	196	224	348	932

Note: Figures highlighted in blue represent the three most popular responses

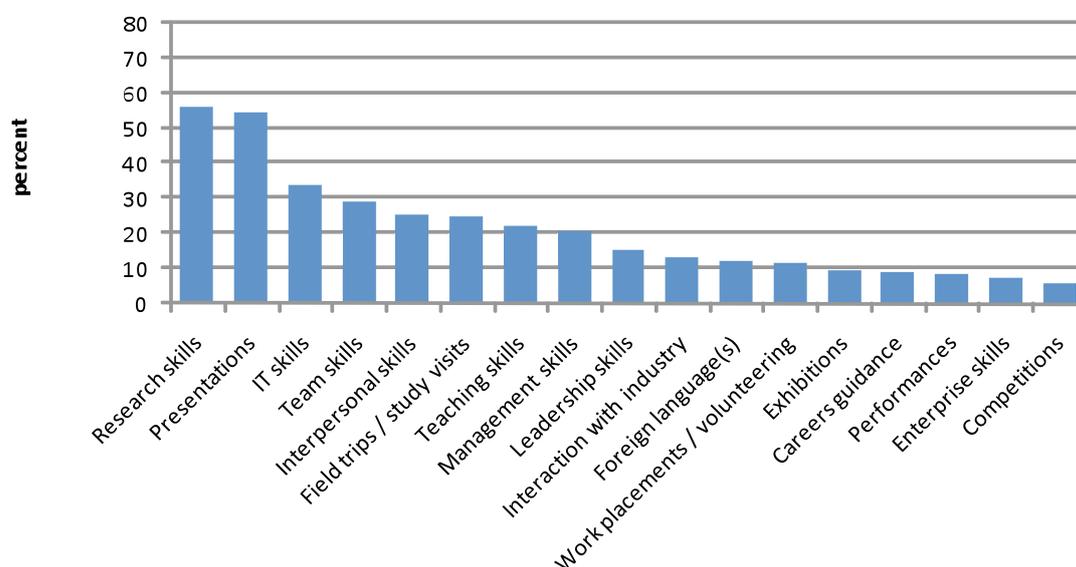
### 3.3 Course Elements and Skills Gained

- Respondents were asked to identify various elements of their course. This is presented in figure 3.4 for all courses and table 3.4 by level of study.
- Over half of all courses contained research skills and presentations. IT skills were another significant element, cited as being in a third of courses.
- Again there are some noticeable differences in course elements between levels of study. For example IT skills are a common feature

of Master's and Bachelor's degree courses but are not such a significant feature of doctoral programmes of study.

- Bachelor's degrees appear to be more multi-faceted, with significant proportions of respondents highlighting team skills (54%), field trips (43%) and interpersonal skills (38%) as elements of their course. Work placements also feature more in Bachelor's degrees than at any other level, with one in five respondents citing this as part of their course. The survey of employers indicated that employers would like to see more work placements as part of undergraduate education.

Figure 3.4: Course elements, all respondents, percent



Note: Respondents could offer more than one answer, figures are presented as a percentage of total graduates

Table 3.4: Course elements, all respondents, percent

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Enterprise skills	2	9	15	3	7
Interpersonal skills	29	37	38	9	25
Interaction with industry	8	22	20	6	13
Exhibitions	6	8	23	3	9
Performances	4	12	15	4	8
Presentations	72	79	79	17	55
Competitions	5	6	14	1	6
Teaching skills	59	28	17	6	22
IT skills	35	47	59	10	34
Foreign language(s)	20	15	17	4	12
Careers guidance	5	8	25	1	9
Field trips / study visits	34	31	43	6	25
Work placements / volunteering	4	16	22	6	12
Team skills	16	44	54	11	29
Management skills	14	30	35	10	21
Leadership skills	15	20	23	8	15
Research skills	85	89	75	12	56

Note: Figures highlighted in blue represent the three most popular responses

- Following the questions in relation to course elements, respondents were asked to highlight skills that they have found useful but which were not part of their courses. This is presented in table 3.5 with the three most popular responses at each level highlighted.
- There is a reasonably even spread of answers across each element and level of study. IT

skills feature as a popular choice of useful skills that were not taught, particularly among respondents holding a doctoral degree, one-third of whom identified IT skills in this regard.

- Management skills were also cited across each level of study by around one in four respondents as being useful skills not gained through courses undertaken.

- One area of notable difference is enterprise skills. One in four Bachelor's graduates have found this skill useful compared to less than one in ten of respondents holding a Ph.D. and 15% of Master's graduates.

**Table 3.5: Skills that have been useful but not provided in the course, by level of study, percent**

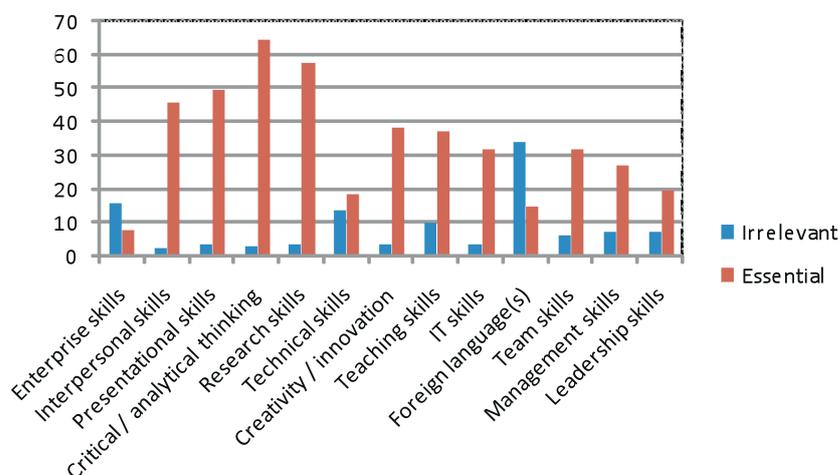
	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Enterprise skills	10	15	24	3	12
Interpersonal skills	21	23	22	5	16
Teaching skills	21	24	30	5	18
IT skills	35	28	24	6	20
Foreign language(s)	28	20	22	3	16
Team skills	18	18	14	5	12
Management skills	26	24	23	7	18
Leadership skills	18	21	23	6	15
Research skills	12	7	11	3	7
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.3.1 Importance of Skills to Respondents' Careers

- Respondents were asked to rate the relevance of a range of skills to their careers. Figure 3.5 and Table 3.6 show the results for all respondents. Critical/analytical thinking skills have been rated as essential by two-thirds of respondents. Research, interpersonal and presentational skills have also been highlighted as essential by close to half of all respondents.

- Critical thinking and research skills were highlighted as being particularly important at doctoral level, with over 80% of respondents citing these skills as essential.
- The relevance of critical thinking and research skills was less emphatically supported at Master's and Bachelor's levels although it was still cited as an essential skill by 69% and 51% respectively.

**Figure 3.5: Relevance of key skills**



**Table 3.6: Relevance of key skills**

	Doctorate		Masters		Bachelor	
	Irrelevant	Essential	Irrelevant	Essential	Irrelevant	Essential
Enterprise skills	24	5	12	7	12	12
Interpersonal skills	4	44	1	44	2	42
Presentational skills	4	59	2	48	4	45
Critical / analytical thinking	4	85	2	69	1	51
Research skills	4	84	1	57	3	45
Technical skills	19	10	14	13	9	32
Creativity / innovation	3	40	2	40	3	38
Teaching skills	4	57	9	38	13	25
IT skills	4	21	3	35	2	39
Foreign language(s)	25	20	33	14	42	8
Team skills	9	23	4	31	5	38
Management skills	12	23	4	25	6	30
Leadership skills	10	12	5	18	7	24

### 3.4 Further Study

- 28% of the sample is undertaking further study. Table 3.7 shows the ‘flow’ between levels of study. For example, of Bachelor’s graduates who are undertaking further study, almost half are undertaking a Master’s degree. Of the 103 Master’s graduates who are undertaking further study, 8 out of 10 are pursuing doctoral research.

