
Systemic Analysis and Definition of Entry Points and Intervention Strategies in the Social Science and Research Sectors (SSRS) of Albania and Serbia

Literature review – First draft

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1. Introduction

The present desk study is the first step in a reflection and evaluation process that is to systemically analyse and define entry points and intervention strategies in the Social Science and Research Sectors of Albania and Serbia for SDC. The literature review is based upon documents provided by SDC as well as a search of websites that deal with the Social Science and Research Sectors in Southeastern Europe. The study will briefly outline the SDC-financed Regional Research Promotion Programme Western Balkans (RRPP) before looking at the Social Science and Research Sectors of Albania and Serbia and the arising Political Economy questions.

2. A general look at the SSRS in Albania and Serbia

“Eastern Europe shows a different landscape, where lack of resources, the hierarchism of traditional (public) academic and research institutions, the poor pay and working conditions of faculty members, and the presence of externally funded institutions and think tanks capable of mobilising important resources, can generate an internal as well as an external brain drain, as English-speaking academics find new professional outlets in the non-academic research sector or abroad. These provide a challenge to traditional institutions such as the old academies of science that held sway prior to 1989 and continue to be influential to varying degrees post-1989. [...] The differences between Eastern and Western Europe raise more generally the question of communication and collaboration between national research traditions in the SSH, the preservation of valuable research capacities previously built within national frameworks, and transnational and interdisciplinary research.”¹

“All of the countries of this region have a different starting point for the recent reform processes in this [the social sciences] sector due to their different political history of the last fifty years under communist regimes of, moreover, different shades. Whereas Albania was totally isolated under the “stone-age” communism of Enver Hoxha and Romania remained a highly centralised, unitary state with a neo-Stalinist communist regime and strict political control until the very end of the Ceausescu regime, the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia devolved political power according to the 1974 federal constitution to the level of the Republics. Moreover, the Titoist doctrine of workers’ self-management was also applied to the sector of research and education. Hence, based on the doctrines of federalism and socialist self-management, a highly decentralised institutional framework was created.

After the fall of communism in 1989, any discussion of the reform of the research and tertiary education sector has to take into account not only the legacy of the communist regimes, but also the manifold variables of multiple transition processes from authoritarian political regimes to multi-party democracy and rule of law, a more or less centrally planned economy to a market economy and, in the aftermath of the dissolution of SFRY, the consequences of a series of violent conflicts and wars in Croatia in 1991, Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1992 till 1995, the Federal Re-public of Yugoslavia in 1999 and Macedonia in 2001. These conflicts and wars also had serious consequences for the research and tertiary education sector: libraries and laboratories were destroyed; many researchers, teachers and students became refugees or internally displaced persons; institutions were ethnically cleansed and became finally segregated; in many cases “normal” research and teaching activities became simply impossible. Hence, the reconstruction of the State and the economy, as well as the

¹ European Commission (2009).

reconciliation of ethnically divided societies, are not only “general” problems, but also of great importance for the research and education sector. Research and teaching infrastructures have to be re-established, the loss of human capital through the wars and ethnic cleansing and ongoing “brain-drain” to Western countries must be fought against, and the institutional setting of research and tertiary education activities must be reformed under the double legacy of communism and the need for reconstruction and reconciliation.”²

“As far as the institutional setting of universities in SEE is concerned, after the fall of communism, the reestablishment of universities’ “autonomy” became the catch-word in all countries of transition. However, as we can see, the very term “autonomy” can have rather different meanings. First and foremost with regard to the communist legacy, autonomy was the mantra used to get rid of the direct and strict control of the communist party, which used central planning of financing, staff appointments and quota for access of students to universities as means to “produce” the necessary “cadres” for all spheres of politics, economics and culture, i.e. the civil service, the planned labour “market” or “cultural” industries such as education, media or arts and sciences. The quest for the re-establishment of (individual) academic freedom and institutional autonomy in order to get rid of direct and strict political management and control of research and tertiary education was thus legitimized not only by the reference to the common European, pre-communist history of the establishment of universities in SEE, but also by the notion that central planning and with regard to research and tertiary education failed in the end to make communism and communist universities “effective”, i.e. competitive enough to be able to compete with Western economies based on market systems. This holds true for the peculiar, highly decentralised Titoist self-management system because in practice there was no real “competition” possible between self-management units but instead a strict hierarchy following the files and ranks of the communist party system. [...] Hence, the conditions of transition to democracy and market economy posed the problem for universities and other institutions, in particular academies of sciences and other non-university research institutions, not to re-establish “autonomy”, but to find out which form of autonomy and how much freedom from state interference they need. This raises a lot of “technical” governance and management issues beyond “philosophical” speculations on freedom and autonomy.”³

“The internationalisation of CEE social sciences carries clear national aims as well. It uncovers challenges for social scientists to become visible on the European academic map; participation in international comparative projects is a 'learning by doing' process leading to academic synergy, new competencies and the encouragement of international funding opportunities; new practices of integrating research and teaching pave the way for the next generation of social scientists by keeping their hands on all stages of an international comparative study. It is not only the national science community that wins from the internationalisation of social sciences, but also other local and international agents. This is especially meaningful in the situation of still quite rapid social and economic developments of the CEE countries and their integration with the European Union (EU). Internationally harmonised data of an excellent academic quality, high-level academic papers and social political briefings give evidence for the national aims being attained; using social indicators as early warning signs can send out an alarm about emerging social economic and political hardship that

² Mantl, W., Marko, J. and Kopetz, H. (2007).

³ Mantl, W., Marko, J. and Kopetz, H. (2007).

the country might face; internationally comparative data serve the knowledge base in planning social and economic developments of the country; and last but not least, it can promote dialogue and debate among political actors. As stressed by Adolf Filacek, a knowledge-based society precedes increasingly extensive access to information and knowledge of all kinds, especially that related to social, political and economic processes affecting the European civilisation.”⁴

3. The Regional Research Promotion Programme Western Balkans (RRPP)

In function since 2008, financed by SDC and implemented by the University of Fribourg (Switzerland), the RRPP is meant to support young researchers in the Western Balkans, among others in Albania and in Serbia. According to the current credit proposal, the RRPP’s overall objective is “sustainable transition-relevant social research capacities in the Western Balkans region contribute to social, economic and institutional reforms in the individual countries as well as to their regional integration”. The guidelines for RRRP Research Projects in the current RRPP Call for 2012 clarify this: “The RRPP provides funding for research projects in the social sciences conducted by re-searchers from partner institutions in the Western Balkans, thereby fostering social, economic and institutional transition reforms in both individual countries and the region.”

Since July of 2011 and until the end of June of 2013, RRPP is in a transition phase, in which it wants to combine its support function to specific research projects with the enhancement of the political relevance of the SSRS to political reform and transition processes:

“The RRPP will continue enabling and strengthening regionally relevant social science research that has not reached the European and international standards yet, while bridging the gap between research and teaching, especially at public universities. It will continue providing opportunities for research cooperation in a region still marked by political tensions and mistrust. Beyond that and in order to link the research results with the current social, political and economic reforms in individual countries, it will actively engage in disseminating the relevant research results among the interested groups and policy-makers.”⁵

RRPP finances research in the following “areas of interest”: Rule of Law and Democracy, Economic Development and Social Change; Social and Economic Change and the Challenge of (new) Social Disparities; Managing Diversity (national, ethnic and religious identities, gender, youth, and minorities, incl. Roma); States, Networks and Informality. The RRPP’s funding scheme induces regional cooperation by requiring a cooperation of researchers from at least 2 countries and increasing funding per additional country taking place. Additional evaluation criteria include the “regional dimension (cooperation and networking)” as well as the “alignment with relevant initiatives for changes (regional, European, other)”.

