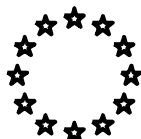


2001

**EXTERNAL MONITORING REPORT
ON THE
SPECIFIC PROGRAMME
FOR
RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL
DEVELOPMENT**



IN THE FIELD OF

**IMPROVING THE HUMAN RESEARCH
POTENTIAL AND THE SOCIO-
ECONOMIC KNOWLEDGE BASE**

The report consists of two parts:

Part A: *External monitoring report prepared by the following independent external experts:*

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Part B: *Responses of the Programme management to the external monitoring report.*

PART A:

Report of the external Monitoring Panel

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2. PANEL METHODOLOGY	2
3. INTRODUCTION	2
4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	6
4.1 STRATEGY – OBJECTIVES	6
4.1.1 <i>Progress in ERA and programme implementation</i>	6
4.1.2 <i>Significant results in the European and International context</i>	7
4.1.3 <i>Participation of candidates countries</i>	7
4.1.4 <i>Participation of SMEs</i>	7
4.1.5 <i>Women and science</i>	8
4.1.6 <i>Towards a new FP: state of play</i>	9
4.2 MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSES	9
4.2.1 <i>Main management issues</i>	9
4.2.2 <i>Communication and information dissemination</i>	11
4.2.3 <i>Evaluation, monitoring and follow up on impact previous FPs</i>	12
4.2.4 <i>Impact of previous research FPs and SPs</i>	13
4.2.5 <i>Impact on less favoured regions and accession countries</i>	14
4.3 FOLLOW UP OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS	14
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	15
5.1 CONCLUSIONS	15
5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS:.....	16

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As of the year 2001 the Improving the Human Research Potential and the Socio-economic Knowledge Base (IHP) has been dismantled as a unified programme. Following the objectives set out under the European Research Area, the management of the programme has been split across four different directorates. This division has made it even more obvious how many different activities take place under the IHP banner. The Panel sees the merits of this split in light of the ERA and the 6th Framework Programme (FP6). The restructuring has however taken up a lot of valuable management time, particularly for Directorates D and K, and led to many staff vacancies that took a good part of the year 2001 to fill. In this turbulent setting the Commission services had to manage “business as usual” and in addition prepare for FP6. The Panel appreciates the huge efforts by the Commission’s Staff that went into this process.

In general terms the various parts of IHP have a valuable role to play in the European science and research community and are well appreciated. Some parts of the IHP programme have the additional mission to link research results with the policy community and the general public. We have seen various examples of these efforts, which had good visibility, not only with policy makers in the Commission but also those in the member states. Achievements have been made in all parts of the programme.

Overall the programme is well managed and practices are in place to run the process efficiently. However there are a number of concerns:

- Little has been done to define the impact that the Actions are aiming for and further to set up systems to measure these impacts
- The dissemination of results, particularly from RTD projects and studies, done as accompanying measures should be improved. More of the burden should be placed on the participants to actually provide and actively publicise the agreed deliverables. Even though a dissemination strategy is required in the proposals, these tasks are often neglected by the proposers, when projects reach their end. These deliverables would not necessarily be scientific reports only
- In 2001, the Commission services could not prepare themselves well for the implications of FP6, due to the lack of transparency in the FP6 decision making process. The problems lie not so much in the contents of the future research themes, but more in terms of the implementation of the new instruments and the consequences of FP6 in the entire management cycle. From February 2002 the Commission services could make progress on preparing for the implementation of FP6.

From a full set of recommendations listed on pages 19 and 20, the following five stand out:

- 1 Overall the IHP should put more effort into defining the desired outcomes and impacts that they envisage with their respective activities and subsequently develop assessment indicators that match these envisaged objectives. Particularly the impact of mobility schemes on the researchers and European research systems needs further examination. The Commission should be prepared to have results of the impact studies ready for the Five Year Assessment exercise
- 2 The Fellows in Research Training Networks (RTN) should more actively be encouraged to move from one laboratory to another within the network, in order to further enrich their research experience. Additionally, joint RTN courses on horizontal issues such as ethical issues or research management should be organised
- 3 A horizontal high level interface between the scientific community for social sciences and humanities and the research and innovation policy community should be developed at European level. Currently there are too few organisations supporting the position of these science areas in the ERA. Socio-economic research still needs to be reinforced at European level.
- 4 Training objectives (not training instruments such as seminars, workshops, graduate courses etc.) should be stated with clarity in all mobility proposals. The training objectives should be used in self-evaluation exercises by hosts and in the assessments included in the intermediate and final reports.
- 5 Preparations and training for the practical implementation of FP6 should cover all IHP activities. More transparency should be given to the various user groups of IHP in the changes in FP6, both in terms of contents and research management.

2. PANEL METHODOLOGY

After defining the key issues for this monitoring exercise, in accordance with the Monitoring Broad Guidelines, the Panel has used the following approaches to collect and assess information:

- Interviewed directors, heads of units, and scientific officers in the Directorates B, C, D and K
- Interviewed a small number of representatives from the National Contact Points network and the Programme Committee
- Analysed an extensive amount of documentation from the various parts of the programme and documents produced by the programme's participants
- A draft version of the report was discussed with Directors and Heads of Units
- The Panel members met on several occasions for discussion sessions in order to come to a unanimous view.

A draft Self-assessment Report of the programme's activity lines became available to the Panel in December, the final report being provided to the Panel in February. The report contained separate parts for each of the programme lines, although no synthesis for IHP as a unified programme. Documentation and background information was provided expeditiously by the Commission services at our request. The Panel members were conscious that their task was monitoring the programme and not reaching deeper conclusions reserved for mid-term-evaluations and Five Year Assessments.

3. INTRODUCTION

The Improving the Human Research Potential (IHP) programme consists of nine activity lines, each with different objectives, target groups, and support mechanisms:

- Supporting Training and Mobility of Researchers is divided between:
 - Marie Curie Fellowships (MCF)
 - Research Training Networks (RTN)
 - High Level Scientific Conferences (HLSC)
- Enhancing Access to Research Infrastructures (ARI)
- The Key-action: Socio-economic Research (KA)
- Public Understanding of Science and Technology, which includes three prizes (Descartes, Archimedes and the EU Contest for young scientists)
- Women and Science
- Support for the Development of Scientific and Technological policies in Europe, made up of:
 - Strategic Analysis for Specific political issues (STRATA) and
 - Common Basis of Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CBSTII)

At the start of the 5th Framework Programme (FP5) most of these activities were pulled together under one umbrella: the IHP programme, which for the most part were run by the former Directorate F. With the recent restructuring of DG Research along the lines of the European Research Area, the nine activity lines were separated again and restructured into four different directorates. Directorate B is in charge of ARI (Access to Research Infrastructures), Directorate C is in charge for Public Understanding and Women and Science. Directorate D is in charge for Fellowships, RTN and HLSC. Finally, Directorate K which is in charge for Key Action Socio-economic research, STRATA, CBSTII and the co-ordination of the integration of the socio-economic dimension in the FP5.