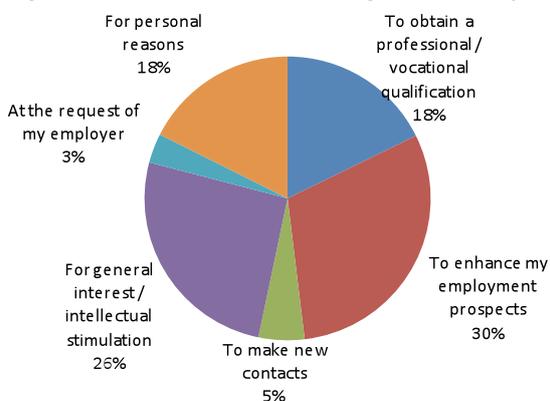
- The HEA annual survey of graduates also informs us of the percentage of graduates undertaking further study. Of those who responded who qualified with a Bachelor’s degree in 2006, 33 percent went on to further study. The figure was 47 percent of those with a Bachelor’s degree in the AHSS. At doctoral level the overall figure of those going on to further study was 14 percent with only 7 percent of those with a Ph.D. in the AHSS going on to further study (Source: ‘What do Graduates Do’ 2006)

**Table 3.7: Current level of further study by most recent qualification achieved**

Current level being studied for	Most Recent Qualification Obtained				TOTAL
	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	
Bachelor’s degree	9	0	1	9	2
Certificate	9	2	6	3	4
Diploma	17	2	8	6	6
Doctorate	26	83	23	33	48
Master’s degree	13	8	47	45	29
Other	26	5	15	3	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Sample	23	103	104	33	263

- Enhanced employment prospects are the most popular reason offered as to why further study is being undertaken, closely followed by ‘general interest/intellectual stimulation’ (figure 3.6).

**Figure 3.6: Reason for Undertaking further Study**



Looking at each current level of attainment, there are few differences in the reasons for undertaking further study (table 3.8). The most popular reason offered for undertaking further study by individuals holding a Bachelor’s degree was to enhance employment prospects. Although this is a popular reason given by respondents holding Master’s and Ph.D. degrees, the most popular reason given for further study by graduates at this level was for ‘general interest/intellectual stimulation’.

**Table 3.8: Reasons for undertaking further study by level of most recent qualification**

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
To obtain a professional / vocational qualification	17	16	21	14	18
To enhance my employment prospects	29	28	32	31	30
To make new contacts	5	5	5	6	5
For general interest / intellectual stimulation	31	29	20	31	26
At the request of my employer	5	2	4	5	3
For personal reasons	12	20	18	14	18
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Sample	58	244	268	85	655

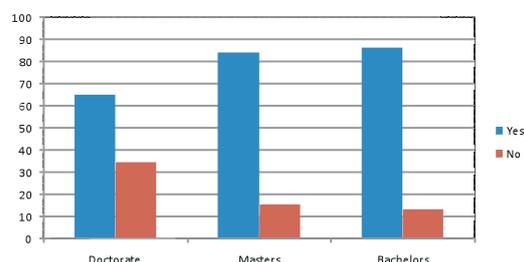
Graduates who reported that they were not undertaking further study were asked if they would consider doing so in future, and if so, what would they consider. 290 graduates, (78% of those not currently studying) said that they would consider undertaking a course of study in the future.

The proportion of respondents who thought that they would undertake further study decreases across each level of attainment. For example almost nine out of ten holders of Bachelor’s degrees indicated that they would consider further study as opposed to just over six out of ten respondents holding Ph.D. degrees.

Respondents were then asked for views on what courses they might study. The responses to this question were ‘open-ended’, and so are not statistically analysed, but several recurrent themes appear throughout. For example many respondents view an IT

course as something they might undertake in future. The need for continuous personal development to enhance career prospects is also a recurrent theme in the answers.

**Figure 3.7: If not undertaking further study, would you?**



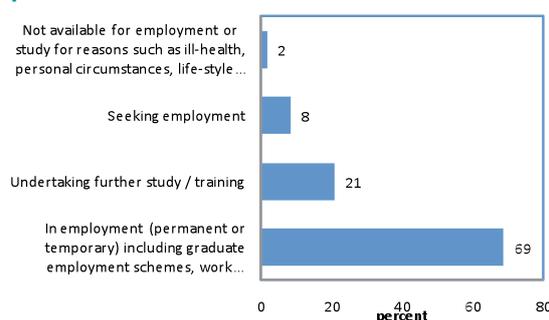
#### 4 Current Economic Status

More than two-thirds of all respondents are currently in employment, with 20 percent undertaking further study.

- Perhaps unsurprisingly there are considerable differences in the current situation of respondents depending on their level of attainment. For example the ‘employment rate’ for respondents with a Ph.D. is 88 percent compared to 66 percent for those with a Master’s and 54 percent for those with Bachelor’s degrees. Understandably the number of respondents with Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees who are undertaking further study is considerably higher than the number of respondents who hold Ph.D. degrees.
- The figures presented here are broadly comparable with those given in the report, *What do Graduates Do? Class of 2006*, which presents the results of a graduate survey conducted nine months after graduation. One

difference that does stand out however is that only 3 percent of graduates were seeking employment, compared with 8 percent in this survey of graduates in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

**Figure 4.1: Current situation, all respondents, percent**



**Table 4.1: Current situation by level of attainment, percent**

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
In employment (permanent or temporary) including graduate employment schemes, work experience, or training schemes	88	66	54	74	69
Undertaking further study / training	3	27	32	15	21
Seeking employment	7	5	12	11	8
Not available for employment or study for reasons such as ill-health, personal circumstances, life-style choice, or caring responsibilities	2	2	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Sample</i>	147	170	171	73	561

#### 4.1.1 Nature of Employment

- The vast majority of employed respondents are employed in the public sector (62 percent). The proportion is greater for respondents who hold doctoral degrees, of whom 8 out of 10 are employed in the public sector. Almost two-thirds of respondents holding Bachelor’s degrees work in the private sector (Figure 4.2).
- Current employment by occupation is listed in table 4.2. This reiterates the significance of the public sector as an employment provider for respondents, with large proportions of people employed in education. In fact

two-thirds of respondents holding a doctoral degree and nearly half of respondents holding Master’s degrees are employed in education. However those respondents holding Bachelor’s degrees are more evenly dispersed across a range of occupations.

- The identification of the public sector as the main source of employment is broadly consistent with the findings of the *What Do Graduates Do? The Class of 2006* report which highlighted the fact that the first employment destination for 37.1 percent of honours Bachelor’s degree graduates from the arts, humanities and social sciences was

the ‘non-market services’ such as education and health, with education accounting for 14 percent. Interestingly the first destination of 22 percent of graduates from arts, humanities and social sciences was the business, finance, and insurance services sector with banking, finance, and insurance accounting for 14 percent. This compares to only 4 percent of respondents to this survey who are in this sector.

Figure 4.2: Employment by sector

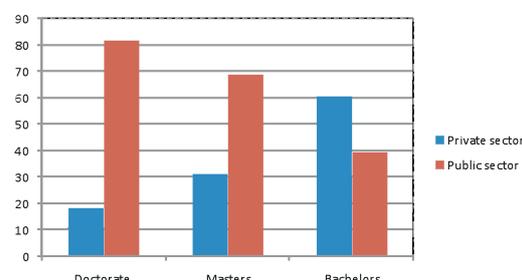


Table 4.2: Employment by occupation group

	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Accommodation and food service activities	0	1	6	1	2
Activities of extra-territorial organisations and bodies	0	1	0	0	0
Administrative and support service activities	3	7	11	6	7
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0	0	1	0	0
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1	5	12	6	6
Construction	0	0	3	1	1
Education	68	46	19	35	43
Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	0	0	1	0	0
Financial and insurance activities	0	3	7	13	4
Human health and social work activities	3	4	5	1	4
Information and communication	1	4	5	10	4
Manufacturing	0	1	4	1	2
Other service activities	1	3	5	3	3
Professional, scientific and technical activities	12	9	4	7	8
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1	3	2	1	2
Real estate activities	0	0	1	0	0
Transporting and storage	0	0	0	1	0
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0	0	0	1	0
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	0	0	1	0	0
Other	8	13	12	11	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Sample	145	157	150	71	523

Note: Figures highlighted in blue represent the three most popular responses

#### 4.1.2 Earnings

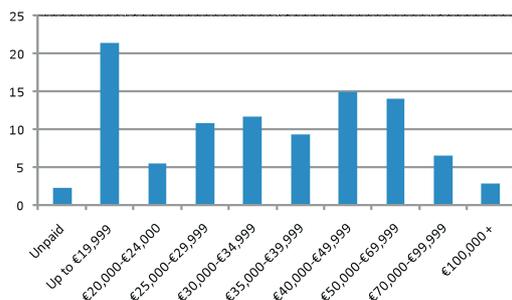
- The most reported earnings level is ‘up to €19,999’ with over 20% of all employed respondents reporting this range of salary (figure 4.3). This is most likely due to the fact that half of all respondents achieved their qualification within the past three years and a third of respondents have been in their job for less than one year.
- Table 4.3 shows the salary scales of respondents by the level of degree that they hold. The most common salary band is

shaded in blue. The most popular salary band for respondents holding a doctoral degree is €40,000–€49,000.