The RRPP’s main target group are young researchers, mainly MA and PhD candidates. The programme also targets decision-makers at academic institutions in their supporting role for young researchers and as advocates for a more prominent role of SSRS in higher education and in the priorities of national policy-makers.

⁴ Wenninger A. (2010).

⁵ SDC (2011). *Western Balkans: Regional Research Promotion Programme in the field of Social Sciences (RRPP). Phase 3: 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2013. Credit proposal.* Bern.

As part of its activities, the RRPP carries out a yearly Scientific Conference. The 2012 edition's theme is "Social, Political and Economic Change in the Western Balkans" and one of its objectives – besides the possibility for academic presentation and discussion and the improvement of skills and opportunities – is a discussion between young researchers on “the current political and socio-economic situation in the region—this year will emphasize the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.” Papers to be presented can have a regional or nation-specific focus.

The current members of the Scientific Board are solely academics from outside the region. Out of the Steering Board members, two out of 4 are from regional institutions, but none working as an academic or in government⁶.

In a participatory evaluation (Stricker, P. and Wigger, F. (2010), RRPP's stakeholders were asked to rate the programme's biggest impacts:

- The highest programme impact is seen in the contribution to inter-regional (Western Balkans) communication and cooperation, as there previously seemed to be a nearly complete “lack of international cooperation in research”.
- The second important impact is the contribution to national communication and cooperation. RRPP stakeholders consider the RRPP to make a substantial contribution to the building-up and creation of a previously non-existent national network in the social sciences sector and the launch of a platform for exchange and interchange at national level.
- Development of advocacy and lobbying for social research is ranked as the weakest part of the impact the RRPP, as this is an activity that was not to be immediately carried out.

RRPP policy dialogue

As part of its repositioning, RRPP will also more actively seek a policy dialogue “regarding the status of social science research in the region, thus also including governmental bodies into its activities aiming at influencing systemic changes in the long run”:⁷

During the period of January – June 2011, the RRPP LCU in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia have organised National conferences on the status of social sciences and research in their respective countries. These events were partly supported by the responsible ministries (Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia) or even co-organised in cooperation with them, as was in the case of Albania. The events included policy makers from universities and ministries but also RRPP researchers, including those from NGOs and offered a first platform for opening a discussion on the status of social sciences and the main problems which need to be tackled as soon as possible. [These main problems include “insufficient influence of research results on defining national policies and strategies” and “ideological and political manipulation of social sciences”. Systemic changes would include “a better status of social sciences: more funding, inclusion of research as an indispensable part in the university curricula, setting-up of doctoral studies, etc.”]. The SDC Coordination Offices in the region are in a position to significantly contribute to this process.

Several of RRPP's expected outcomes and impacts tie into the policy arena:

⁶ SDC personnel in Serbia and Open Society Fund personnel in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁷ SDC (2011). *Western Balkans: Regional Research Promotion Programme in the field of Social Sciences (RRPP). Phase 3: 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2013. Credit proposal.* Bern.

- Expected outcome and impact A: “Sustainable transition-relevant social research capacities in the Western Balkans region contribute to social, economic and institutional reforms in the individual countries as well as to their regional integration.”
- Expected outcome and impact C: Research results are relevant and can be used to support the transformation process and policy making at various levels.”
- Expected outcome and impact D: The utility of social science research promoted through the programme is recognised by both the regional research community and policy makers. The capabilities of researchers and research institutes to develop contacts with relevant governmental institutions and advocating activities for social sciences have been strengthened and the linkage between applied research in social sciences and the policy making process has become stronger.”
- Expected outcome and impact E: Additional funds are made available due to the attractive programme structure, promoting gender and the five principles of governance⁸, as a transversal theme”.

In the RRPP Call 2012, only one of the 10 criteria ties into a wider policy role: “regional dimension (cooperation and networking), alignment with relevant initiatives for changes (regional, European, other), inclusion of at least two countries as research object”.⁹

For Serbia, the goals of the policy dialogue relate both to the “improvement of scientific production quality in the field of social sciences” and “securing that social science research is carried out and implemented for county’s socioeconomic development and welfare”.

A Working Group has been created to prepare a document with policy recommendations. The Working Group members hail from the Scientific Board for Social Sciences of the Ministry for Educational and Science, the Ministry itself, research centres and institutes, and university faculties. It is chaired by Professor Jovan Babic, PhD from Belgrade University’s Faculty of Philosophy, which is also the chairman of the Scientific Board for Social Sciences. A researchers’ conference with the title “State and perspectives of the research in the field of social sciences in Serbia” took place on April 14th, 2011. Out of the main challenges identified for the SRSS sector by the participants, “lack of cooperation between decision makers and researchers” deals directly with policy dialogue issues; the other challenges dealing more with SRSS-“internal” elements (quality of research, lack of cooperation and funding). The participants also made recommendations.

The first Working Group meetings are to take place in March of 2012 leading up to a policy draft to be discussed at a conference with the title “Systematic Changes for the Better Status of Social Sciences” in December of 2012. A final document with policy recommendations is to be prepared, published and disseminated by the spring/summer of 2013.

Together with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Institute of Economic Sciences in Belgrade, the RRPP Local Coordination Unit (LCU) Serbia is conducting an assessment of the levels of both scientific and research capacities in the Serbian social sciences, concurrently identifying the

⁸ Accountability, transparency, non-discrimination, participation and efficiency.

⁹ RRPP Call 2012.

salient problems faced by researchers in the region. The objective is to provide researchers with the ability to properly assess systematic changes for the betterment of social sciences and increase the capacity-building of scientific and research communities in Serbia. An online poll is being carried out to gather responses from all Serbian social sciences researchers.

The policy dialogue on the status of social research in Albania has not yet started. According to the current credit proposal, it has the following aims:

- To promote and improve social sciences in Albania;
- To collaborate with policy experts yielding policy papers;
- To sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Brain Gain Program and the Ministry of Education in Albania for the purpose of co-creating the National Conference on Social Sciences;
- To attempt to engage young researchers and to promote them in public research institutions;
- To enhance the role of social science research with policy-makers.