In this sense the IHP programme has ceased to exist in a unified structure.. The year 2001 particularly marked by this organisational restructuring. Some units, particularly those in Directorate D, have seen a significant turnover of (senior) staff. Although in terms of the content of the work this restructuring meant little change, since the activity lines operated quite independently. Directorate K was newly structured to include all activities in FP5 dealing with socio-economic research. This was the key-action for Socio-Economic Research, complemented by STRATA and CBSTII, which came from the former AP5 unit and a unit attached to the DG, respectively. Directorate K is also in charge of several horizontal tasks for DG Research, such as the co-ordination of the Lisbon strategy, foresight, analysis and co-ordination of the

socio-economic dimension of the FP5. The latter leads to the Annual report on “The Integration of the Socio-economic Dimension in the Fifth Framework Programme”. This activity could be the building block for the integration of the socio-economic dimension in FP6. We will briefly discuss each of these Action Lines one by one. An overview of key data is provided in Table 1 in Annex 1.

Supporting Training and Mobility of Researchers

The activities under this banner, all in Directorate D, aim to contribute to enhancing the human factor aspects of the European Research Area. The year 2001 was a very busy year in the area of training and mobility. In accordance with FP5 there were five different deadlines for the Marie Curie (MC) Fellowships, one for the High Level Scientific Conference (HLSC) and one for the Research Training Networks (RTN). The total amount of funds available for these calls was 386 M€ Marie Curie Host Development Fellowships have been extremely popular; although the success rate was only 10% for the first call, it increased to approximately 35% for the second and last calls under FP5.

The specific objectives for the above mentioned activities are listed in the work programme. As examples one can mention that for the MC Fellowships the objective was to fund 8620 fellowship-years and for the RTN activity it was to create about 75 networks per 100M€ of financing, which would involve 600 research teams and provide about 1800 person-years of training for young researchers. With the exception of MC Training Sites Fellowships (which met 95,5% of its objectives for the year), the objectives for the different activities have been fully met. For the MC Training Sites Fellowships all the proposals that reached the evaluation threshold were financed and the decision was taken to transfer 2 M€ out of the planned 44 M€ from the Training Sites to the MC Individual Fellowships of the following year. The Panel agrees with this decision.

Enhancing Access to Research Infrastructures

The general objectives of the action “Enhancing Access to research Infrastructures” (ARI) are:

- To sponsor new opportunities for trans-national access to major research infrastructures of community-wide interest
- To stimulate infrastructure operators and users to work together in order to make more effective use of research infrastructures and to improve their service to the scientific community
- To arrange co-ordinating, supporting and accompanying actions that ensure consistency with related actions undertaken in other specific programmes.

The programme’s committed budget was not sufficient to support all proposals that were recommended for selection. A batch of proposals had to be transferred to the 2002 budget in order to allocate funding to them. ARI has been increasingly open to newcomers, an issue for which the programme was criticised in the past. In the 3rd call (2001) approximately half of the selected proposals were from newcomers. The Panel is pleased with this development.

The Key Action: Socio-Economic Research

The objective of this key-action is to improve the understanding of the structural changes taking place in the European Society in order to identify ways of managing change and to involve European citizens more actively in shaping their own futures.

The self assessment report stated that “the key strategic objective of the key-action was to promote the development of European research communities in the social sciences and the humanities, and to link these communities with policy concerns”. The choice of themes was in agreement with this assertion. In the 2nd call, the themes were:

- Improving management of societal change
- Individual and collective strategy in a changing society
- Employment and unemployment in Europe
- Social cohesion
- Learning (new perspectives)
- Governance, citizenship and European integration
- Challenge of EU enlargement.

In the third and final call for FP5 the focus is on “Europeanisation” of socio-economic research and responding to the European Research Area. The object of this call is to prepare the research community for the themes of FP6.

Important activities in 2001 were:

- Organisation and documentation of European Presidency conferences, in particular for the Swedish Presidency on “Europe with a Human face”, and for the Belgian presidency on “The contribution of the social sciences and the humanities to the European Research Area”.
- A number of dialogue workshops between scientists and policy makers
- A review of results from clusters of projects

Raising Public Awareness

The main objective of ‘Raising Public Awareness of Science and Technology’ is to bridge the gap between science in its European dimension and the public. In particular, the activities envisaged are aimed at raising public awareness of scientific activities and technological developments undertaken at the European level and in European research programmes.

As part of this action line there are 3 different contests: the Descartes prize, the Archimedes Prize and the European Union Contest for Young Scientists.

The Descartes prize was initiated in the year 1999, and first awarded in 2000. The Panel has some concerns about the overall public exposure of this activity and whether the Commission has effective follow-up mechanisms to determine whether the Descartes Award system is reaching both its short and long-term goals. Directorate C should commission a study for the identification of suitable indicators to be used to assess the effectiveness of the programme’s exposure to the European public. It should also explore the reasons behind the decrease in the number of proposals it received this year, 54 proposals compared to 115 in the first year.

The main objective of the Archimedes Prize is to combine University studies with RTD, aiming to produce a quality necessary to compete at the international level. The target group is undergraduate students of higher education institutions in Europe. The number of proposals received has been disappointingly low, only 56 entries for the 2001 call. Of these 50 were eligible and 10 prizes were awarded. The low number of entries may, to some extent, be explained by the fact that the Archimedes Prize addresses different, and rather narrow domains/themes every year. The Commission feels that it may be due to the fact that students with Master degrees are not eligible to participate. A further drawback is that there are no national contests in place on which to base this activity. The Panel feels that if the Commission wishes to reform this activity, it should become a thematically open competition, while retaining the philosophy that the entries have a strong societal dimension.

The Panel notes that another way to proceed would be to try a different approach to encourage young people to be sensitised for research. The Commission could look into the possibilities of targeting younger age groups i.e. secondary school students (11-15 year olds) and high school students (15-19 year olds). For secondary school students national science fair projects could represent a fun way of learning about science and could be seen as a catalyst of an interest in research projects. For high school students high standard European summer courses or schools could be inspirational for a future career choice as a researcher.