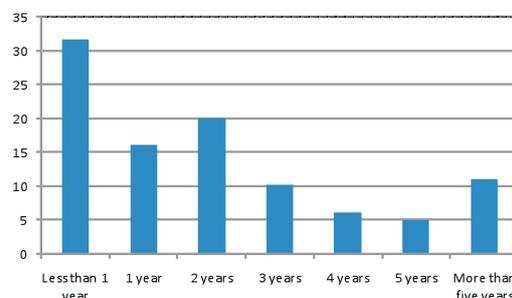
- It is also evident that 8 out of 10 Bachelor graduates earn less than €40,000 compared to half of doctorate graduates and just over half of Master’s graduates. The *What Do Graduates Do? The Class of 2006* report also contains information in relation to salary, and reports that the most common band for all Bachelor’s graduates is €21,000–€24,999 which is consistent with the information below. Similarly the most common salary band for all

Ph.D. graduates cited in *What do Graduates do? The Class of 2006* is €33,000–€36,999 which is slightly less than reported below.

**Figure 4.3: Earnings levels for all respondents**



**Figure 4.4: Time with current employer, percent of total respondents**



**Table 4.3: Earnings Bands by level of most recent degree**

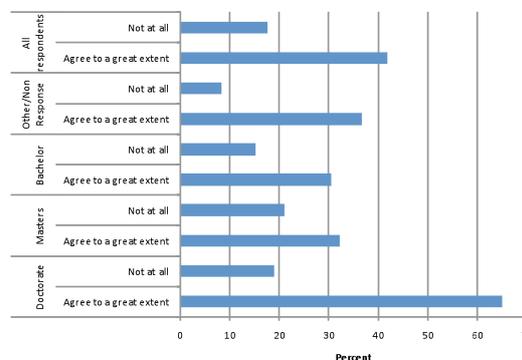
	Doctorate	Masters	Bachelors	Other/Not Stated	TOTAL
Unpaid	1	1	6	2	2
Up to €19,999	13	27	26	16	21
€20,000-€24,000	2	4	11	5	6
€25,000-€29,999	7	8	20	7	11
€30,000-€34,999	14	10	8	19	12
€35,000-€39,999	14	8	8	5	9
€40,000-€49,999	19	16	10	14	15
€50,000-€59,999	18	15	6	19	14
€70,000-€99,999	8	6	4	11	7
€100,000 +	3	6	0	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Sample	120	132	125	57	434

Note: Figures highlighted in blue represent the most popular responses

## 5 Appropriateness of Respondents' Third-Level Education

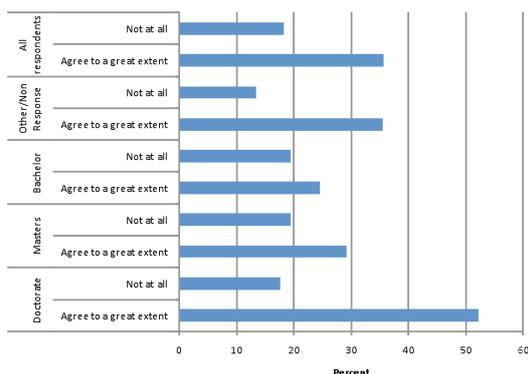
- Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of questions in relation to the appropriateness of their third-level education and the appropriateness of their current job to their qualification. Just under half of all respondents agreed to a great extent that they are applying the knowledge and skills acquired in their third-level qualification while slightly less than 20 percent dismissed the suggestion entirely. The extent to which people agree with the statement differs between levels of study with over 60 percent of respondents holding a Ph.D. agreeing to a great extent, more than twice the rate that respondents holding Bachelor's degrees report.

**Figure 5.1: Extent of agreement with the following statement: 'I use the knowledge and skills acquired in the course of my third-level education'**



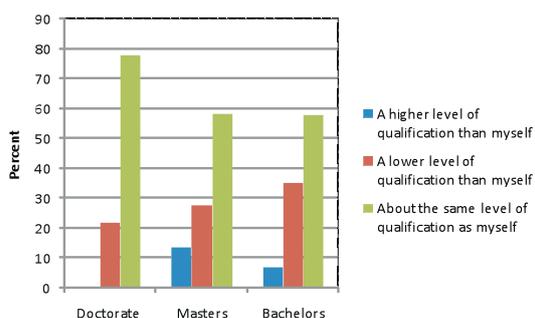
- The extent to which respondents believe they are in a job which is appropriate to their third-level qualification follows a similar pattern to the ‘use of skills’ question above. Taking all respondents, one-third agrees to a great extent that they are in an appropriate job while just fewer than 20 percent dismiss the suggestion. The agreement with the statement is less emphatic at Bachelor’s level, where just over 20 percent agree to a great extent compared to more than 50 percent amongst respondents holding a Ph.D..

**Figure 5.2: Extent of agreement with the following statement: ‘My current job is appropriate to my third-level education (in reference to pay, position, tasks etc)’**



- The majority of respondents (70%) believe that their colleagues are of a similar level of education to them (figure 5.3).

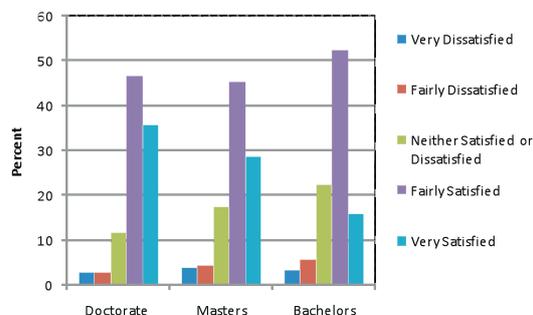
**Figure 5.3: Comparison of colleagues’ typical level of education**



## 6 Career Satisfaction

- Survey respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were across a range of factors such as earnings, career path, ability to use skills from third-level, skills development in employment and their job as a whole. Figure 6.1 shows the overall satisfaction with current employment by respondents at each level. Considerably more than half are satisfied with their job (fairly + very).

**Figure 6.1: Satisfaction with current job overall**

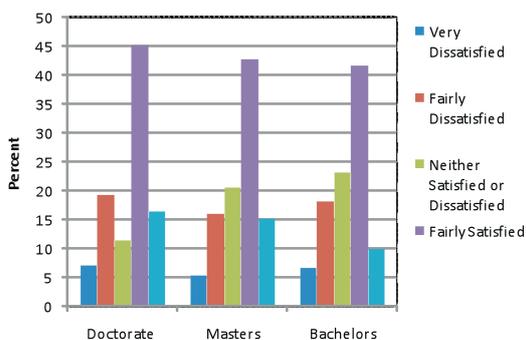


- Figures 6.2–6.5 show the level of satisfaction across a range of factors – career opportunities, earnings, ability to use skills from third-level course, and skills. The trends are broadly similar across each factor. Specifically:

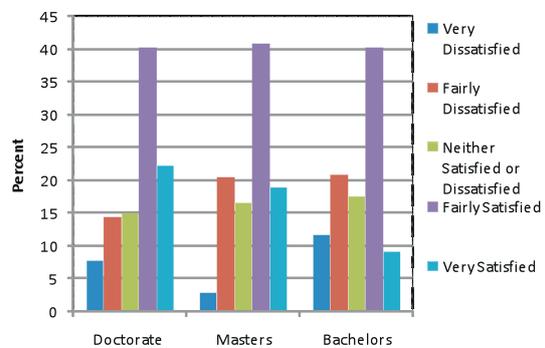
- **Career Opportunities:** ‘fairly satisfied’ is the most popular response across each level of study. Satisfaction levels appear to be slightly higher amongst respondents holding a Ph.D. degree, with close to two-thirds claiming to be ‘fairly satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’.
- **Earnings:** satisfaction with earnings is high, with a majority of respondents at each level of study reporting ‘fairly satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’. Again satisfaction levels are highest for respondents holding a Ph.D. degree, two-thirds of whom claim to be satisfied with their level of earnings.

- Ability to use skills from third-level education:** The scale of satisfaction for this factor suggests that doctoral-level graduates find employment which is directly linked to their studies. 85 percent of respondents holding a Ph.D. are satisfied with the scope their job gives them to use their third-level education. This level of satisfaction declines with the level of study undertaken. 78 percent of Master's graduates are satisfied with their ability to use the skills from their studies compared to 55 percent of Bachelor's graduates.
- Skills Development:** There is almost no difference in satisfaction levels when looking at satisfaction with skills levels. Close to two-thirds of respondents at each level report that they are satisfied with this element of their career.