4. Profile of the SSRS in Serbia

Country sector information

- Public science and research is financed by slightly less than 0.30 % of GDP in 2010 and previous years – Croatia and Slovenia invest more than 1.00% in science and research. In numbers, this translates into 100 million EUR in 2008, 86.2 million Euros in 2009, and 107.5 million EUR in 2010. Public and private R&D together corresponded to 0.89% of GDP in 2009¹⁰. Basic research in social sciences accounted for 6.5% of total research expenditure in 2008 (6.5 million EUR) and 15% in 2010. Programme funding is the dominant mode of funding.
- Whereas Croatia and Slovenia have their R&D activities mostly concentrated in business enterprises (and for that matter, EU countries on average as well), in 2009 Serbia directed most of its public R&D investments into the higher education sector (54.8%), followed by the government sector (30.9%) and finally the business sector (14.3%). Combining public and private R&D investment, the higher education sector in Serbia is the source of 21% of the country's total allocation to R&D, compared to 2% in Croatia and only 0.3% in Slovenia.¹¹
- In 2010, there were 10.220 scientific publically-funded researchers in Serbia, 44.3% of which were women. According to the head count for projects approved under the new research cycle 2011-2014, 8.4% of the researchers involved are in projects in the field of social sciences and 11.2% in the field of humanities.¹²

¹⁰ As a rule of thumb, the European Union wants to raise R&D efforts in Europe to a total of 3%, out of which 1% is to be publically and 2% privately funded.

¹¹ Centre for Education Policy (2011).

¹² Combining publically and privately funded R&D, the total number of R&D personnel (FTE) in Slovenia (12,410) and Croatia (11,015) reached about the same level in 2009, both having fewer R&D personnel in total than Serbia (18,107). An average EU country had slightly below 60,000 full-time researchers. The number of researchers per million of inhabitants in Croatia and Serbia in 2009 was about 1500, while in Slovenia this number was more than 3500. Cf. Centre for Education Policy (2011).

- According to the Innovation Union Scoreboard 2011, Serbia is one of the moderate innovators with a below-average performance.

In the Basic Research Programme (BRP) for the research cycle 2011-2014:

- The Share of researchers from History, Archaeology, and Ethnology, Language and literature and Social sciences is one third (37%) of all researchers engaged.
- The total share of SSH research within the basic research programme is 30.6%; slightly less than one third of total funding of basic research.
- For the first time, young researchers were able to apply as project team leaders. From the applied 25 projects of young researchers, 24 were approved for funding.
- All 5 R&D priorities in the area of Social science and humanities are classified within EU Readiness priorities. They include the “Affirmation of the role of social sciences in formulating public policies” (Priority 1) as well as the “Support to integration processes” (Priority 2).

Key actors, donors, and networks

- Scientific research projects, in both social and technical sciences, are financed by the Serbian **Ministry of Education and Science (MES)**, established in March of 2011 as a successor to the previous Ministry of Science and Technological Development (MSTD). Contrary to Slovenia and Croatia, Serbia has up to now not created an intermediary public agency for research funding, and hence the Ministry is the key source of funding. The Ministry is authorized to provide accreditations for scientific research institutions as academic and scientific recognition. The Ministry usually finances projects for a period of four to five years, but smaller research projects can also be financed for a shorter term period. Project proposals can be submitted to the Ministry in response to its public calls or after official announcements regarding new scientific projects and research. Every two years the Ministry evaluates current projects and considers possibilities for financing additional sub-projects.

In April 2008, as part of its new strategy, the Ministry introduced new criteria for the valorisation of scientific results (criteria for reports and texts published in domestic and international journals, quotations in international publications, academic references, valorisation of project results and statistic data etc.), which have provoked quite strong negative criticism by a number of institutes and researchers who found these criteria too strict and inadequate for the Serbian context. On the other side, a larger number of scientific institutions have found these criteria necessary to be introduced in order to improve the quality of scientific research in both technical and social sciences.

A public call for co-financing of the so-called “innovation projects” has been launched in December 2011 with the MES being the responsible institution.

Centres of excellence are another means for the government to enforce selective funding, especially since a separate programme has been created to support them.

- While Slovenia and Croatia, through intermediary bodies, are exhibiting a certain interest towards their development in higher education and imposing some accountability on public universities, in Serbia universities are still left to themselves. Even the **Serbian National Council for Higher Education**, which is an independent body meant to secure constant development and advancement of the quality of higher education, is comprised solely of academics. According to a study by the Serbian Centre for Education Policy, this means that

the Serbian government has decided to transfer the mandate for reform to the academic community.¹³

- The Ministry of Education and Science disposes of a **Specialised Scientific Board (SSBs)** for Social Sciences. The different SSBs, nominated by the Ministry, support decision making-process in the Ministry's Department for Basic Research by evaluating and ranking research projects in their respective areas, reviewing their realisation, and evaluating their results. They are also responsible for the policy dialogue, suggestions and comments and other contributions during the policy development process, and can also be called upon by the Ministry to assess the quality of work of researchers.
- The **Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA or SANU)** organizes scientific conferences, lectures and art exhibitions, and has a strong publishing activity. SASA played a significant political role in the mid-1980s in providing a conceptual base for the extreme Serbian nationalism in the late 1980s.

The Academy has eight departments, including the Department for Social Sciences. The Academy has also established ten institutes related to technical sciences, history, literature and language. In terms of scientific research related to social sciences, the Academy has established two research centres with the Universities of Kragujevac and Nis.

- The Ministry of Education and Science funds 39 scientific (technical and social sciences) **institutes**, while 25 others are funded by other ministries, faculties or the business sector. Funds are allocated directly to faculties, without being channelled through universities. Faculties function as legal entities independent from their universities.

The leading public institutes, which were established by the socialist government in the former Yugoslavia decades ago, have dominated all fields of scientific research, exclusively receiving authorization and finances for research projects from the government. They have managed to maintain a monopoly in large research projects, professional staff and financial resources for a long period of time. However, policy research oriented centres, think-tanks and CSOs, established in late 90-ties and after 2000, have become competitive to the institutes, succeeding to provide competent policy analyses on various contemporary social phenomena, which are sometimes more relevant for today, appealing and socially influential than the results of research projects provided by governmental institutes. Despite this development, a constant disadvantage and quality gap exist. The reason is that, although think-tanks and study centres react quickly to investigate and analyze new social phenomena in Serbia, they do not yet have proper capacities for scientific and longer term research projects with field research, including staff, know-how, finances, and organizational capabilities.

- A public debate took place between June and September of 2009 on the "**Science and technological development strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2010-2015**", which was subsequently published in December of 2009. The therein-defined national priorities in social sciences and humanities are the affirmation of the role of social sciences in areas of public policy; the support in integrative processes (EU accession, regional and international relations); finishing major national projects (dictionary, atlas, grammar); affirmation of the national historical and cultural heritage; and the digitalization of libraries data.

¹³ Centre for Education Policy (2009).

- The **Conference of Universities** was established for the closer co-ordination of work, determining of common policies, achieving of common interests, and co-operation. The members of the Conference are all accredited Serbian universities.
- The **Parliamentary Committee for S&T Development** which reviews and proposes to the parliament the laws regulating the area of science, technology and innovation.
- The **National Council for S&T Development**, constituted in 2010 for a 5-year term, is to design and propose to the government a strategy for S&T development and to monitor its implementation. Of the 16 members of National Council (plus one chairperson), 8 are directly influenced by academia: 3 hail from research institutes (based upon a list of candidates proposed by the Serbian Association of Institutes), 3 are university professors (based upon a list of candidates proposed by the Conference of Universities) and two members are nominated upon proposal of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Council competences relevant for the SSRS include:

- oversee the situation and development of scientific research activities in the Republic of Serbia;
- issue opinions to the Minister (e.g., on procedures and methods for evaluation)
- prepare and submit annually to the Government a report on the situation in the field of science,, including proposals and suggestions for the next year;
- put forward proposals to the Minister for scientific fields, branches and disciplines for which the specialised scientific boards are set up;
- pass an act in the form of by-law and/or decisions concerning evaluation of R&D activities, accreditation of R&D organisations in general and in particular cases for centre(s) of scientific excellence;
- decide as the second instance on appeals regarding the procedure for accreditation of scientific research organisations;
- pursue international cooperation in the area of S&T and higher education.