The EU Young Scientists Contest, based on national contests, took place for the thirteenth time in 2001. A total of 90 contestants aged 15-20 from 35 countries displayed 60 projects in Bergen (Norway). 32 contestants were awarded different prizes. The Panel feels that such a contest presents participants with valuable networking possibilities.

Women and Science

Unit 5 Women and Science of Directorate C – is part of the IHP programme, and has been successful in putting gender issues on the agenda both inside and outside the Commission. The activities of the Unit have achieved many results and good visibility.

- On May 2001, the Commission services issued a working document entitled “Women and Science: The gender dimension as a leverage for reforming science” which suggests a strategy for women and

science and highlights that the gender dimension is at the core of the Science and Society issue, which in turn is itself at the core of the European Research Area

- The Council resolution of 3rd of July 2001 on Science and Society and on Women in Science invites the Commission to continue and intensify its efforts to promote the role of women in science and technology. The resolution also ensures an effective mainstreaming of the gender dimension whilst implementing the Sixth Framework Programme and developing the European Research Area.

In addition to creating a Policy Forum on the issues, the Unit has been active in establishing a Gender Watch System. Examples of this system are the collection of gender specific data from proposal forms, and the creation of a data-base on gender equality in the Framework programme.

No fixed budget has been allocated to this action, but instead funds were negotiated between the directors of IHP with funding for Accompanying Measures relabelled for this activity. This has not caused any problems in 2001, and the Unit has received good support from the hierarchy in the Commission. In order to have sustainability of Gender and Science issues, this Action Line should be allocated a dedicated budget under FP6. Although mainstreaming the gender issue is important, dedicated activities remain necessary.

Support for the Development of Scientific and Technologic Policies in Europe

The two IHP activity lines under this label are STRATA (Strategic Analysis for specific political issues), run by Unit K1 and CBSTII (the Common Basis of Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators) run by Unit K2. In addition to these two IHP activities both Units are responsible for non-IHP tasks.. The Unit K2 has been very active in providing background material and data for ERA, particularly for benchmarking and mapping excellence.

The objectives of **STRATA** are:

- To enable considered reasoning by researchers and Research Technology Development and Innovation (RTDI) policymakers alike via dialogue
- To improve the efficiency of the European policy development process at local, regional, national and international level, as well as interactions with other related policies. The aims are to stimulate innovation in RTD projects, to collaborate with those responsible for policy development and foresight initiatives, and to contribute to the co-ordination of policy and policy related research at the European level.

The Panel feels that the objectives are appropriate and important. However their realisation is difficult due to different approaches, which reflect national idiosyncrasies.

The K1unit, established in 2001, has organised many expert group meetings, workshops and conferences. The implementation of these activities seems to be appropriate. Conferences were organised in co-operation with different partners, examples being a conference on scientific and technological foresight in Stockholm, and one on regional scientific and technological foresight in Dublin to present the results from the FOREN project.

The call of 2001 received more interest from the research community than that of 2000 (which already received an increased number of proposals compared to the call of 1999). In fact, the total number of participants grew from 153 from the 2000 call to 268 in 2001. These participants came from 30 countries and 3 international organisations, compared to, respectively, 24 and 2, in 2000. Assessment of outcomes and impacts of newly contracted projects is premature, therefore the Panel can not comment on this matter.

CBSTII is run by Unit K2. The Unit was transferred to Directorate K in 2001 in order to improve interaction with socio-economic research. In 1999 and 2000 the initial implementation stages of CBSTII were realised and consisted of studies resulting from open calls for tenders, supported by a top down approach. These studies were aimed at providing input to the 3rd S&T Indicators Report and addressing certain S&T indicator problems in depth. The revision of the work programme at the end of 2000 gave a mandate for a CBSTII call for proposals and the use of a more bottom up approach in 2001. In the context of the ERA and within the overall objectives of CBSTII 4 themes were specified for the call for proposals. These themes were:

- New indicators for the European Research Area
- Linking indicators of S&T, innovation and economic performance
- Indicators of dynamics, inertia and efficiency of research and innovation systems and policies in Europe
- New approaches and indicators for the qualitative analysis of S&T.

The absolute number of proposals received and resulting selected projects was very low, presumably reflecting the small number of experts in this particular field.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 STRATEGY – OBJECTIVES

4.1.1 Progress in ERA and programme implementation

Some IHP actions operating at the heart of the ERA philosophy (the mobility schemes and research infrastructures in particular) are preparing themselves for the new implementation under FP6. These actions represent the components of IHP that will not be effected a great deal by the new instruments. The IHP activity that will be most effected by FP6 is the Key-action. The key-action developed a strong anticipatory strategy in preparation for the European Research Area in social sciences and humanities, and the transition towards FP6. This was achieved by dedicating the last and biggest call for proposals to these objectives. One unique feature was that within the remit of IHP, the call had elements of FP6, such as including for the first time Research Infrastructures for the Social Sciences. The process of evaluation of the results of this call, is currently taking place, although the interest in terms of the number of proposals and the spread over research themes suggests that it has been well received by the research community.

The Panel believes that the Commission services are preparing well in terms of the change in contents of the activities. However in terms of preparing for the changes in management, including issues such as managing and evaluating the new instruments, and managing much larger budgets with the same number of staff, the Panel sees little evidence of progress in 2001. This is partly due to the unclear decision procedures in the highest political levels. The Panel has also established that at the start of 2002 progress has been made in preparing the staff for the consequences of FP6, a challenge that will require a strong investment in management and communication.

A recent communication “A mobility strategy for the European Research Area” (COM(2001) 331 Final), addresses ways of creating a favourable environment for the mobility of researchers in the ERA. The actions include improving information on mobility (development of a European Research Mobility Web Portal), improving the provision of practical assistance to researchers (Mobility Centres etc), and enhancing qualitative issues, legal improvements and financial incentives at local, regional, national and Community level. Some of these actions have been launched in 2001. The Commission intends to use a scoreboard to monitor the development of the above mentioned actions at national and Community level.

The Working Document ‘A European Research Area for Infrastructures’ states that “A research Community operating at the cutting edge of science and technology needs state-of-the-art infrastructures”. It is exactly this element of science policy that fits the philosophy of ERA very well: large scale and unique research infrastructures typically need co-ordination at the transnational level. Therefore 2001 was the year that ARI reaped the results from being at the centre of the ERA debate, and in this sense, DG Research’s reorganisation, pulling ARI away from other IHP activities, seems a logical choice.