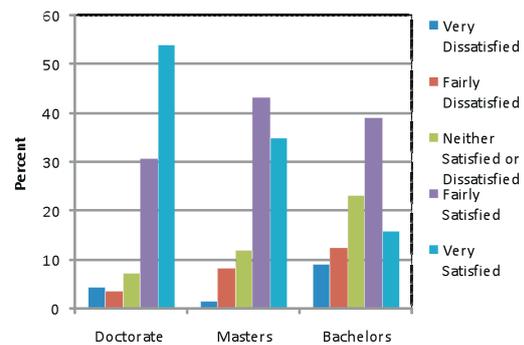
**Figure 6.2: Satisfaction with Career Opportunities**



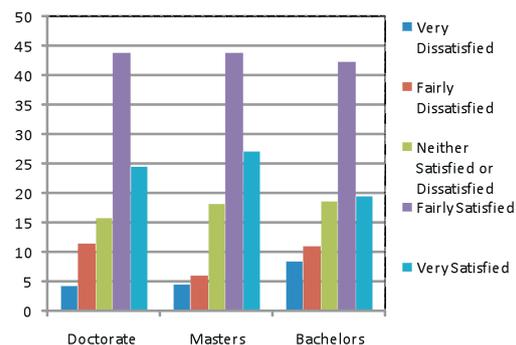
**Figure 6.3: Satisfaction with Earnings**



**Figure 6.4: Satisfaction with Ability to use Skills from third level Education**



**Figure 6.5: Satisfaction with Skills Development**



## 7 Graduates' Concluding Comments

- To conclude the graduate survey, respondents were asked for any comments on the role of the arts, humanities and social sciences in society and the future role that they might play in contributing to society and the economy.
- 143 respondents answered the question and a number of themes were discernible in the responses.
- These included the contribution of the arts, humanities and social sciences to the challenges and issues facing society.

*The arts, humanities and social sciences are crucial to our society and its future. These disciplines offer an insight into people as human beings. The greater we understand ourselves and society, the more we can achieve. Also students of these disciplines acquire vital critical and analytical skills which are partnered with independent thought and knowledge in a wide range of subjects. Society, and the economy, needs such people.*

*The skills that are imparted by courses in the arts, humanities and social sciences are often underrated by comparison with the technical skills offered by study in the natural and medical sciences or in engineering. The skills acquired through study of the AHSS are just as important to a thriving economy and to a vibrant society as more technical skills. No organisation or business can be run effectively unless the members have good communication skills and strong critical and analytical skills. These are best developed in higher education through courses in the AHSS that encourage students to think through a range of meanings and problems, to research them thoroughly, and to write and speak clearly in an insightful and critical way about the problems and possible solutions to them. Our society and economy would be very short of leadership if these skills were not well-developed in our students.*

- A number of respondents pointed out that the arts, humanities and social sciences are undervalued in terms of esteem, reflected most pointedly in the area of funding and resources in third-level education. One graduate pointed out that the sector requires leadership to change this situation.

*Arts, humanities and social sciences are essential for the future of society and economy in Ireland. However some of the academics in these areas may be their own worst enemies in fighting this cause through their continued (public) claims of neglect and disrespect. While the situation regarding research and development in these areas is certainly different to those in science and technology, academics cannot expect their world to continue unaffected by other external environmental changes. I would expect experts in the arts, humanities and social sciences to lead from the front, rather than (as some of them appear to do) complain from the rear.*

- Some graduates also made comments on the general higher education system in Ireland, specifically the fees issue and promotion processes, lack of posts in academia available beyond doctoral level, and lack of preparedness for the world of work outside of academia after a Ph.D.
- Graduates recommended greater interaction between the media and other areas to bring the results of research in the arts, humanities and social sciences to the public. This will also have an impact on raising the profile of the valuable work done in these areas and contribute to greater understanding of the value of the disciplines.
- Greater provision of careers guidance for students in the arts, humanities and social sciences was suggested a number of times, along with the development of work placements for students as part of their undergraduate degree.

- Financial and statistical training for graduates was also mentioned as an area that would increase employment opportunities. However other respondents also wrote about how they did not wish to see undergraduate education in the arts, humanities and social sciences geared only towards the labour market.
- Other areas mentioned were IT training and Special Education.
- Collaboration with industry and enterprise needs to be fostered on a greater scale than at present.
- Graduates also felt that multidisciplinary research, and particularly that which involves the natural sciences, should be encouraged on a greater scale. As one respondent reflects:

*As a former science graduate, I am in a unique position to appreciate the value of both. Industrial endeavour allows a country to remain financially fluid, but everyone must also enjoy themselves, enjoy living and ultimately continue to allow the process of social development. This development, indeed the very rudder for it, is borne from the work done in arts, humanities and social sciences.*

Another respondent comments:

*There is not enough structured systematic integration of the AHSS with perspectives from the natural sciences. Scientists have a growing awareness of the need for the vocabulary of the AHSS (as evidenced by calls for the reintroduction of ‘philosophy of science’ in science faculties for example). And the AHSS need to dialogue with and integrate natural science perspectives more fully. Interdisciplinarity is not an end in itself but is a prerequisite for worthy research that better contributes to society (and its subset the economy).*

- Many graduates thanked the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences for the funding provided for their studies and the opportunities it provided them with for carrying out their study and bringing publications to fruition. Some graduates suggested that a social network of awardees should be created to encourage the exchange of ideas and keep researchers informed about the work of others.

- Some other comments are listed below:

*‘The arts, humanities and social sciences have a crucial role in society, in providing an essential ‘thinking space’, independent of industry and enterprise. In this sense they provide a space in human culture for thought, regeneration, and creativity, despite the malaise of the modern capitalist economy.’*

*‘Graduates from the arts, humanities and social sciences are highly skilled and flexible employees with the ability to transfer and apply their skills in a wide variety of situations. Their role in the current economy and future development of the economy is undervalued.’*

*‘It is important that career paths are clearly understood for those entering this area of study – a lot of graduates are “lost” to jobs that are not relevant and this shapes a negative attitude towards this area. These courses should provide a base for career development, they tend to be very broad and somewhat lacking in direction. Career expectations need to be communicated and understood for all participants.’*

*‘The largest proportion of graduates (approximately 60–70%) come from the arts, humanities and social sciences – their role needs to be better articulated and promoted as they form the core of the labour force and the future for Ireland’s economy.’*

*'I think that third-level institutions need to provide undergraduates in this area with much better career advice. Unlike the sciences and law, the career path of those in the humanities and social sciences is not as clear cut. I found that as a graduate of this field I was encouraged to obtain a further qualification in another discipline (in my case business) by the careers office of my institution. Looking back it would have been far more appropriate if I could have been guided toward the career possibilities for my undergraduate degree. It was clear that the careers office of my institution at the time felt that an arts degree was useless in terms of obtaining employment without a further qualification. I have found that a lot of those with an undergraduate degree in the arts go onto a postgraduate qualification and that few go straight into employment.'*

*'There needs to be better integration of academic and employment pursuits. It is difficult for students to go from being students to working, but when in a Ph.D. programme there is little support available to facilitate the introduction of Ph.D. students to teaching, research, and other academic-related duties.'*

*'I think that the arts are essential and I am entirely against any efforts of making arts more business or commerce-orientated. Culture is so important intellectually and for tourism. It would be great if one could take a few optional modules from other areas if one wants to pursue certain careers, such as a module from media studies per year would have helped me a lot. Or in other cases a module in general business or enterprise, or modules from early childhood studies for future teachers or psychology etc. without having to take these courses as their main subjects. This would allow students to pursue an academic course of study and yet gain some skills in areas in which they are interested thus making integration into work easier.'*

*'Work experience abroad should be encouraged for students of languages and the necessary support should be given e.g. Convention de Stage for France.'*

*'The arts, humanities and social sciences provide a valuable insight into the processes that shape how people live in Ireland. Through greater understanding, they contribute valuable information for those in charge of public spending. The arts provide an essential opportunity for young people to gain attention and a sense of achievement that in turn has a positive effect on society.'*

*'I think the role of the arts, humanities and the social sciences is undervalued in society, particularly in Irish third-level education. There should be greater acknowledgment of the fact that the innovative, independent and critical modes of thinking nurtured by studying the arts and humanities make a significant contribution to society, and to a healthy economy.'*

*'I am concerned by the fact that the arts and humanities are increasingly judged on the basis of their economic potential, especially in third-level institutions, when the primary purpose of these subjects is to deepen our knowledge and understanding of society.'*

# Appendix X: Report on FAHSS Consultative Forum

An abridged version of the report on the FAHSS Consultative Forum is available below.  
The full text of the report is available for download at [www.heai.ie](http://www.heai.ie) or [www.irchss.ie](http://www.irchss.ie).



## 1. Introduction

The following report summarises the key discussion points and recommendations made by the participants at the Consultative Forum on the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences held under the auspices of the Foresight in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences exercise, on Friday 23rd January 2009. The summary is based on the following:

- the notes of the 'scribes' from the HEA/IRCHSS, who took on the role of capturing the key points made in each group;
- the notes of the rapporteurs who steered the discussion of each of the groups,
- observation of each of the groups by the facilitator of the overall event,
- the reports back to the plenary and the points raised at the plenary, together with subsequent feedback by email and telephone.