The MES is responsible for the coordination between the National Council for S&T Development and the Specialised Scientific Boards during policy consultations and the realisation of adopted common action plans concerning SSH research activities in Serbia.

- A number of **non-governmental and non-profit organizations** (NGOs) take part in policy debates and dialogues. At the annual conference of the Civic Initiatives in February 2003, the Federation of Non-governmental Organizations of Serbia (Gradjanska inicijativa nevladinih organizacija) (FeNS) was founded. There is a certain number of NGOs which are more oriented towards policy advice in different areas of SSH, from economical issues to human rights and education. All these organisations offer their services to interested parties, including governmental agencies and/or ministries who commission analysis on specific reports. Work commissioned by public Serbian institutions is rare: at first, the NGOs were mainly supported by a number of foreign donor organizations as a support to the Serbian democratisation process. Starting in 2005, when foreign donor organisations mostly changed their focus to supporting economic development instead of human rights and democratisation issues, all of the above mentioned organisations have established capacities to be able to compete for international projects mainly in the Western Balkan region, sometimes in a wider European context.

- The interest to join the **EU** (which is now the priority of Serbian politics) strongly influences the future development strategy of the Ministry and the focus of current research projects in institutes of social science, whose prior goal in many cases is to investigate paths toward the integration of Serbia into the EU processes, and necessary changes to Serbia's juridical and market legislations towards this end. According to a report by the Serbian Centre for Education Policy, the government is highly receptive to the recommendations of the **European Commission**.
- In 2007, a Memorandum of understanding was signed between the Republic of Serbia and the European Commission, allowing Serbia to participate as an associate member in the **Framework Programme 7** (FP 7), one of the main EU-level instruments employed to support the development of the European Research Era (ERA)¹⁴.
- For 2011, R&D funds were to increase from 107.5 million EUR in the previous year to 109 million EUR, the increase due to the Innovation Fund with funds provided under the EU-funded **Instrument for Pre-Accession** (IPA).
- **UNESCO** awarded to the Centre for Education Policy, a non-governmental organisation, a UNESCO Chair in Development of Education: Research and Institutional Building, in February 2008. The purpose of the Chair is to promote an integrated system of research, training, information and documentation in the field of education. Furthermore, the Chair facilitates collaboration between experts, internationally recognized researchers and teaching staff of CEP and other institutions in Serbia.
- The **Open Society in Serbia** finances a research project entitled 'Knowledge Economy', implemented by the Centre for Education Policy.

Laws and strategies

- The 2005 **Law on Higher Education** regulates studies and curriculums, higher education activity, scientific-research work and artistic activity as well as the higher education institution bodies and staff. It also guarantees academic freedom and institutional autonomy.
- The **Act on Scientific Research Activity** (2005) defines scientific, research and innovative activities of public interest and regulates basic and applied research. It also regulates the work of the scientific and research institutions of public interest, their establishment, management and funding as well as academic qualifications for scientific research staff.
- The **Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2010 to 2015** was developed by the former Ministry of Science and Technological Development (now the Ministry of Education and Science) and adopted by the Serbian Government in 2009. It sets forth the vision of creating an innovative Serbia in which scientists attain European standards, contribute to society's overall level of knowledge, and further the technological knowledge of the economy. In terms of research capacity development, the strategy intends to stimulate the training of future PhD students, increase the number of research programmes, and expand investments in R&D up to 1.05% of national GDP until 2015. The strategy also aims to establish a clearer focus when it comes to funding

¹⁴ The EU's Framework Programme 7 covers a period of seven years (2007-2013). In total 50.5 billion EUR are provided for research funding activities. This makes FP7 the world's largest multinational research funding programme.

research activities. It aims to favour applied research over basic research by introducing utilitarian and pragmatic criteria for grant allocation. All priorities set are in the field of technology research, with the exception of “policy development” and the “affirmation of national identity”.

- Serbia’s main strategic document, **Serbia 2020**, sets the goal of reaching 2% of GDP spent on public and private R&D by 2020.

Challenges

- Permanently low public funding for activities and projects, particularly in the field and empiric research areas. The former main financial investors in scientific research in the former Yugoslavia - the Yugoslav National Army and big industrial complexes - lost their important role in economic development with the disintegration of the country.
- An already low budget for science and research is fragmented into many independent projects, while multidisciplinary and incorporated projects are missing. Financing is project-based and not institutional, which lowers long-term security. A strong competition for the Ministry’s funds is the main reason for the lack of cooperation between government-funded institutes and the faculties and their institutes. The institutes insist that scientific research remains their domain (with faculties responsible for academic education), yet also criticize the fact that they are excluded from the teaching process.
- The funds from international donors are decreasing due to a lessened donor interest in Serbia and the Western Balkans, while applications for international funds are complex and demanding. Researchers are not adequately skilled for successfully applying for the EU FP7 funds: at the end of 2010, according to MTSD statistics, out of 81 proposals submitted in the sub-programme Socio-Economic Sciences and Humanities, only one got approved for financing.
- Lack of financial and other incentives in scientific work as well as lack of openness towards new ideas and strategies leading to general passivity and apathy among institutes’ staff, keeping them away from an active public engagement.
- Simultaneously, researchers criticize political meddling in government funding decisions and a bias of the Ministry of Education and Science in favour of technological research projects.
- There is a significant communication gap between the different academic actors as well as between academia and government decisions, which leaves project expectations unclear and can lead to posterior frustrations.
- A quality and management reform of the research institutes is necessary.
- The constant “brain drain” jeopardizes the sustainability of the scientific sector, particular with regards to specialized research methodologies and mid-level and senior researchers. About 20.000 Serbs with university degrees have left Serbia since 1990 due to political challenges, low salaries, a slow career development and the lack of adequate housing. In-country researchers do not extensively cooperate with this diaspora.
- The focus on EU integration is too strong within most project frameworks; thereby other important issues for Serbia’s society receive much lesser attention.
- After a project is completed, the results are generally presented at domestic or international conferences, at a press conference or through the publication in academic journals and books.

The institutes' research teams usually do not finalize their projects with policy recommendations and advices for further social improvements, simply because that is not suggested or expected by the Ministry for Science and Technological Development, the founder of the institutes and main finance provider of their projects. The only exceptions are institutes for economics, which cooperate with business and production sectors and conduct more applied research.

According to an RRPP-commissioned study, social science researchers are fully aware of the necessity to include policy recommendations within the project framework and would be ready to accept this as an obligatory task in the project performance. However, there are no initiatives yet for such changes in project application conditions.