The ARI Unit started preparing for ERA and FP6 by calling together a High Level Expert Group, which had the mandate to examine mechanisms that are developed to support policy making for research infrastructures in Europe. The scope of this group is therefore much wider than the ‘Access to Research Infrastructures’ activity alone and thus exceeds IHP. This Expert Group, chaired by the Director responsible for “Structuring the European Research Area” (Directorate B), held three meetings in 2001 and issued a report in February 2002. The expert Group recommended that Member States set up a *European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures*. The advisory process and its recommendations are very much in line with the ERA spirit. Its impact on preparation of FP6 is less direct.

4.1.2 Significant results in the European and International context

The IHP programme does not rely on large-scale RTD projects with a mix of scientific and industrial partners. Instead a large part of the support relates to individual researchers (Marie Curie Fellowships,, ARI, Archimedes, and Young Scientist Prizes). Its RTD results, not being the primary deliverable, are therefore less visible to the outside world, and as little impact monitoring has been done on the training impact, there is not much evidence of significant results. Those activities of IHP that do have more visibility and can be identified as significant results, are activities which in general involve major publications, conferences and policy work. The Panel would like to specifically highlight the following:

- The Policy Forum activities of the Women and Science Unit, which led to the development of the Helsinki Group of civil servants, the ‘Gender in Research’ Conference in Brussels, and several Gender Impact Studies. These activities have helped in establish the Gender issue as part of the policy agendas of the member States
- The launch of a High Level Expert Group on Research Infrastructures, where the Commission has played a facilitating role in defining a more co-ordinated European policy for Infrastructures
- The High Level Group on obstacles to mobility in the ERA, which report of April 2001 formed the basis of the Commission’s Mobility Strategy and which was subsequently discussed in two large policy conferences (An enlarged Europe for researchers-June 2001 and the Belgium Presidency Conference on RDT – September 2001)
- The implementation of the horizontal task of integrating the socio-economic dimension into other DG Research areas, leading to the annual report “The socio-economic dimension in the Fifth Framework Programme, and
- The publication of the “Regional Foresight Special Report” which is widely spread over European regions.

4.1.3 Participation of candidates countries

Participation from candidate countries varies between the different action lines, though overall seems satisfactory.

- STRATA shows an increased participation of the candidate and associated countries, reaching 57 participants from 14 non-EU countries in 2001, compared to 17 and 10 respectively in 2000
- The Key-action’s second call has 76 teams from candidate countries in the 71 proposals funded, on average this represents more than one participant from candidate countries per proposal
- For the two deadlines of Individual MCF in 2001, 225 proposals out of 1653 came from nationals of the candidate countries. The overall selection rate of proposals by applicants from all nationalities was 38,1%, while candidate countries’ success rate was 32,4%
- In the 2001 RTN call, some 517 institutions from Associated Countries applied, 129 are participating in proposals that were selected for funding, including 4 as co-ordinators
- From the Raising Public Awareness’ third call, 8 proposals out of a total of 63 had co-ordinators from accessing countries. The 63 proposals included 76 partners (16,2%) from accessing countries
- Among the winners of the Descartes Prize in 2001 there was one team from the Czech Republic and another from Russia, as partners in European prize winning networks
- Among the 11 winners of the 10 Archimedes prizes for 2001 4 of them were nationals of candidate countries i.e. two Hungarians, one Czech and one Slovene
- Helsinki group, an outcome of the Women and Science activity, was set up not only with representatives of the member states but extend it to all countries associated to FP5

4.1.4 Participation of SMEs

The IHP programme is not particularly pertinent for direct participation by SMEs. The only activity of the programme that does involve SMEs is the Marie Curie Industry Host Fellowships scheme. About one third of the 210 eligible proposals received in 2001 came from SMEs. The number of proposals from SMEs

increased from 47 in 1999 to 72 in 2001, although the success rate for SMEs continues to be disappointingly low. In 2000 26% of the SME proposals were successful, falling to 17% in the 2001 call. That said it is perhaps unreasonable to judge SME proposals using the same evaluation criteria as in the case of large industries, as in most cases SMEs have no Research Departments, unless they work in high tech or biotechnology fields. However, they all have research questions which could be addressed by post-Doctorate (B30) industry trainees. Perhaps the Commission could develop a new mobility-training concept which would support participation of SMEs that do not have formal research departments. Actively encouraging collaboration with university labs could also be an option. to address the SME problem. The Panel also finds that more could be done to indirectly involve SMEs, for instance by inviting them to dissemination activities or to workshops of the Research Training Networks. We have no data on how often this actually occurs, but the Commission could stress this as part of the research team's dissemination plans. Finally, the Panel feels that boosting SME participation (particularly in new technology fields) in the Industry Host Fellowship programme, could increase employment prospects for research fellows, who according to the results of the FP4 Impact Study, have a very low permanent employment rate.

4.1.5 Women and science

IHP addresses the Women and Science issue in two ways: directly through its Women and Science Unit which is part of Directorate C (see above), and indirectly through other programme activities. The different action lines that form these activities vary in their gender balance.

Some findings from the IHP Action Lines are:

- At the last MC Individual Fellowship application round the success rate of women was higher than that of men for the first time. These rates were 43.5% for women compared with 40.3% for men. Concerning the Marie Curie Host fellowships, out of 1455 fellows already confirmed, 587 (40.3%) were women .
- In Training Networks 16% of co-ordinators and 12-13% of participants are women, with no significant discrepancies between proposals received and considered for funding
- Out of 1455 fellows already confirmed in the Marie Curie Host Fellowships, 587 are women, resulting in a percentage of 40% female fellows in the scheme
- The Key-action's current statistics are based on contract signatories, not on the performing scientist. In the future calls the scientist's gender will also be identified
- The gender balance is not an issue for the ARI programme: the infrastructures themselves make the selection of researchers on the basis of the quality of their proposals. Setting quota would not be beneficial to women in science.

Investigating the gender impact of research activity outcomes in various scientific sectors is a good practice and should continue. In some critical sectors, such as environment, quality of life, social policy etc., it would be useful for DG Research to have information from the research projects (perhaps in the form of a separate section in the final report) reflecting prospective impacts of outcomes on gender issues. This information will facilitate the identification of themes for gender impact studies.

The Panel would also like to note that the Key-action has supported several RTD projects that included a specific gender related topic. The second call of the key-action had a less explicit mention of gender as a cross-cutting issue. The Braithwaite Report on Gender Impact Assessment for the Key-action contained some criticism that many RTD projects could have included gender issues but did not. Researchers should be made aware of this at the start of their projects. The Unit is planning to launch a review of their research projects that will aim to record and promote research results that contribute to gender equality.