No editorial influence has been applied and every effort has been made to ensure all viewpoints have been captured. This draft report will be sent to the participants to enable them to make further inputs and/or to clarify the points already captured.

As would be expected from those with expertise in the arts, humanities and social sciences, the structure of the Consultative Forum and the form and content of the questions posed were critiqued and suggestions made. The groups addressed the questions requested of them, in the main, but also contributed other insights and suggestions, and discussed topics that had not been contemplated. The outcome of the Consultative Forum is the stronger for these.

## Section 2. Questions Posed at the Forum

### Question 1.

**What are the main ways in which the arts, humanities and social sciences can contribute to the Irish economy and society? OR Imagine if no AHSS were taught in Ireland, or the sector was not as strong as it is currently. What impact would that have?**

### Question 2.

**Are there particular challenges for society and the economy to which the AHSS can contribute?**

### Question 3.

**What characteristics of the AHSS provide students with the knowledge, methods of thinking, and specific skills and sensibilities for their professional and social lives?**

### Question 4.

**By 2020 what would be different, what would be the headline achievements for the AHSS**

### Question 5.

**Given those headline goals, what is necessary to achieve them?**

### Question 6.

**In promoting the place of the AHSS in Ireland, is it necessary to focus on research in preference to other areas?**

### Question 7.

**Should academic programmes in AHSS include vocational training and other non-academic activities?**

### 3. Strong Themes

As a review of the points captured from the groups will show, a wide range of views, ideas, insights and suggestions were garnered from the Consultative Forum. There are few outright contradictions. The objective of the Forum was to draw in the diversity of views from the different stakeholders participating. The Working Group will have the benefit of this diversity of contributions. Recognising the dangers of reductionism and instrumentality, pointed out as approaches of concern by Forum participants, it did not seem appropriate to attempt a synthesis of the main points from the Consultation. However it is interesting to note that the following themes were mentioned by many of the groups at some point in their deliberations:

- The AHSS feed society as well as the economy. Without vibrant AHSS both society and the economy would be poorer.
- Key skills developed by the AHSS include critical thinking, the ability to evaluate and critique, critical and analytical skills, creativity, non-linear thinking, tolerance for ambiguity, numeracy and literacy, communications and other soft skills.
- Digital humanities are a key development to underpin the success of the AHSS in the future. There are differing views on how this will be achieved but great belief in its power to measure the value of humanities.
- Communications are crucial to successful advocacy on behalf of the AHSS and to ensuring that the debate on the value of the AHSS never has to be undertaken again. There is a strong sense that the AHSS are not currently valued and that advocacy is crucial to redressing this misperception.
- AHSS v. SET should not be considered a dichotomy. SET should not be considered superior to the AHSS. Thinking in dichotomies is not helpful and it is inaccurate as there is no requirement to choose one or the other as a society. Both contribute significantly.
- Significant changes are needed if the AHSS are to continue to underpin a successful society and economy. Cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary work is key to the future of AHSS. The challenge is in getting recognition of this first of all, and then developing the systems and processes for cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary work.
- AHSS has particular resonance for tourism currently and in the future.
- AHSS can contribute to the successful resolution of social issues such as social integration. Experiments in these areas have proven successful and can underpin greater application of this potential in future.
- The dichotomy between research and teaching is false as the two are inseparable in a high-quality environment. The current emphasis on research is leading to the belief that it is a choice of either one or the other.

# Appendix XI: Student Numbers, 2004/05 and 2007/08

**Table 1: Enrolments in all Disciplines in the Publicly-Funded HE System, 2004/05 and 2007/08**

	2004/05			2007/08			Percentage Change		
	Overall			Overall			Male & Female		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Overall
<b>University sector</b>									
UG	30,415	44,612	75,027	31,683	46,797	78,480	8%	-18%	5%
PG	9,859	12,457	22,316	10,788	14,283	25,071	8%	22%	12%
Total	40,274	57,069	97,343	42,471	61,080	103,551	8%	-1%	6%
<b>IoT sector</b>									
UG	33,356	31,156	64,512	32,671	30,101	62,772	-2%	-5%	-3%
PG	1,141	1,076	2,217	2,305	2,404	4,709	81%	152%	112%
Total	34,497	32,232	66,729	34,976	32,505	67,481	0%	6%	1%
Total for sector	74,771	89,301	164,072	77,447	93,585	171,032	4.80%	2%	4%

**Table 2: Enrolments in AHSS Disciplines in the Publicly-Funded HE System, 2004/05 and 2007/08**

	2004/05			2007/08			Percentage Change		
	Overall			Overall			Male & Female		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Overall
<b>University sector</b>									
UG	16,049	27,619	42,891	17,569	27,650	45,219	7%	-8%	5%
% of all disciplines	53%	62%	<b>57%</b>	55%	59%	<b>58%</b>			
PG	4,862	6,836	11,698	5,572	8,247	13,819	11%	35%	18%
% of all disciplines	49%	55%	<b>52%</b>	52%	58%	<b>55%</b>			
<b>IoT sector</b>									
UG	13,193	19,963	33,156	12,560	18,438	30,998	-6%	-9%	-7%
% of all disciplines	40%	64%	<b>51%</b>	38%	61%	<b>49%</b>			
PG	532	641	1,173	1,110	1,536	2,646	66%	242%	126%
% of all disciplines	47%	60%	<b>53%</b>	48%	64%	<b>56%</b>			

Source: HEA and Department of Education and Skills

## Appendix XII: Data from the 2006 Census of the Population in the Republic of Ireland Indicating AHSS Graduates' Occupational Group

Subject Area of Third Level Qualification	Education	Humanities and Arts	Social Sciences, Business and Law	Services
Occupational Group				
Farming, fishing and forestry workers	1%	1%	1%	1%
Electrical trades workers	0%	0%	0%	1%
Engineering and allied trades workers	0%	0%	0%	2%
Textile, clothing and leather workers	0%	0%	0%	0%
Food, drink and tobacco production workers	0%	0%	0%	1%
Chemical, paper, wood, rubber, plastics and printing workers	0%	0%	0%	1%
Other manufacturing workers	1%	1%	1%	2%
Building and construction workers	1%	2%	1%	3%
Managers and executives	3%	10%	18%	8%
Communication, warehouse and transport workers	1%	2%	2%	5%
Clerical and office workers	4%	12%	16%	9%
Sales occupations	3%	9%	9%	11%
Business and commerce occupations	1%	6%	28%	2%
Computer software occupations	0%	2%	2%	1%
Scientific and technical occupations	0%	1%	1%	1%
Health and related workers	1%	1%	1%	1%
Social workers and related occupations	1%	2%	2%	0%
Religious occupations	1%	2%	0%	0%
Other professional workers	2%	15%	2%	2%
Personal service and childcare workers	6%	6%	4%	33%
Teachers	67%	17%	3%	1%
Central and local government workers	1%	4%	5%	4%
Garda Síochána	0%	0%	1%	5%
Army occupations	0%	0%	0%	1%
Other gainful occupations (incl. not stated)	4%	5%	4%	6%
All occupations	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Central Statistics Office Ireland. Data presented is taken from Table 29, 'Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over, in the labour force with a third-level qualification attained after completing two or more years of study, classified by occupational group.'

## Appendix XIII: Investment in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Table 1 (below) shows that in the period 1998–2006 there has been a 131% increase in the amount of money allocated to research and development in the AHSS. In each of the years listed, approximately a quarter of all of the money allocated to research and development was captured by the AHSS.

**Table 1: Higher education expenditure on research and development in the humanities and social sciences, 1998–2006**

	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	% change 1998– 2006
HSS HERD €m	56.9	68.7	93.4	120.5	131.23	131%
Total HERD €m	203.7	238.1	322.3	491.7	600.6	195%
HSS as % of total HERD	28%	29%	29%	25%	22%	

Source: Forfás, *The Higher Education Research and Development Survey*, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006.