- The entire process of project implementation lacks proper evaluation measures. Given to the small SSRS sector, it is hard to find independent reviewers for project work and for publications. There also seem to be problems with regards to honest citing of sources.
- Low scientific productivity and visibility of Social Sciences and Humanities research: less than 1% of all Serbian scientific articles published in the Serbian Web of Science journals in 2008 were from these fields.
- Lack of foreign languages spoken by researchers.

5. Profile of the SSRS in Albania

Country sector information

- In the last years, yearly funds for scientific R&D as a whole in Albania have not exceeded 0.05% of GDP, which marks the lowest level in Europe (EU average at 1.9% of GDP). Out of this percentage, no more than 2.6% have gone to social science research.
- According to the Ministry of Education and Science programme (2007-2009), the national social sciences' projects cover the following areas: Linguistics; History; Albanian culture and tradition; Albanology; and Social sciences.
- The personnel working in social sciences comprise 13% (288 persons) of the total number of the scientific disciplines personnel. In 2003, the social sciences personnel working in the social sciences higher education sector represented 17% of the total number of employees in the sector. Researchers holding PhD degrees in social sciences comprise 13% of the total number of PhD holders/graduates in R&D in the scientific disciplines. The number of the young researchers compared to the other scientific disciplines is lower, representing only 9.2% of the total number. The number of professors and assistant professors in the social sciences is 36 or 10% of the total number in all the scientific disciplines.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Plan for 2015
Share of GDP for scientific research (%)	0.02	0.04	0.02		0.05				0.6
% of expenditures for research activities from the	2.30	1.30	0.62						

state budget in the field of education									
% of expenditure by MoES for national projects in social sciences from the total expenditure for science	2.6	0.9	1.81						
Budgetary framework for the implementation of Science and Technology Initiative (STI) (EUR)			18	14.5	21.9	18.1	27.8	20.8	31

Source: RRPP-commissioned study.

Key actors, donors, and networks

- The **Council of Ministers (CoM)** approves the scientific policies of Albania. It submits to Parliament the draft laws on scientific activities in the country and passes decisions on the establishment, dissolution and merging of research institutions. The Council of Ministers passes decisions on the distribution of the budget to the various national programmes. Furthermore, it takes decisions regarding the institutions to be part of the country's scientific research network and decides on the creation of the national scientific research centres and their statutes. The Council of Ministers approves, in principle, the bilateral and multilateral agreements in the field of science and technology.
- The CoM is advised on innovation and technology policy priority setting by the **National Council for Science and Innovation (NCSI)**, which was set up as an advisory body to the MES and the Council of Ministers. Its main role is to advise on strategies and national programmes, priority policies, and their financial resources. The Prime Minister chairs the NCSI, which has two committees: one on Business Innovation advising the Minister of Economy, Trade and Energy, the other on Higher Education and Science advising the Minister of Education and Science.
- Since the 1994 Law on Science and Technological Development, the **Council for Science Policy and Technological Development (CSPTD)** has been the body that has drafted and proposed for approval to the Council of Ministers the Science and Technological Development Policy.² The Council for Science Policy and Technological Development, chaired by the Prime Minister, consists of 15 members from the scientific community and governmental institutions. However, according to the National Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation 2009–2015, this Council has never functioned effectively or been granted the resources (e.g. a staffed secretariat) to fulfil its mandate.
- The **Council for Higher Education and Science (CHES)** was created by a 2006 amendment to the 1999 law on Higher Education. CHES was set up as an advisory body to MoES and to the Council of Ministers. Its main role is to advise on strategies, policies and priorities (e.g. to assess the compatibility of the five-year strategic plan proposed by each university with this strategy). The HE Strategy proposed to establish a small high-level (and permanent) Research Strategy Group (RSG) under CHES, responsible for developing a research strategy. According to the aforementioned strategy, the extent to which CHES-RSG duplicates the role

of CSPTD needs to be considered, though presently neither body is advising the government on STI priorities. The Council consists of 19 members: the Minister of Education and Science as its head, the Head of the Academy of Sciences, the Head of the Rectors' Conference, a representative determined by the Minister of Finance, 15 experts from different fields of science who are chosen in public competition, as well as experts of higher education, science, technology and from the private sector.

- The **Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)** defines the S&T policy and has a role of coordinator as well. The MoES is responsible for administrating the national S&T programmes, which are funded through the Public Investment Programme. As coordinator, the MoES supports S&T programmes of other ministries, drafts national S&T policy documents and prepares the budget for R&D programmes. Through its Department of Scientific Research, the Ministry drafts science and technology policies, as well as related national programmes that are in return presented to the CSPTD. In coordination with other ministries, MoES and the Academy of Sciences plan the state budget for scientific activities. The Department of Scientific Research manages and distributes funds to projects on competitive basis. It also manages funds that are generated through the technical and scientific cooperation with other countries and international organisations. It also manages a special reserve fund for important unscheduled activities and projects.
- Until 2006, the **Academy of Sciences of Albania (ASA)** was responsible for conducting scientific research, petitioning the relevant government authorities with important issues related to the situation of R&D and support global networking. Following that date, it was re-organized following the model of many other European countries: it now operates through a selected community of scientists organised in sections and no longer administers the research institutes, which were detached and integrated into the higher education system (14 institutions are now affiliated to universities, the rest to ministries¹⁵). The role of the Academy is by now limited to a representative and advisory function with regards to science and no longer does it carry out any research per se. The Academy's Social Sciences and Albanological section is divided into 7 units (Institute of Economy, Institute of Language and Literature, Institute of History, Archaeological Institute, Centre of Albanian Encyclopaedia, Institute of Folk Culture and the Centre of the Study of Arts).
- The integration of the former Academy of Sciences research institutes into the **universities** and the development of a research strategy within each institution will clearly take time. According to a RRPP-commissioned study, it was clear that the rectors, vice-rectors, deans and heads of departments in the three main universities are only now beginning to develop the foundations for the development of a strategic management of research. Research opportunities both with regards to funding and with regards to infrastructure seem to be more numerous at private universities (i.e. not in the research centres that transited toward public universities). The **Rectors' Conference** has an advisory role with regards to the undertaken research as well as with regards to cooperation with the private sector in research projects.

¹⁵ The 24 research institutions attached to ministries seem to provide mainly advisory services and conduct little research. Out of the 24, the only one that seems somehow relevant for the SSRS is the Institute of Cultural Monuments attached to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports).