4.1.6 Towards a new FP: state of play

The consequences of FP6 are quite different for various parts of IHP:

- The Mobility schemes and ARI have their own priority lines under ‘Structuring the European Research Area’. Both have seen a considerable increase in budgets, although in terms of the contents of their work, changes will not be drastic. Consequences of managing such a big programme with the same number of staff is something for which the unit should prepare. It is also not clear how the training and mobility elements in the Networks of Excellence and the Integrated Projects will be co-ordinated with the current programme. Transparency on this should be provided as soon as possible.
- Directorate K will have direct responsibility for priority 7 “Citizens and Governance in the knowledge based society”, the activities related to foresight and scientific and technological indicators, the horizontal co-ordination of socio-economic research in FP6 and support to the development of the “Lisbon strategy”. This combination seems appropriate due to the strong links between these different dimensions. Overall the emphasis that FP5 took on socio-economic aspects of research, seems less prominent in FP6. The Panel regrets this reduced attention and would emphasise the continuing need for reinforcing socio-economic research in all parts of FP6 and a continuing role for the Commission in the ‘Europeanisation’ of the research communities in social sciences and humanities.
- The activities of Public Awareness and Woman and Science will come up in the priority line Science and Society and Education for Science and Technology.

Those parts of IHP, which will have to deal with the new instruments (Integrated projects, Networks of Excellence) do seem not well informed and/or prepared for dealing with an entirely new management concept. This situation is seen to have a negative impact on the current users of FP5 in the sense that they have been poorly informed about the coming changes.

For a future application of Article 169 it will be necessary for the Commission to work with the member states to reach an agreement on the definition of a programme. The key-action and ARI units have made a start to this consultation.

4.2 MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSES

4.2.1 Main management issues

In 2001 the IHP programme was split up according to the themes of the ERA and management responsibilities were divided among four different directorates. This in fact means the end of a unified IHP programme. Although this made no real difference in terms of content of the activities (the action lines already operated quite independent of each other), it did have an impact on IHP’s management. Changes did result in a lack of leadership for IHP as a programme, which in turn effected cohesion across the programme. This problem should be rectified during the management of FP 6 due to the way in which the activities fit into the new structure.

However with management responsibility spread over four directors, no one person is in charge of or accountable for IHP. Two disadvantages are unclear referral for the Programme Committee members and no joint operation in inter-service communications. In 2002 these have been partly corrected by setting up decision-making procedures around the Group of Directors. This will presumably speed up the time to contract as the Group of Directors replaces the Inter service consultation, thus simplifying the procedures.

The year 2001 has meant many personnel changes for some of the IHP directorates, particularly in Directorate D- *The Human Factor*. Directorate D was given a new structure, with a new Director and encountered many changes amongst the heads of units. There was also the creation of a new horizontal unit in charge of ERA, mobility, and co-ordination matters (e.g. Programme Committee, inter-service consultations, written procedures, annual report, etc.). This reorganisation led to a high mobility of people within the Directorate, which meant that each unit had to recruit and train new staff.

Another change was the decentralisation of the administrative management of contracts from the unit “Administration and Finance” to the operational units. This meant that nine staff positions have been transferred to the operational units. Advantages of this division of labour are:

- Administrative aspects of the contract are more closely co-ordinated with its scientific aspects
- The Administration and Finance Unit can concentrate on financial and legal issues and provide specialised support to other units
- Better risk management as it allows for an independent check on the financial aspects of contracts (cost statements)

With such a drastic change of organisational structure one runs the risk of losing good management practices that were built up in the previous years. The Administrative and Finance Unit co-ordinates horizontal working groups (e.g. all contract negotiators) to maintain a common standard of operation. It will only be in mid -2002 that integration of the central DG Research Management Information Systems introduced for FP5, will be made fully operational. Until now mixtures of local (unit driven) and central applications are used for processing contract and project information. This transition has resulted in a large amount of work by the unit. It has taken almost the full life cycle of FP5 to introduce these integrated systems. The Panel fears that with the introduction of FP6 the Management Information Systems will have to be adapted once again.

The fact that Directorate K had to be created and that it had to gather units and staff formerly attached to the Director General (K2, advisors), or attached to different Directorates (Directorate AP and Directorate F) resulted in a very heavy administrative pressure in 2001. A new administrative unit had to be put in place from scratch, with long delays in its staffing.. In spite of this, the Directorate has managed to commit its budget successfully.

The STRATA is a policy oriented activity. Policymakers often need new analysis on new issues. This requires the mobilisation of expertise on broad questions such as the impacts of scientific and technological change, globalisation, social exclusion and so on. There is a considerable theoretical scope for this activity and the Panel suggests a permanent Committee of high level, multidisciplinary experts in human and socio-economic sciences, to support the Commission with the necessary think tank activities.

Time to contract and contract negotiations

Overall the Panel feels that the time to contract is still too long. In many cases this is due to procedures and decisions outside the direct control of the IHP units. In 2001 the inter-service consultation procedures and the decision to reshuffle budget allocations between IHP parts caused unnecessary delays. Simplifications need to be made, for instance in the contract preparation forms, which are in some cases almost 60 pages long.

Directorate C has made some efforts in their logistics to avoid wasting time. These include sending out contract preparation forms and administrative forms before the official decision, including a formal waiver.

In terms of time to contract:

- The average time to contract for the HLSC-activity should be less than 6 months but in 2001 it was much longer. The reason for this was beyond the control of the unit in question and the problems are not expected to continue next year.
- The decisions and negotiation procedures for MC Fellows take too much time (6 months). This was confirmed by our interviews with National Contact Points (NCPs) who stated that the MCF programme risks to lose the best scientists to other funding opportunities or career options.
- The time to contract for the majority of ARI contracts was 8,5 months (from mid February to November 2001). There is a second batch of proposals, which have no contracts yet.
- The time to contract for the Key-action was extremely long this year (11-14 months). Factors outside the reach of the IHP programme were behind this. In the year 2000 it was decided to postpone the Key-action's call deadline since the overall IHP programme would otherwise not comply with the planned annual budget allocations. The research community appreciated this postponement.
- STRATA has a time to contract of 6 months which is very reasonable.