**Figure 1: Higher education expenditure on research and development in the humanities and social sciences, 1998–2006**

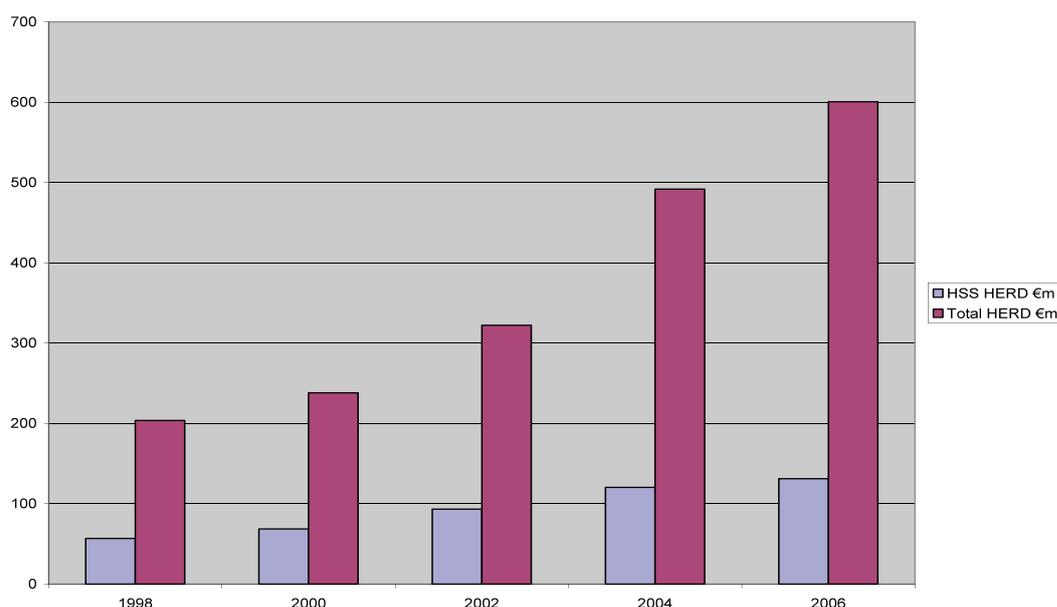


Table 2 shows the source of all funds allocated to research and development in the higher education sector in the period 1998–2006. From this it will be apparent that most of these funds come directly or indirectly from the Irish government. Direct government funding is ‘filtered through the Irish exchequer and various government departments and their agencies in order to fund research projects which are performed in the higher-education sector’.<sup>1</sup> Indirect government funding refers to the block grant administered to the higher education institutions by the HEA.<sup>2</sup> The next most important source of funding for research and development within Ireland are the Framework Programmes of the European Union.

- 1 Forfás, *The Higher Education Research and Development Survey 2006*, 22. The agencies that administer HERD funds are Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), Enterprise Ireland, the HEA, the Health Research Board, the IRCHSS, the IRCSET, and Teagasc.
- 2 Prior to 2007 the HEA was not responsible for the administration of the block grant to the institutes of technology and Dublin Institute of Technology.

**Table 2: Source of total HERD funds for all fields of science expressed as a percentage share of total HERD, 1998–2006**

Source of funding	1998 (%)	2000 (%)	2002 (%)	2004 (%)	2006 (%)
Direct government	24	24	40	41	44
EU	16	12	7	6	6
Foreign sources	3	4	2	2	1
Irish business	7	5	4	3	5
Other & own	8	13	9	6	3
Indirect government	42	42	38	42	41
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Total HERD (€m)	203.7	238.1	322.3	491.7	600.6

Source: Forfás, *The Higher Education Research and Development Survey*, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006; figures for 2006 obtained directly from Forfás.

**Figure 2: Source of total HERD funds for all fields of science expressed as a percentage share of total HERD, 1998–2006**

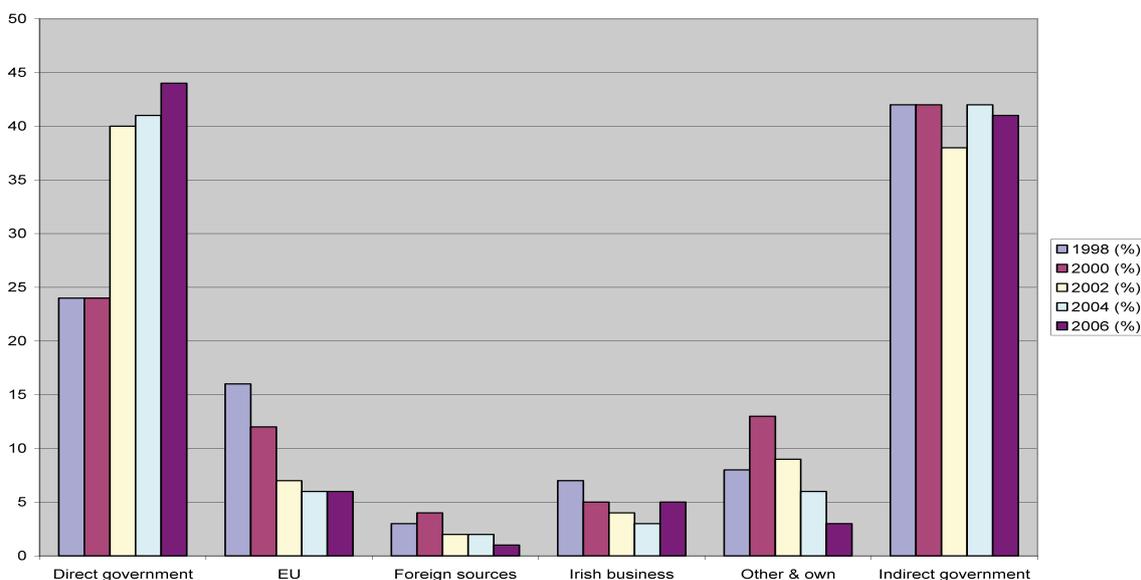


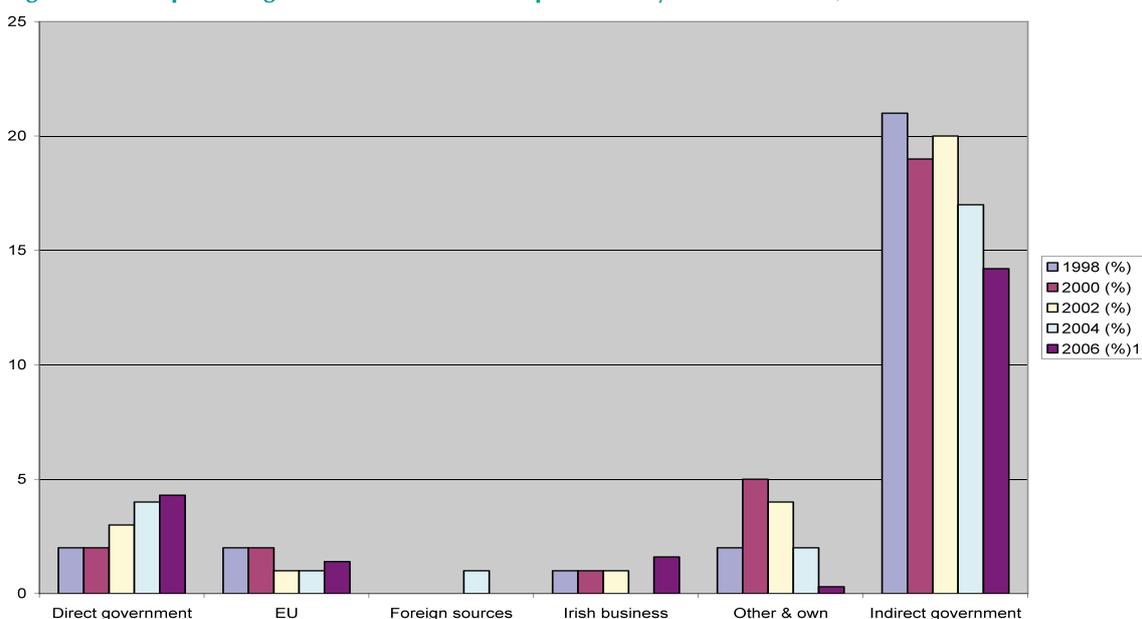
Table 3 (overleaf) shows the source of all funds allocated to research and development in the AHSS in the higher education sector in the period 1998–2006.

**Table 3: AHSS percentage share of total HERD expenditure by source of funds, 1998–2006 (€m)**

Source of funding	1998 (%)	2000 (%)	2002 (%)	2004 (%)	2006 (%) <sup>1</sup>
Direct government	2	2	3	4	4.3
EU	2	2	1	1	1.4
Foreign sources	0	0	0	1	0
Irish business	1	1	1	0	1.6
Other & own	2	5	4	2	0.3
Indirect government	21	19	20	17	14.2
HSS % share of total HERD	28	29	29	25	21.8
Total HSS HERD	56.9	68.7	93.4	120.5	131.23

Source: Forfás, *The Higher Education Research and Development Survey*, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006; figures for 2006 obtained directly from Forfás.

**Figure 3: AHSS percentage share of total HERD expenditure by source of funds, 1998–2006**



Source: Forfás, *The Higher Education Research & Development Survey*, 2006.