- The **Albanian Parliament** is the legislative body that plays the main role in policy priority setting. Through its permanent Committee on Education and Public Information (as the Committee on Science, Innovation and Technology assessment is not yet operational), it appoints plenary Parliamentary subcommittees by field (education, science, innovation, culture, youth, and sports, visual and print media) to discuss draft laws. The Albanian Parliament is advised on setting priorities for innovation and technology policies by the Academy of Science of Albania (ASA).
- The **Agency for Research, Technology and Innovation (ARTI)** was set up in March 2010 as a budgetary legal institution under the competences of the Council of Ministers. ARTI is focused on building a modern system of science and strengthening the role of S&T in Albania. ARTI operates as a coordinating structure for national, bilateral and international programmes and projects and cooperates with different institutions in the field of R&D. Its mission is to evaluate, finance, monitor and manage programmes and projects in the fields of science, technology and innovation in Albania. ARTI contributes to the establishment of infrastructure and instruments which implement S&T policies by playing a leading role in the creation of a science and technology culture. Among others, the Agency funds projects of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) and the renewal of technological equipment of SMEs.
- The 2007 Law of Higher Education defines that **academies** offer professional higher education and creative activities, including scientific research, in specific areas of the arts, sports, public order and other professional fields. The new LHE also provides for **interuniversity centres** to develop and promote scientific research programs and projects and to assist in the advanced education after the first cycle of university studies; they have a structure similar to a faculty and are created by decision of the Council of Ministers at the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Science.
- The **Brain Gain programme** was set-up by the Albanian Government (60%) in cooperation with UNDP (40%) in April 2006, with the aim of assisting Albanian scientists working abroad to come back to work in Albania. It created 550 vacancies in higher education and scientific research institutions. To date, 82 assistant lecturers and lecturers holding MA or PhD degrees have qualified and have been hired, on the basis of open competition, at public and private universities. The programme is also promoting the educational reform applied in the universities. The main partners in the programme implementation are the Council of Minister, MoES, ONE UN, IOM, students' organisation and diaspora organisations. The programme was suspended due to budget cuts in July 2011.
- On a similar note, in 2007, the Albanian government implemented a PhD study programme, **The Excellence Fund**, which supported the best PhD candidates to complete PhD studies abroad partially or fully, without restricting criteria regarding the field of study. A total number of 45 PhD students were supported by this fund during the academic year 2006-2007.
- All Albanian state universities participated in the EU's **Tempus programme** from 1992 to 1999. According to Tempus own impact evaluation, it "played a vital role in bringing the academic community into the European network of higher education institutions, mainly by supporting, re-training and upgrading the skills of the academic staff (70%- 80% of the academic staff have re-trained abroad through Tempus). Tempus has also been crucial in supporting the reform process and in the development of the capacities of the universities to

upgrade the institutional management. [...] Tempus has contributed to the harmonisation of higher education in terms of the development of a unified curriculum, with 70% of higher education institutions stating that over half of their curricula comply with the Bologna criteria due to Tempus's assistance. The programme has also been highly effective in developing human resources and in building capacities in public administration, civil society and NGOs. Moreover, it led to a greater cooperation, not just through Tempus, but more importantly, at the national level."

- Albania is part of the International Cooperation Partner Countries of the EU's **FP7**. According to the latest EU report on Albania's accession progress, "administrative capacity has been improved by the appointment of National Contact Points (NCPs) and representatives in most FP7 management committees. The NCPs have taken part in several network events and training sessions organised by the European Commission. The number of submissions has increased, but the number of successful FP7 projects funded is still low. Albania should continue its efforts in implementing the Memorandum on Association to the FP7 and in closely monitoring its participation. Further efforts are required in particular with respect to human capital building (Marie Curie Actions), involvement of SMEs in research and innovation, and scientific excellence in general."
- Within the framework of the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance funded **EU SME Project Albania**, a working group consisting of representatives of the main stakeholders of the initiative was set up to facilitate the strategic formulation process not only of the Albanian Business Innovation and Technology Strategy (BITS), but also for the functioning of the Business Relay and Innovation Centre (BRIC). In order to assure that the promotion of innovation in the private sector foreseen in the Strategy addresses the needs of end users, an active and continued participation of stakeholders is ensured through the *Business Innovation and Technology Strategy Development Group (BITSDG)*, which involves the aforementioned BRIC and representatives from METE, AIDA, ARTI, the Albanian Academy of Sciences, the Regional Development Agency Network and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) of Tirana.

Laws and strategies

- The **National Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)** of June of 2009 stipulates the governmental plans to increase public spending on research to 0.6% of the GDP by 2015, to increase the share of gross expenditure on R&D from foreign sources (EU programmes, e.g. FP7, and international donors) to cover 40% of all research spending in the years 2010 to 2015, to create four to five Albanian Centres of Excellence in Science (ACES), to double the number of researchers through "Brain Gain" incentives and training of new researchers (establishment of graduate schools, training of 500 PhDs), to increase the innovation activities of 100 companies, and to create a National Technology Programme.

Challenges

- Shortages of qualified researchers inside Albania, due to brain drain and numerically insufficient education of new generation of researchers.
- Lack of cooperation with the government.
- Lack of cooperation between CSOs and research associations.

- Lack of a local agenda by CSOs, which prioritizes social research projects, due to the overdependence on funds by the other international organizations.
- Need for improved human capacities that can do research in the social sciences.
- Insufficient infrastructure (mainly in higher education institutions) to conduct research.
- Fragmentation of social research projects.
- Insufficient attention by the government, in terms of support and recognition, towards independent scientific research framing models of competition for positions in higher education. According to an RRPP-commissioned research, “low salaries of the professors (at the public universities) and the fact that research was not considered part of their contribution to the university (only teaching was) has led many of them to conduct independent social research in cooperation with the local and/or international civil society organizations and not as a part of the university.”
- According to the latest EU report on Albania’s accession progress, the implementation of the National Strategy on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) 2009–2015 has been rather slow. The establishment of centres of excellence is still under consideration and only very limited action has been taken to improve mobility of scientists. The database of scientists working in the country has been updated, but the database of Albanian scientists working abroad still needs to be set up. Albania has nominated its observer delegates to all the ERA governance bodies, but is not attending on a regular basis due to lack of administrative capacity. The amount of investment in research is difficult to monitor due to the lack of reliable statistics on science and technology.”

6. Western Balkans in general – Donors and international network

WBC-INCO.NET, an FP7 funded project running from 2008 to 2013 with a total of 29 project partners, aims at the enhancement of the integration of Western Balkan Countries in the European Research Area (ERA). The project supports the **Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan** countries in the facilitation of interaction between the Western Balkan countries, the EU Member States, states associated to the Framework Programmes for RTD and the European Commission; meetings take place twice a year. Its core objectives are to support the bi-regional dialogue on science and technology (S&T), to identify RTDI cooperation potentials and priorities for take-up in FP and other EU programmes, to enhance participation of WB researchers in EU projects, to analyse innovation needs and barriers in the WBC, to exchange information and best practices on innovation policies and to establish closer cooperation between research and innovation. The partners in Serbia are the Ministry of Education and Science as well as the natural sciences Mihajlo Pupin Institute; in Albania, the Ministry of Education and Science as well as the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy.

Moreover, since April 2009, all Western Balkan countries are running, together with EU member states and the European Commission, a comprehensive regional joint research funding programme (**SEE-ERA.NET PLUS**), a networking project aimed at integrating EU member states and Southeast European countries in the European Research Area by linking research activities within existing national, bilateral and regional RTD programmes.

The **Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)**, bringing together the different countries of the region, has two regional initiatives connected to the promotion of the information/knowledge- based society as part of the 15 regional initiatives of in Economic and Social Development priority area.

Two task forces have been operating under the umbrella of the RCC: The *Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital (TF FBHC)* and the *Gender Task Force*. The EU-funded *Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA)* aims to improve the level of public administration in the Western Balkans, in line with the principles of the European Administrative Space.