4.2.2 Communication and information dissemination

The IHP programme has never been a coherent programme with an overall communication and dissemination strategy. To the outside world the programme is known by its constituent parts, and communication is very different from one part to the other. Each IHP component has a totally different user and stakeholder community to address, so an overall IHP communication would not be very effective. The Panel is pleased to see that important progress has been made on dissemination activities from all activity lines.

Regarding the Fellowship schemes the Panel believes that progress has been made in updating and improving information on the Web-sites. The Panel welcomes the vacancy research tool for fellowships to enhance the filling of available research posts. We would like to see this complemented by a database with short CVs of young researchers with an interest in a fellowship. Industrial hosts could use this to identify appropriate fellows. The Panel understands that the Commission is preparing a portal for researchers who are interested in moving to other countries, providing them with a range of practical information. The Panel appreciates this initiative.

Information concerning the activities of Directorate D, as with all other activities, is available on the Cordis web site. The NCPs regularly receive information about different actions and events organised by the Directorate. A further way of disseminating information is through a Help Desk, which can be accessed via e-mail. It is important that the Fellowships be widely visible and governed by a good communication strategy towards those aiming for a research career. Interviews in some member states confirmed that the Marie Curie Fellowships have a good reputation and are sought by (young) researchers, in spite of some complaints regarding the accessibility of project officers for assistance.

The HLSC activity was described in an advertisement in "Nature" and "Science" several times during 2001. The same was done to announce the European Science and Technology Week. The Descartes and Archimedes prizes were given TV coverage and doubled the newspaper and magazine coverage of the previous year.

The ARI participants have been encouraged to pay more attention to crediting the support from the Commission in their research publications. The Technical Review Panel will use this as an assessment indicator. Currently ARI has a good publication rate of almost two refereed publications per user.

Directorate K has a strong focus on influencing policy makers in the Commission and the member States. Their communication should therefore focus on bridging research results with decision-makers in the policy arena. The Panel is pleased to see that all units have made good progress on this. The Dialogue Workshops between socio-economic researchers and policy-makers is a good tool for this and the Panel strongly supports these, although we have only anecdotal evidence of the appreciation by the policy makers. The Panel suggests the execution of a small survey at the end of these workshops to evaluate user satisfaction.

The Key-action responsibility for disseminating the research results to the user community, particularly to policy makers, is shared between the research consortia and Directorate K. This is often a task with low priority for the researchers, particularly at the end of their project. Contractual agreements should be made to ensure that researchers take up the responsibility to disseminate an executive summary to corresponding policy makers and practitioners. The Key-action deals with a research community that has been geographically fragmented, and has no strong European culture, making an active dissemination strategy of reports and outcomes even more crucial. The directorate undertakes several activities to disseminate results to user groups such as the synthesis reports and organising conferences.

The STRATA activity does not seem to be very visible to the outside world. The Panel could not assess the level of interaction with the stakeholders, due to lack of data. It seems that a lot depends on individual projects leaders whether their results are visible or not. There have been some examples of projects, such as the EUROPOLIS and Science Shop projects, which had good visibility and levels of impact on a mix of user groups. The Panel is also aware that a conference is planned in April 2002 to disseminate the first results from the STRATA projects. The Panel proposes that on behalf of both the STRATA and CBSTII activities a policy user platform is set up. This Platform should invite policy makers from members states

and other commission services to discuss policy priorities and needs, and translate these to topics where European socio-economic research could contribute. This Platform could be assisted by a High Level Expert Group from the humanities and socio-economic sciences.

4.2.3 Evaluation, monitoring and follow up on impact previous FPs

Evaluation of proposals

The Monitoring Panel was able to use a number of independent observer reports describing the evaluation procedures. Overall the Panel is satisfied that procedures are fair, transparent and well implemented.

The ARI proposals Evaluation Panel uses a quite rigorous 'shaving' method in order to arrive at the planned budget. In the case of Access proposals, the Evaluation Panel recommended reducing the estimated costs for the 69 proposals in the main priority list, i.e. down to the level that corresponds to the total indicative budget for this activity. This led to an average reduction of -60%, with an average funding per contract of about 0.8 M€ The question is whether such a shaving method leads to funding decisions which are unrealistic for some contractors. For this call, the reduction in budget was proportional to a reduction in the number of access grants.

In the case of SRATA, selection criteria should favour proposals focusing on new or emerging issues and policy trends. Proposals will be required to demonstrate the relevance and added value of the activity proposed to the future development of science and technology policies in Europe. The independent observer for the July evaluation for the STRATA proposals was very pleased with the evaluation process, which was described as being thorough, transparent and fair.

The independent observer for MCF states that there have been a number of clear improvements since the previous round of applications. An example is the rigorous specification of quality, a score of 70% being introduced as the threshold for funding a proposal. The general conclusions of the observer are all positive, that the administrative preparation and servicing of the Panels were excellent, that the evaluation procedures observed were effectively designed and that due process was observed.

Impact assessment

Several of the activities have used questionnaires and reviews for measuring the impact of the activity in question. We list the following efforts:

A study on the short-term impact assessment of the MC Fellowship activity under FP4 (at that time called TMR) will be published during 2002, A draft report of this study was made available to the monitoring Panel. The study is based on the replies to questionnaires from 650 fellows and 850 supervisors. The Panel has been given a first draft of this study and some preliminary results raise some concern. Three out of four fellows find some kind of employment after their fellowship. Of those employed half continue mostly on a post-doctoral level. Only a good 17% of former MC Fellows actually have a some kind of permanent research position. A long-term impact assessment study of the MCF is being planned. The Panel suggests that this study addresses the career patterns in more detail.

The RTN staff use Mid Term Reviews (MTR) as the principal means of monitoring their activity. At the meetings the young researchers are asked to complete a questionnaire on their experiences in the network. Almost 1000 of these have been analysed so far, but unfortunately the results have not been published. Every network members must participate in the midterm review, including the trained young researchers, possibly also those who already left the group. If there are deficiencies in the recruitment of young researchers by the network, these are often revealed at the midterm evaluation, which is too late to undertake corrective measures, especially for the 3 years contracts. Participation in the midterm review is extended to young researchers who may have already left the group. The only deficiencies in the management aspect of a network to be noted would be the timing of the evaluation, which might be too late.

HLSC monitoring is based on four different activities: Proposal evaluation by independent experts, reporting by the contractor, evaluation by the participants, and monitoring by EC staff. More than 8000 questionnaires covering 356 events (June 2000-November 2001) have been analysed. The results have not been published.