Of the direct government funding referred to above, that distributed by the IRCHSS and the HEA, through the Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions (PRTL), constitutes a major portion of the funds allocated to the AHSS as illustrated by Table 4 overleaf. Funds distributed by the Health Research Board (HRB) and Teagasc to the AHSS are also significant. Although most of the investment in the AHSS is recurrent funding, there has also been significant capital investment in these disciplines by the HEA through the PRTL, as well as some by the HRB and Teagasc.

Table 4: Estimated AHSS HERD allocation by source (direct government funding only) and percentage funding allocation, 1998–date<sup>1</sup>

Agency/funding programme	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total Enterprise Ireland HERD	12,100	12,700	34,600	32,700	32,900	25,400	20,300	33,200	39,900	55,500	3
AHSS Enterprise Ireland HERD	10	20	40	20.0	50.0	30.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3
% allocation to AHSS	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0%	0%	0%	3
Total HEA HERD (excluding PRTL) <sup>4</sup>	0	0	0	1,270	2,050	1,928	3,189	3,088	1,278	687	4,692
AHSS HEA HERD (excluding PRTL)	0	0	0	560	653	623	1,308	1,217	514	138	1,654
% allocation to AHSS	0	0	0	44%	32%	32%	41%	39%	40%	20%	35%
Total HRB HERD <sup>5</sup>	5,580	6,600	10,000	10,840	14,780	22,200	25,700	22,690	28,730	55,700	3
AHSS HRB HERD	0	0	0	2,200	800	1,300	1,800	3,700	3,890	18,360	3
% allocation to AHSS	0%	0%	0%	20%	5%	6%	7%	16%	14%	33%	3
Total IRCSS HERD	1	900	1,600	2,900	6,300	7,400	7,400	8,100	9,000	12,500	12,500
AHSS IRCSS HERD	1	900	1,600	2,900	6,300	7,400	7,400	8,100	9,000	12,500	12,500
% allocation to AHSS	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total IRCSET HERD	1	1	1	1	4,400	10,500	13,800	16,300	18,500	22,900	25,600
AHSS IRCSET HERD	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% allocation to AHSS	1	1	1	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total PRTL HERD	1	107,785	49,518	261,437	1	3	3	3	3	229,558.00	3
AHSS PRTL HERD <sup>6</sup>	1	7,009.00	7,230.00	27,401.00	1	3	3	3	3	47,198.00	3
% allocation to AHSS	1	7%	15%	10%	1	3	3	3	3	21%	3
Total SFI HERD	1	1	1	1	31,000	64,900	108,600	122,000	139,900	155,700	174,500
AHSS SFI HERD	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% allocation to AHSS	1	1	1	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total Teagasc HERD	29,800	28,900	35,700	43,800	51,500	46,500	50,500	55,900	56,500	63,800	3
AHSS Teagasc HERD	1,650	1,625	1,705	1,612	1,850	1,598	1,723	1,599	1,696	1,915	3
% allocation to AHSS	5.5%	5.6%	4.8%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%	2.9%	3%	3%	3

Sources: Listed agencies.

Notes to Table 4:

1. Monies allocated to higher education institutions from the Technological Sector Research (TSR) Fund are not included in this table because of the unavailability of complete data pertaining to this. The TSR Fund commenced in 2000, since which time between approximately €3.3 million and €6.7 million has been allocated across all disciplines on an annual basis.

2. The increase in HERD allocation in 2007 by Enterprise Ireland can be attributed in part to the drive to catch up on overhead costs accrued and legacy projects.

3. Organisation/research award scheme not in existence/data unavailable for period/no awards made during period.

4. The HEA research awards included in this category are the North–South Programme for Collaborative Research (Strand I), the Fund for Digital Research, the Transport Research Fund, and the Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes (2007–2011).

5. The figures shown for the HRB's AHSS HERD allocation are based on the agency's loose classification of non-biomedical/clinical research grants as social science/humanities research. The figures pertain to the committed value of grants awarded to higher-education institutions by the HRB.

6. AHSS PRTL I HERD does not include the funding of libraries. In 1999, under Cycle 1 of the PRTL I, €12,888,000.00 was awarded to TCD for the Ussher Library; in 2001, under Cycle 3, €15,149,000.00 was awarded to UCC for their research library.

7. The figures shown for the IRCHSS's HERD allocation are the budget for the organisation for each year, including funds for administration.

## Appendix XIV: Humanities and Social Science Research Institutes Funder under PRTL I Cycles 1-4

Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions – Cycle 1		
Programme	Institutions	Amount Awarded (€)
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences</b>		
Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies	TCD	
Irish Scottish Studies	TCD	
National Political Social Survey	TCD	1,397
History and Society	UCC	1,175
Institute for Social Change	UCD	4,436
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7,008</b>

Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions – Cycle 2		
Programme	Institutions	Amount Awarded (€'000)
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences</b>		
Centre for Human Settlement and Historical Change	NUIG UL UCC TCD	2,903
National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis	NUIM DIT IT Sligo GMIT WIT Mary Immaculate College	2,712
Urban Institute	UCD TCD	6,196
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11,811</b>

Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions – Cycle 3		
Programme	Institutions	Amount Awarded (€'000)
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences</b>		
Institute for International Studies	TCD NUIM	8,380
Institute for the Study of Social Change*	UCD NUIM TCD	3,428
Innovation and Structural Change	NUIG DCU UCD	2,794
Centre for Transportation Research	TCD UCC	2,031
Centre for Human Settlement and Historical Change*	NUIG UCC	889
Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies *	TCD	1,270
Irish Scottish Studies *	TCD	1,016
Humanities Institute of Ireland	UCD St. Patrick's College Drumcondra	7,618
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27,426</b>

\* Denotes institute had received funding under prior cycles

Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions – Cycle 4		
Programme	Institutions	Amount Awarded (€)
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences</b>		
Humanities Serving Irish Society (HSIS)	DCU NUIG NUIM NCAD RIA TCD UCC UCD	28,908
National Programme of Research on Innovation, Society and Space (KISS)	DCU NUIG NUIM UCC UL	22,097
Irish Social Science Data Archive	UCD	750
Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media (GradCAM)	DIT NCAD	2,148
	<b>Total</b>	<b>53,903</b>

## Appendix XV: Funding Awarded by the IRCHSS

### IRCHSS Awards by Scheme, 2001/2-2008/09

Scheme	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06	2004/05	2003/04	2002/03	2001/02
Postgraduate Scholarship	154	124	94	91	84	76	112	176
Postdoctoral Fellowship	26	32	22	23	31	20	27	25
Research Fellowship	8	10	9	10	16	10	7	12
Senior Research Fellowship	12	9	9	10	12	12	11	14
Projects	77	40	20	13	21	77	0	0
Senior Scholarship	0	0	0	0	7	8	10	11

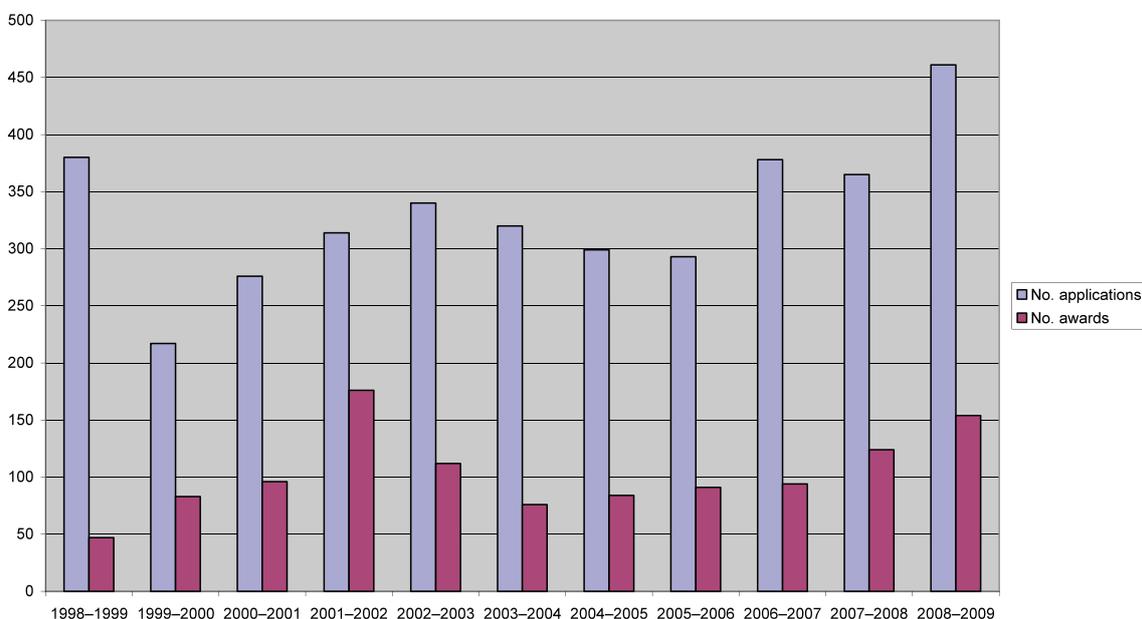
### IRCSET and IRCHSS postgraduate scholarship scheme: number of applications for scholarships and awards granted, 1998–date

Year	IRCHSS		IRCSET	
	No. applications	No. awards	No. applications	No. awards
1998–1999	380	47	1	1
1999–2000	217	83	1	1
2000–2001	276	96	1	1
2001–2002	314	176	1	1
2002–2003	340	112	1222	218
2003–2004	320	76	790	149
2004–2005	299	84	716	157
2005–2006	293	91	725	226
2006–2007	378	94	901	246
2007–2008	365	124	996	247
2008–2009	461	154	907	276
Total	3643	1137	6257	1519
% successful applicants to IRCHSS				31%
% successful applicants to IRCSET				24%

Source: IRCSET and IRCHSS.