According to its work programme 2011-2013, it plans to develop a **Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for the Western Balkans**. The first aim of the Strategy will be to interconnect national research and innovation systems, thus promoting competitiveness of the region. The RCC shall facilitate and support the development of the Regional Strategy in close cooperation with regional and international partners. The project is to be co-financed by the European Commission.

Also according to its work programme 2011-2013, the RCC will chair a Steering group, within the so-called **Novi Sad Initiative**¹⁶, for guiding and monitoring progress of higher education structural reform which will be established under the umbrella of RCC. In 2010, in the mature phase of Novi Sad Initiative, a large consortium of higher education institutions and authorities, intimately related to the Novi Sad Initiative, received three years EC grant to build capacity for structural reform in Western Balkan Countries. Since then NS Initiative supports closely the goals of this project.

The **Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)** supports sustainable education reforms through regional cooperation. It aims at fostering shared European standards in education and training for a rapid integration of its member countries into a wider European area of education, thus contributing to the success and sustainability of the EU integration process. ERI SEE takes into account both country-specific needs and demands in education reforms, as well as present trends in the development of the envisaged European Area of Education. In June 2010, five ERI SEE member countries reaffirmed their commitment to cooperating within the ERI SEE initiative (Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) through the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Role and Organization of ERI SEE (MoU), which also sets a new framework for the transformation of ERI SEE into an international organization. The Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina also joined the MoU in 2011. Following the closure of the ERI SEE Secretariat in Zagreb, Croatia in June 2010, the ERI SEE Governing Board has accepted proposal of the Government of Serbia to become the next host country of the ERI SEE Secretariat and to designate the Centre for Education Policy (CEP) as the institution that will host ERI SEE Agency in the interim period, prior to the opening of the new ERI SEE Secretariat in Serbia.

¹⁶ The Novi Sad Initiative is a European bottom-up initiative addressing questions of structural reform in higher education with a special emphasis on Western Balkan Region. Since 2009 Novi Sad Initiative operates under the umbrella of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), and its goals have been included in the RCC plan for 2011-1013.

The **Norwegian Research Council**'s programme NORGLOBAL, through its "European Integration in Higher Education and Research in the Western Balkans" project, supports regional social science research in the Western Balkans (with a priority to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo) that focus on sustainable economic development and institutional and democratic reforms that are important for the process in these countries' Euro-Atlantic integration. Projects that study the effects of environmental changes in this region may be considered. The project is jointly implemented by the Department of Educational Research of the Faculty of Educational Sciences (PFI) and the Centre for European Studies (ARENA) at the University of Oslo, the University of Zagreb, the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Belgrade and the Norwegian Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFUSTEP) and the Centre for Education Policy.

With the programme's support, the conference "European Integration in Higher Education and Research in the Western Balkans" will take place in Zagreb in May of 2012.

The programme also supports the so-called Knowledge Base (<http://www.herdata.org>), which has the aim to gather and systematize information and data on higher education and research in the Western Balkan countries, i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and to act as a resource centre for researchers, policy makers, as well as other stakeholders, such as higher education institutions, students, general public etc., from the Western Balkans and beyond.

The 25th annual conference of the **Consortium of Higher Education Researchers (CHER)** will take place in Belgrade in September of 2012 and will be organized by the Centre for Education Policy (CEP) and the Centre for Education Policy Studies of the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Education (CEPS). For the first time since its foundation, the CHER conference will take place in the Western Balkans.

7. Understand the SSRS: Bringing together systems theory and political economy analysis

While the previous chapters looked at factual information concerning the Albanian and Serbian SSRSs, the present chapter will take a methodological approach at the sector, as societal complexity requires a deepened theoretical understanding of society and of its subsystems. For this, it will use a combination of systems theory and political economy analysis – the former to highlight the boundaries of the different subsystems that are relevant for a systemic analysis and the definition of entry points and intervention strategies, the latter to be able to understand the power relations that exist inside each subsystem and between the different subsystems.

Using systems theory to characterize the SSRS and other societal subsystems

According to Niklas Luhmann, social systems are systems of communication, and society is the most encompassing social system. A system is defined by a boundary between itself and its environment, dividing it from an infinitely complex exterior. By a process of complexity reduction (selecting only a limited amount of all information available outside), the interior of the system becomes a zone of reduced complexity. Systems theory thus understands social systems as an operatively closed

process of social communication. Based on the factual information gathered, relevant systems regarding social sciences in Albania and in Serbia include:

- The social science and research sector (SSRS) is the system bringing together the various core actors and institutions of social sciences – i.e. researchers, research institutions and research support institutions. For the purpose of the on-going assessment, it is one of the core systems under consideration.
- The political system is comprised of national, regional and local decision-makers. It holds the key to the financial resources necessary for adequate research resources. Additionally, as the “area” of political decision-making, the system is a potential prime destination of knowledge created and gathered by SSRS activities.
- Regional and international research networks are composed of SSRS peer networks across national boundaries. They are attractive to national SSRS for both practical research activities (increased cooperation and funding) and status purposes (increasing the recognition and visibility of the SSRSs among peers, which would also allow to deal with brain drain challenges).
- Additional systems include the private sector, legal system, and the cultural sector, each composed by corresponding practitioners.
- Finally, the general public itself represents itself a system. With regards to the SSRS, the general public is understood as persons not carrying out research, or following research, on a professional basis. The SSRS can give it better approaches and tools to deal with a troubled past and an uncertain present and future.

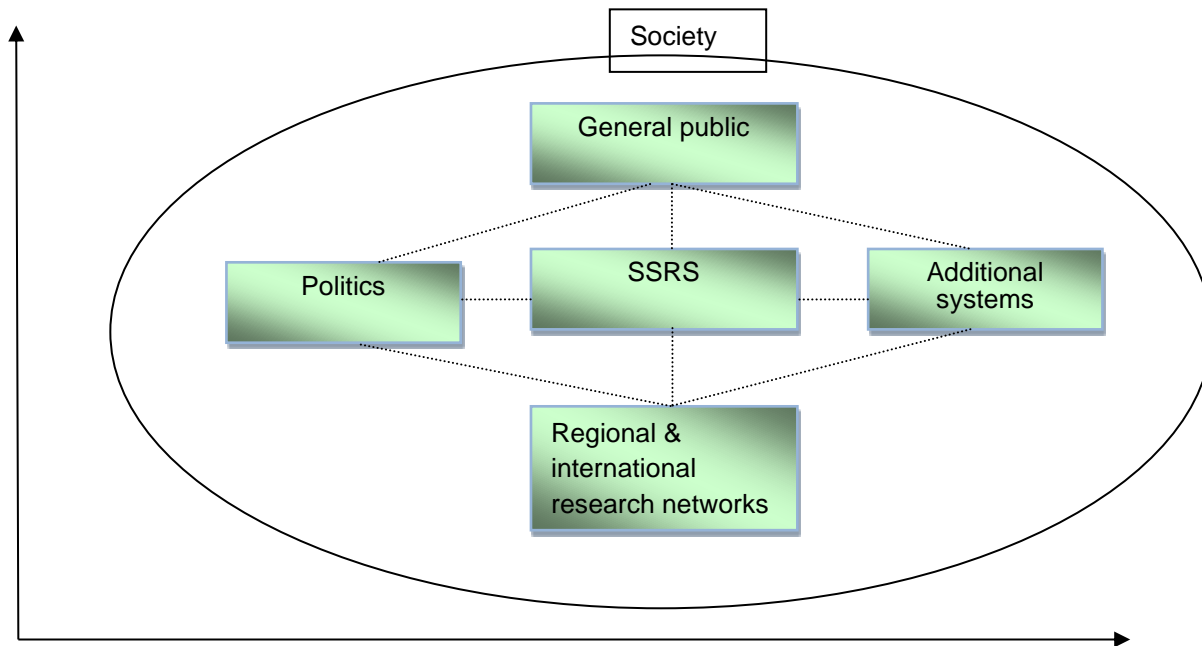
Particularly in transitioning societies like Albania and Serbia, SSRS have a particular role to play; as illustrations from other contexts, witness the role of SSRS in Germany in the dealing with the past or transitional justice advocacy in South America. The SSRS fulfil several important and complementary roles with regards to the reform processes in the countries and societies they work in:

- Evidence-based analysis and contribution to public discussions and public reforms: In a context of political tensions due to malfunctioning of institutions and dogmatic dominant coalitions, the sector can objectivise discourses by feeding in evidence-based knowledge. This includes undertaking the necessary critical analysis of the past, so as to not let unfounded affirmations undermine democratically legitimized reform efforts.
- Contributing towards the fostering and the development of an active citizenry and of public accountability: Through the knowledge it generates, the sector contributes towards a more informed citizens, improving meaningful political participation and decision making on reforms. Through its work, it also constitutes a necessary check on the effects of the institutional framework, governance practice and the involvement of the private sector and civil society organisations.
- Contribution to competitiveness: The sector can contribute towards the necessary reflection on how to improve the countries’ economy and open it to the rest of Europe (and to the world) in a beneficial way.

Conditions for an effective SSRS impact include:

- Quality and relevance (as well as timing) of the carried-out research;
- A critical SSRS mass so that communication into other subsystems is feasible and effective;

- Recognition of SSRS expertise by politics and general public, which leads to knowledge being sought and SSRS experts being involved in decision-making
- Cooperation between the SSRS and other systems, particularly regional and international research networks and the general public.



Political Economy characteristics of power relations inside and between the subsystems

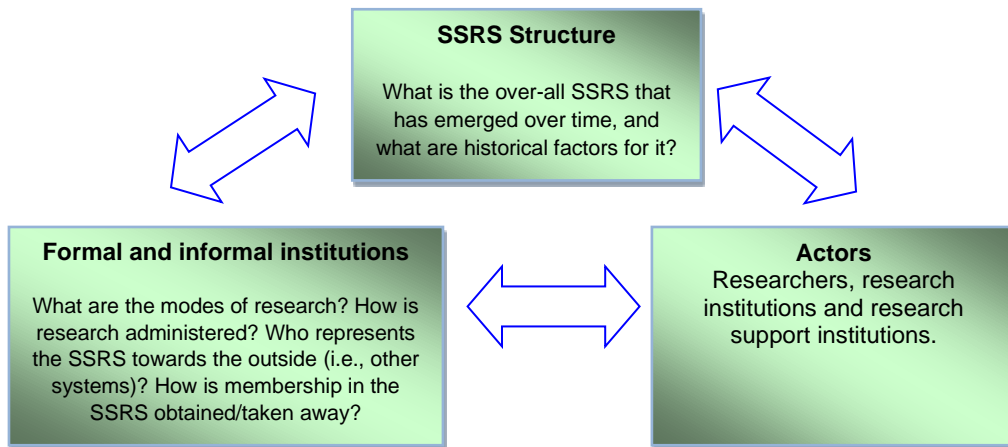
Inside a given system, power relations are influenced by three interrelated factors:

- Structures that have grown over time;
- Formal and informal institutions, which are ruled followed by the system's actors and contain rules on interconnection with other systems. The rules are negotiated and changed by the actors themselves.
- The systemic actors themselves.

In the power relationships inside the overall system, those three factors come up again. In an ideal constellation, the SSRS fosters and deepens the auto-reflective capacities of the societies they are related to, while maintaining a healthy degree of autonomy in order to guarantee the objectivity of research and potential advocacy and recommendations. However, the connections between the different subsystems (be they interconnection or interdependencies) can be functional or dysfunctional (i.e., alternatively too weak or too strong). As a concrete example, a too-strong interconnection between science and politics can bring the former into a dependency position vis-à-vis the latter; however, a disconnection can have a similar negative effect. Thus, „institutions of research and tertiary education are not seen as “insular” entities, but performing the functions of autonomy, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in their relationships towards the state, market and society at large. These functions also serve as benchmarks of comparison in a policy cycle”.¹⁷ To

¹⁷ Marko, J., and Unger, H. (2010).

give a concrete example with regards to power relations, SSRS actors will thus be negotiating with political actors, inside the institutional framework of the political system, on their access to research resources and the recognition and acceptance of their resource results. This permanent negotiation is captured in the concept of so-called “policy networks”.



Example: power relations inside the SSRS

Work hypotheses resulting out of systemic theory and political economy analysis

If academia in general and the SSRS in particular are to play their full role in society, the core issue is how an SSRS status improvement can lead to relevant academic input to the policy-making process, i.e. how the political relevance of SSRS can be increased. Regarding the SSRS, this means looking at how research results and reflections can be injected into the current power relations inside Serbian and Albanian decision-making structures in the public and in the private sector. This would presuppose altering structural context conditions, rules and institutions and the interaction between the relevant stakeholders that support or impede a political reform process; a paramount issue is the question how reforms are re-distributing power and resources¹⁸ between different stakeholders and interest groups.

Work hypothesis regarding academia / SSRS: The SSRS becomes politically relevant once it can overcome the separation/exclusion of SSRS.

- Does the current structure of the SSRS system guarantee its relevancy for future transition processes?
- How can an effective transmission channel from social science research into the policy-making process be created? This could, along other input, be through a better communication from existing centres or a partnership with civil society organizations?
- Is an academic role as a “spectateur engagé” a feasible option with regards to academia’s views on its own role in politics and society?

¹⁸ The concept of resources goes beyond material resources and includes non-discrimination and equality, the access to knowledge, justice and political participation in decision making.

- Is academic ready to accept more public oversight in exchange for more funding, also with regards to its experience with political meddling in academic work?
- How can the regional and international aspirations of academia be combined with a national policy advice role?
- What are new topics the SSRS could work upon (empirical social research, policy impact estimations)?
- Are the academia's research and dissemination topics and methods compatible with the requirements and needs of decision-makers?
- Is it possible to include civil society and the private sector more in social science research and reflection? How does academia see its interaction with civil society (incl. civil society research organizations) and media with regards to public oversight and to the generation and diffusion of policy-making input?
- How can an independent, deductive research be guaranteed that effectively informs policy-making and does not serve as a rubber stamp for it?

Work hypothesis regarding decision-makers and policy-making: Decision-makers stand to benefit from accrued and more systematic SSRS input, as long as they can accurately and realistically frame their demands.

- What is the demand for objective information?
- What are research topics relevant for politics and policy-setting?
- What are the available additional finances and the political will to employ them for the SSRS?

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