

Reaching beyond Europe –  
EU programmes for Higher Education and Research  
22-23 April 2010 Brussels

Cooperation with the EU Neighbourhood Area:  
examples of two FP7 research projects



and



Speaker: Dr. Alexander Chvorostov



Reaching beyond Europe – EU programmes for Higher Education and Research

## About this presentation

### Contents:

1. **About the CEASS research network:**  
an international network of social scientists
2. **Example of two projects:** presentation of the largest on-going research projects implemented by the network
  - **ENRI-East** European, National and Regional Identities in Eastern Europe (2008-2011) [FP7-SSH]
  - **HITT-CIS** Health in Times of Transition in CIS countries (2009-2013) [FP7-Health]
3. **Summary experience** and discussion of issues of international cooperation in Social Sciences with NIS countries

## About the research network: Who we are?

- **Network history** (since mid 1990s...)
- **“Network of networks”** (regions, disciplines, professional associations...)
- **Expertise:** Eastern part of European continent (inclusive “old” and “new” EU members, immediate “EU neighbors”, Russia, Caucasus and Central Asia)
- **Social Scientists** : *sociological* and *political* topics (values, elections, identities, households) up to the *health care* and *security*...
- **Key facts** about the implemented projects
  - typical duration: 2 to 4 years;
  - funding: € 150,000 to € 3 mil.;
  - partners: 2 to 13 teams from 2 to 12 countries;
  - researchers: 2 to 10 fellows per team, 50 to 150 per project.

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## About the research network: Core teams

- Core-teams of the network:
  - **IHS-Vienna**  
(Institut für Höhere Studien  
/ Institute for Advanced Studies)
  - **University of Aberdeen**
- Projects implemented by these two core teams during the last 10 years (since 2000)
  - 6 coordinated projects in FP5-6-7 (and numerous partnerships);
  - 6 INTAS, 2 TACIS and several PHARE projects;
  - Multiple projects commissioned by EC, European Parliament, World Bank, various UN bodies, national governments etc.




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„The greatest wealth is health“

## HITT-CIS: Project facts (1)



**HITT-CIS is**

- an international research project
- “Health In Times of Transition: Trends in Population Health and Health Policies in CIS Countries.”
- Funded: EC - 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme
- 2009 – 2013 by 13 teams from 9 countries
- a follow-up project that continues the research efforts started by the project “*Living Conditions, Lifestyles and Health*” ([www.ljh.at](http://www.ljh.at)) in 2000 – 2003 by the same core teams


**Geographical scope and methods:**

- large scale survey in 9 countries (19.000 respondents, 100 formalized questions)
- expert interviews, media analysis, focus groups, community profiles , etc.

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„The greatest wealth is health“

## HITT-CIS Project facts (2)



**Project goal**

- ✓ long-term trends of population health as a consequence of socioeconomic transitions,
- ✓ circumstances in which people of the post-soviet countries live
- ✓ quality of health service they and access the healthcare facilities
- ✓ lifestyles, patterns of nutrition, quality and forms of food
- ✓ habits of alcohol and tobacco consumption
- ✓ efficiency of public policies in relation to health care and securing healthy circumstance

**Overall strategy**

- ✓ Specialist expertise and social science methods
- ✓ Public Health key areas for research
- ✓ Wide range of sociological tools and techniques
- ✓ New insights

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## Addressing stakeholders – whom, why and how

### Benefits by HITT-CIS

- To improve public health policies
- Interacting with national and international stake-holders
- Disseminating findings to EU policymakers and researchers
- Capacity building
- Identifying policy implications based upon research evidence

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## HITT-CIS project consortium

1. Institute for Advanced Studies, **Austria**
2. University of Aberdeen, **United Kingdom**
3. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, **United Kingdom**
4. Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, **Canada**
5. Open Health Institute, Moscow, **Russia**
6. Curatio International Foundation, **Georgia**
7. Center for Survey Methodology “Concluzia Prim”, **Moldova**
8. Center for Sociological Studies MGU, **Russia**
9. State Institute of Management and Social Technologies of Belarusian State University, **Belarus**
10. East-Ukrainian Foundation for Social Research, **Ukraine**
11. Opinia – Independent Sociological and Information Service, **Moldova**
12. Center for Study of Public Opinion, **Kazakhstan**
13. GORBI Gallup International, **Georgia**

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## Projects facts (1)

- An international research project
- Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities:  
Nations between States along the New **Eastern** Borders of the European Union  
A cross-national study of trans-boundary social and ethnic groups in Europe
- Funded: EC - 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme
- 2008 – 2011 by 11 teams from 7 EU and 3 NIS countries

**Interdisciplinary study that employs methods of**  
Sociology, Political Science, History, Ethnography

### Four main cross-cutting research themes

1. Interplay of identities and cultures
2. Nations between the states
3. Self-organization and representation of ethnic groups
4. Path dependencies, historical memories, expected dynamics

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## Geographical scope

### Baltic region

including Baltic-bordering provinces of Russia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and northern parts of Poland

### Eastern Europe

including bordering areas of Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary;

### Central Europe

including special case of Germany and possible further extensions of the study in the case of secured co-funding;

### Carpathian basin

border regions of Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine.