Note 1: The first IRCSET postgraduate awards were made in 2002.

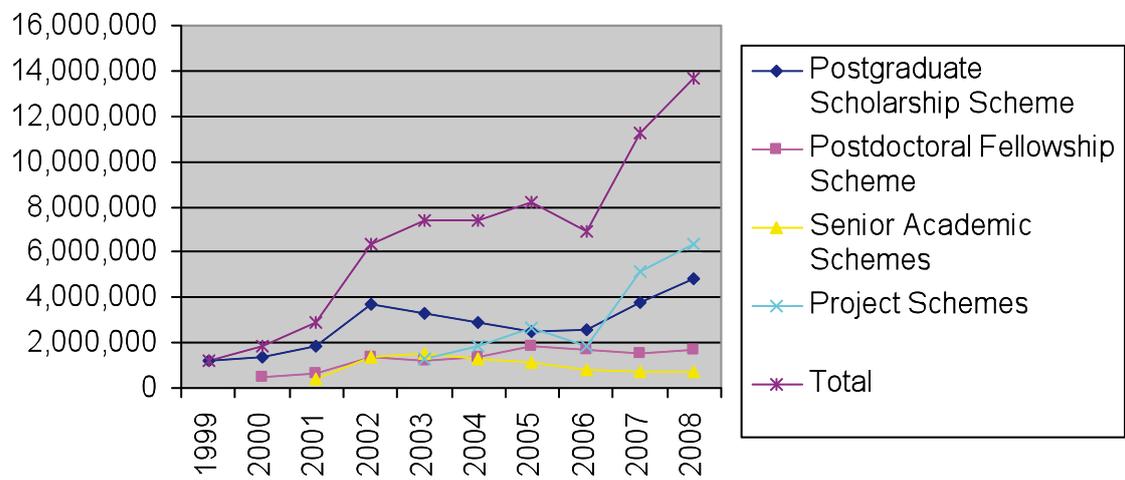
### IRCHSS Applications vs Awards 1998-2008



### IRCHSS Awards by Scheme, 1999-2008

	Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme	Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme	Senior Academic Schemes	Project Schemes	Total
1999	1,200,043				€1,200,043
2000	1,352,832	482,500			€1,835,332
2001	1,829,208	676,136	380,921		€2,886,265
2002	3,701,781	1,353,551	1,333,170		€6,388,502
2003	3,309,239	1,231,130	1,558,000	1,266,338	€7,364,706
2004	2,882,900	1,367,139	1,260,249	1,876,639	€7,386,927
2005	2,501,574	1,848,648	1,158,422	2,672,778	€8,181,422
2006	2,577,367	1,690,743	775,000	1,841,579	€6,884,689
2007	3,810,357	1,564,874	711,181	5,174,452	€11,260,865
2008	4,835,322	1,676,233	763,496	6,389,909	€13,664,961
<b>Total</b>	<b>€28,000,623</b>	<b>€11,890,955</b>	<b>€7,940,440</b>	<b>€19,221,696</b>	<b>€67,053,713</b>

**IRCHSS Awards made by Scheme, 1999–2008**



# Appendix XVI: EU Funding of the AHSS in Ireland

## Ireland's participation in the EU FP4, FP5, FP6 and FP7 to end 2008

Programme	Priority	No. of AHSS projects	€m	No. of Irish partners involved in FP projects	No. of FP projects with Ireland as coordinator
FP4, 1994–1998	Targeted socio-economic research	162	112	32	3
FP5, 1998–2002	Improving the socio-economic knowledge base	185	165	34	4
FP6, 2002–2006	Citizens and knowledge in a knowledge-based society	144	225	28	3
FP7, 2007–2013 <sup>3</sup>	Socio-economic sciences and the humanities	94	125.5	8	1

## NORFACE programmes: participation by AHSS researchers in Ireland

Activity	No. of applications with Irish participation		No. of successful applications with Irish participation		Totals	
	PI	Co-Applicant	PI	Co-Applicant	Total no. of applications	Total no. successful
Seminar series 2005	2	4	0	2	11	2
Seminar series 2006	2	4	1	2	12	3
Seminar series 2007	2	5	1	2	12	4
Pilot research programme 2006	5	7	0	2	63	10
Transnational Research Programme 2008	8	35	**	**	240	**
Total	19	55	2**	8**	338	19**

PI = The Principal Investigator, is the leader of the consortium of international researchers, who also leads the research based in their country.

Co-applicant = The Co-applicant, is a member of the consortium of international researchers, who is responsible for leading research activities in their country.

\*\* The evaluation in 2009 followed a two stage process of the 240 applications submitted, 45 were invited to submit a stage two application, and this included six co-applicants from Ireland.

Source: IRCHSS

<sup>3</sup> This data pertains to awards made under the call 1 and 2 in the socio-economic sciences and humanities in May 2007, and November 2007, it does not include reserve list project which may be selected for funding. Data pertaining to later calls under FP7 was not available at the time of going to press.

**Summary of participation of Ireland, Finland, and Portugal in ESF instruments in the AHSS, 2001–2007  
(including ECRP 2008)**

ESF instrument	Ireland No. of participants	Finland No. of participants	Portugal No. of participants
Exploratory Workshops (Humanities)	14 + 1	21 + 7	17 + 3
Exploratory Workshops (Social Sciences)	28 + 1 (+1)	37 + 7 (+1)	18 + 2 (+1)
EUROCORES CNCC	Not a signatory to the programme.	Yes, a signatory to the agreement.	Yes, a signatory to the agreement
EUROCORES BOREAS	Not a signatory to the programme.	Yes, a signatory to the agreement	Not a signatory to the programme.
EUROCORES OMLL	Not a signatory to the programme.	Yes, a signatory to the agreement	Yes, a signatory to the agreement
EUROCORES HumVIB	2 PL, 1 PI	1 PI	0
ECRP 2001-2004	1 PI	5 PI	Not participating
EUROCORES-ECRP 2005	1 PI	1 PI	Not participating
EUROCORES-ECRP 2006	1 PI	2 PI	Not participating
EUROCORES-ECRP 2007	0	0	Not participating
EUROCORES-ECRP 2008	1 PI	Not participating	Not participating
Members on Steering Committee			
Forward Looks (Humanities)	0 +1	0 +2	0
Forward Looks (Social Sciences)	1 +1	0 +2	0
Research Networking Programmes (Humanities)	2	3	0
Research Networking Programmes (Social Sciences)	3	7	4
Networks (Humanities)	1	0 +2	0
Networks (Social Sciences)	0	2	0

PL = Project Leaders/PI = Principal Investigators

+ number means shared between humanities and social sciences

(+ number) means shared with another non-humanities committee

**HERA programmes: Participation by AHSS researchers in Ireland**

Activity	No. of applications with Irish participation			No. of successful applications with Irish participation			Totals	
	PL	PI	AP	PL	PI	AP	Total no. of applications	Total no. successful
Joint Research Programme "Creativity and Innovation"	10	9	5	**	**	**	61	**
Joint Research Programme "Cultural Dynamics"	10	39	0	**	**	**	173	**
Total	20	48	5	**	**	**	234	**

PL = The Project Leader, is the leader of the consortium of international researchers, who also leads the research based in their institution.

PI = The Principal Investigator, is a member of the consortium of international researchers, who is responsible for leading research activities in their institution, there may be more than one PI per country, however there can only be one PI per institution.

AP = Associated Partners, are non academic partners, who participate in the programme but are not funded by HERA.

\*\* The final outcome of the JRP is due for publication in December 2009.

Source: IRCHSS









Higher Education Authority  
[www.heai.ie](http://www.heai.ie)

Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences  
[www.irchss.ie](http://www.irchss.ie)