The ARI activity supports trans-national access to infrastructures for researchers in a wide set of sciences and arts. Infrastructures are as different as synchrotrons for physicists, research vessels for marine biologists, and library collections and museums for the humanities. Researchers typically spend a limited time at the foreign research infrastructure. The impact of this visit has to be established at the level of the individual researcher (the importance of this access in his or her whole research project) and at the level of the host infrastructure (influence of opening up facility to foreign researchers). Both types of impacts are difficult to measure, especially when attempting to use common indicators for all scientific fields of activity, as has been observed in previous attempts to establish these types of evaluation. A pilot to use bibliometrics for this activity showed this was methodologically too complex. The Commission is aware that identifying proper impact indicators for ARI is a difficult problem. The Commission is planning to explore new approaches to this in the coming year. The Technical Review Panel that has recently started its work could contribute to this development.

ARI now uses two mechanisms to establishing the impact. First through a 'Technical Review' undertaken by a panel of experts (usually members of the Evaluation Panel) and secondly through user surveys. The Technical Review, which is done once during a Framework programme, has not yet taken place. A user survey answered by 1402 researchers that have made use of ARI does however give an indication of the positive role this programme plays. An impressive 88% of the users would not have had access to the research infrastructure if they had not been supported by ARI. A large majority of users considers the services provided by the research facility as good in most respects.

The Key-action has not undertaken any impact studies. For STRATA and CBSTII, and partly the Key-action, the target group is policy makers inside and outside the European Commission. No impact assessment exercises have yet been undertaken for any of these three activities. For STRATA the first batch of projects started implementation in early 2000 and should be finalised some time in 2002, while the second batch of projects started activities in 2001. The first of the CBSTII studies have recently been finalised, and the CBSTII RTD projects have only just begun. STRATA and CBSTII are however considering the realisation of a joint mid-term assessment of both activities in 2002.

Although efforts have been made, the Panel is not convinced that the Commission has done its utmost to assess the impact of its actions, both on the participants themselves and the larger community of stakeholders. Furthermore, impact surveys are not always designed from a vision of what the desired impacts originally were, which make some items in the questionnaires seem rather arbitrary. We do however recognise that impact assessment is even more complicated for IHP projects than it is for applied RTD projects.

The main product of Directorate D is training. So far the only account of training outcomes is in terms of "success stories". However, this is not seen as a representative account of overall training outcomes. We have found little reference to any formal identification of performance indicators for this activity. First steps made through the MCF Association to track Fellows after their involvement with IHP are still under consideration. There is a fear that applicants of Training Networks do not always place enough emphasis on the training aspect. They prefer to look for people who are already qualified rather than engage young inexperienced researchers whom they would have to train. The evidence for this is the absence in proposals of specific training objectives.

The ability to measure the impact of earlier research is totally dependent on proper indicators. The indicators used by the Commission so far have in our view not been satisfactory. The Panel is pleased to note that Directorate D is continuing work in this field and is investigating methodologies for assessing the impact of the MC Fellowships. A call for tender planned for 2002, which addresses this issue and which is based on an earlier study 1999-2000, will hopefully produce a set relevant performance indicators. A similar exercise is planned for the assessing the impact of Research Training networks.

4.2.4 Impact of previous research FPs and SPs

As reported above there have been few impact assessments undertaken within the IHP activities. Apart from some anecdotal evidence of success stories we have little information on impacts from mobility,

access to research infrastructures, or socio-economic research. Given the hybrid nature of objectives of all IHP activities, a rudimentary and necessary step is to define the type of expected impact. In this sense IHP is different from most other Specific Programmes, it does not target a specific technological area, and does not have as its fundamental aim the development of collaborative RTD projects in applied areas of research.

The Panel is deeply concerned with the very low 'permanent employment rate' of the MC fellows after completion of their fellowship. This issue must be addressed with the commissioning of a special external study. If employment prospects of young researchers remain as dismal as was reported in the FP4 Impact Study, effort in the area of Human Research Potential is obviously not reaching its targets and needs to be re-addressed. Given the forthcoming Five Year Assessment the Commission will have to launch impact assessment activities now in order to have input ready for this exercise.

4.2.5 Impact on less favoured regions and accession countries

For the Marie Curie Fellowships there is a clear flow from South to North. This can be seen in a positive way as researchers from less favoured regions get access to the best research organisations. But the Commission should also consider the negative aspects of the inter-European brain drain that might result from the movements taking place under the current mobility schemes. This applies particularly to FP6, where the budget for the mobility schemes have been drastically increased and there is expectation of increased candidate country participation. The problem of brain drain might now spread to the less favoured regions, despite the possibility of receiving a 'return fellowship'. The Panel is pleased to learn that the return fellowship will be opened to researchers who have not benefited from an MC Fellowship and that the support period will be extended to two years, to facilitate the return of the researchers. However, the concern of the Panel is that if experienced researchers can not count on high quality research facilities being available in their home countries, the incentives to go back might be small, and would not be offset by the return fellowships.

Transferring research know-how and developing human research potential in less-favoured regions cannot be accomplished by addressing only research infrastructure development or training young Ph.D.s. It is a structural problem requiring **structural solutions**. The success of a high-level research organisation depends on developing **all** human resources. The quality of the **auxiliary technical staff**, i.e. research centre managers, documentation specialists, laboratory technicians, facility maintenance personnel etc, must also be upgraded. Support staff complement and facilitate the tasks of researchers, and this contribution to research outcomes has been widely recognised in countries that are leading in Research, such as the US, Canada, Japan, Australia the U.K., France, Germany etc. The Panel suggests that the Commission addresses the above mentioned problems.

4.3 FOLLOW UP OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2000 Monitor Panel made 28 recommendations to the Commission. The Commission responded in two ways:

- Recommendations for which a response was given but no further action is foreseen (3 out of the 28 recommendations)
- Recommendations which already have been implemented or currently ongoing (the remainder).

In principle the 2001 Panel is satisfied with the responses by the Commission, but feel more could have been done, in particular in the following areas:

- Rethinking the Public Awareness Prize awarding system and the possibilities to link this with national activities
- Starting the Monitoring exercise at an earlier stage, thus avoiding the pressure of producing self-assessment material during the busy end of the financial year.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

As of the year 2001 the implementation of Improving the Human Research Potential and the Socio-economic Knowledge Base (IHP) has been dismantled as a unified programme. Splitting up the management of the programme into four different directorates, in accordance to the objectives of the European Research Area, has made the various activities that take place under the IHP banner even more apparent. The Panel sees the merits of this split in the light of ERA and FP6. It has however taken up a lot of valuable management time, particularly for Directorates D and K, and led to many staff vacancies that took a good part of the year 2001 to fill. In this turbulent setting the Commission services had to manage “business as usual” and prepare for FP6. The Panel appreciates the huge efforts that have gone into this process by the Commission staff.