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## Project facts (2)

### Project slogan:

*...Moving peoples and moving borders...*

### Main goal of the ENRI-East:

In-depth understanding of European Identities and regional cultures, inter-communication in Eastern Europe

### Main objects of the study:

10 ethnic groups representing more than 20 „split nations“ in Eastern Europe in its four main regions

### Main method of the study:

- Triangulation of theories of identities and empirical „facts of life“
- Verification and adjustment of existing theories, specially designed quantitative and qualitative sociological surveys and systematic observations

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## Project consortium

- Institute for Advanced Studies, **Austria**
- TARKI Research Institute Inc., **Hungary**
- University of Aberdeen, **United Kingdom**
- Osteuropa Institut Regensburg, **Germany**
- Institute of Social Research, **Lithuania**
- Moscow State University, **Russia**
- Belarusian State University, **Belarus**
- East-Ukrainian Foundation for Social Research, **Ukraine**
- University of St. Cyril and Methodius, **Slovakia**
- Oxford XXI, **United Kingdom**
- Maria Curie-Skłodowska University Lublin, **Poland**

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Summary experience and discussion

**How to foster research cooperation with NIS countries in the future? (1)**

**Academic mobility, exchanges and networking at all stages is needed (for real ERA)**

- more grants, joined programs, fellowships, summer schools, etc.
- cooperation, coordination and matching funds of
  - (a) national/governmental/bilateral programs
  - (b) international/intergovernmental programs
  - (c) national and international private donors
- FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT!!!  
No VISA for researchers and students!!!  
(*nice dream...* )

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Summary experience and discussion

**How to foster research cooperation with NIS countries in the future? (2)**

**Overcoming of further communication barriers, namely:**

- *Linguae-francae*:  
use both **English** and **Russian** in academic communications of EU and NIS teams
- Foster **joined publications** (monographs, articles, journals) and mutual **translation programs**
- Invest sufficient funds into the organization of **Interpretation services at international conferences, seminars and workshops** (better in addition and beyond the standard research budgets)

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## Summary experience and discussion

## How to foster research cooperation with NIS countries in the future? (3)

**Typical problems/barriers in cooperation with NIS teams**

- **Issues of generations** (Senior and Junior research fellows in NIS research communities)
- **University versus non-University** research teams
- Issues of research teams from **public and/or private** sector
- A triplet of problematic issues: Regional coverage versus scientific quality versus logistics and accessibility: teams from **capital and/or provincial cities**
- Issues of **leadership**: all partners are equal, but it seems that ***EU teams are more equal?***
- *etc.*

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## Summary experience and discussion

**Coping with a barriers of generations****Junior researchers (under 40)**

- better communicate in foreign languages
- advanced in IT
- more mobile (for good or for bad...)
- better knowledge of modern “western” literature,
- but less academic experience

**Senior researchers (over 60)**

- Insufficient communication in foreign languages
  - though, with numerous exceptions
- experienced researchers and better contextual understanding
- less mobile, but well-established, =>
  - can secure more efficient support from universities’ administrations and other modes of institutional and networking support...

**Solution:** a successful and sustainable network combines advantages of each age group of researchers

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#### Summary experience and discussion

In how far does research in the EU profit from the cooperation with NIS countries in SOCIAL SCIENCES and what is significance of such cooperation?

- **Better understanding** of regions, countries, policies, societies and people outside of EU
- **Advanced comparative studies** (e.g. search for *universal* and *specific* factors in social development or social structures...)
- Mutual enrichment of EU and NIS researchers with regard to **methods of research, exchange of empirical data, critical assessment of theories**, etc.

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#### Summary experience and discussion

How to improve established programs? (1)

**For FP7:**

- Secure real **co-funding** from and full-range participation of NIS countries
- Include bigger number of specific **regional topics** into FP7 thematic Work Programs
  - so far, there are only a few such topics in SSH – for instance for Latin America and China and even those are dedicated to very specific issues... )
- Announce more **topics of SSA nature** allowing more intensive conferencing, networking, joint publications, etc.

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Summary experience and discussion

How to improve established programs? (2)

**For academic exchange programs:**

- Secure inter-linkage between Marie Curie programs and FP7 research projects
  - allowing the most effective capacity building and re-utilisation of outcomes of research projects with life cycles of only 3-4 years;
- Harmonize bi-lateral and multi-lateral exchange schemes and coordinate the efforts
  - Can DAAD in Germany or FWF in Austria and RFBR in Russia co-finance a Marie-Curie IRSES project?

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## Thank you for your attention!



INSTITUT FÜR HÖHERE STUDIEN  
INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES  
Vienna

[www.ihs.ac.at](http://www.ihs.ac.at)



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**HITT/CIS**  
Health in Times  
of Transition

[www.hitt-cis.net](http://www.hitt-cis.net)



**ENRI-East**  
European, National and Regional Identities

[www.enri-east.net](http://www.enri-east.net)

### **CEASS-CENTER**

**Center for comparative Eurasia Studies and Surveys**

Director of CEASS-Center  
at the IHS-Vienna  
Dr. Alexander Chvorostov  
[alex.chv@ihs.ac.at](mailto:alex.chv@ihs.ac.at)



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