In general terms the various parts of IHP have a valuable role to play in the European science and research community and are as such well appreciated. Some parts of the IHP programme have the additional mission to link research results with the policy community and the general public. We have seen various examples of these efforts which have had good visibility with policy makers, the Commission, and have also reached targets in the member states. Achievements have been made in all parts of the programme.

There is however still a cultural problem with the insufficient appreciation and utilisation of human and social sciences by the other sciences and policymakers, particularly for those results that have direct implications on the quality of human life. The small size of units and budgets and the low profile adopted in the priority lines of FP6 are certainly not the best way forward. With a need for development of the knowledge society, in particular to strengthen the European economy the Commission needs to realise the usefulness and urgent need for this type of knowledge.

Overall the programme is well managed and practices are in place to run the process efficiently. However there are a number of concerns:

- Little has been done to define the impact that the Actions are aiming for and to set up systems to measure these impacts
- The dissemination of results, particularly from RTD projects and studies done as accompanying measures should be improved. More of the burden should be placed on the participants to provide and actively publicise the agreed deliverables in their many forms. Even though a dissemination strategy is required in the proposals, these tasks are often neglected when projects reach their end.
- In 2001, the Commission services could not prepare themselves well for the implications of FP6, due to the lack of transparency in the FP6 decision making process. The problems lie not so much in the contents of the future research themes, but more in terms of the implementation of the new instruments and the consequences of FP6 in the entire management cycle.

Research is a globalized concept. Some activities of the IHP programme should be opened up to include researchers outside the European Communities, or give European researchers increased access to conferences networks etc outside Europe, especially the US, Japan, Canada and Australia. For example the return fellowships in FP5 are only open to previous MCF fellows. The Panel is pleased to note that this will change to some extent in FP6. This is likely to have a bigger impact and might be an incentive for those researchers who went to countries like the US, straight after graduation or doctorate, to return to Europe. In general policies should be structured with strong internationalisation components, encouraging cross-pollination, not only within the EU, but also across the continents.

Doubling the size of the Research Mobility schemes¹ in FP6 needs a parallel strategy to improve the attractiveness of science careers in Europe. As long as there is no a good understanding of the impact of the Mobility Schemes, the Commission does not know whether or how this additional effort will effect the European research community. A first draft report analysing the career paths of former MC fellows

¹ The Panel realises that this will not mean a doubling in the number of fellows.

suggests that only 17% of these fellows have managed to find a permanent or long-term position in research. Furthermore, the current difficulties of filling fellowship vacancies at host organisations gives rise to some concern. Here close co-operation between the Member States and the Public Awareness of Science activities is necessary in solving the problems of shortages of researchers. One should also address the question of preventing intra-European brain drain.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

Overall IHP Programme

- 1 The IHP overall should put more effort into defining the desired outcomes and impacts that it envisages with through the respective activities and should subsequently develop assessment indicators that fit these envisaged objectives. The Commission should be prepared to have results of the impact studies ready for the Five Year Assessment exercise.
- 2 We suggest that the impact on less favoured regions and candidate countries should be addressed in the next FP. For less-favoured regions and candidate countries it may be possible to introduce special training fellowships addressing the auxiliary human resource development needs, perhaps through team fellowships (e.g. researcher-technician-manager-documentalist teams) proposed by research institutions in those regions or countries.
- 3 The contract preparation form (CPF), which now consists of many pages, should be simplified.
- 4 The Commission should support a closer interaction amongst NCPs. This should start in 2002, being the concluding year of FP5 and the preparatory year for FP6. Regular meetings should be scheduled.
- 5 Preparations and training for the practical implementation of FP6 should cover all IHP activities. Transparency should be given to the various user groups of IHP on the changes in FP6, both in terms of contents and research management.
- 6 The Annual Monitoring exercise is a heavy administrative burden on the Commission services. Due to its late start the preparation of self-assessment reports clashes with end of year priorities. A less frequent rhythm within the five-year planning cycle could be found to ease this burden.

Marie Curie Fellowships and Research Training Networks

- 7 The Panel would like to see the MCF web-site complemented by a database with short CVs of young researchers with an interest in a fellowship. Industrial hosts could use this to identify appropriate fellows.
- 8 The Fellows in Research Training Networks should actively be encouraged to move within the network from one laboratory to another in order to enrich their research experience. Additionally, joint RTN courses on horizontal issues such as ethical issues or research management should be organised.
- 9 The RTN evaluation panel meetings should be held at the same time in order to increase interaction between panels. This would be beneficial as many of the applications are multidisciplinary.
- 10 The new Industrial Host Fellowship demands a new approach in terms of proposal evaluation and impact assessment, particularly in the case of SMEs. In this type of activity we would expect additional applied research and development to be carried out with a possible aim towards technological innovation and commercialisation goals.
- 11 Training objectives (not only training instruments, i.e. seminars, workshops, graduate courses etc.) should be stated with clarity in all mobility proposals. The training objectives should be used in self-evaluation exercises by hosts and in the assessments included in the intermediate and final reports.

High Level Conferences & Public Awareness

- 12 The Commission should encourage and support courses in research management and not only courses in research itself. The effectiveness of research will increase if young researchers are trained in managing their projects well.
- 13 The Panel believes that the public awareness concept must continue to be supported. News of European science and technology accomplishments and their impact on the quality of life should reach an even larger audience. Promotion of science in Europe should be raised through increased public awareness. This can be achieved by making better use of synergy with national public awareness campaigns, as

well as science and technology initiatives by other international organisations. Stand alone initiatives without visibility in the Member States will remain sub-critical.

- 14 The Archimedes prize has not been successful and the Commission should consider reforming this initiative, taking on board the lessons learnt from its shortcomings. The Panel suggests that the Prize system needs to be rethought. One possibility is to open the contest to all fields of science and possibly also to students who already have a Master degree. We suggest that alternatives could be explored, such as supporting Science and Technology summer schools for 15-18 year olds and Science Fairs for young people of secondary school age.
- 15 Mainstreaming the gender issue is very important, but at the moment it is still important to support the issue through specific measures. The Panel recommends that this issue be specifically addressed in the work programmes for FP6.

Key-action: Socio-Economic Research

- 16 The dialogue workshops, bringing together researchers and policy makers, organised in the Key-action have been an innovative and useful activity. The Panel nevertheless recommends that a wider user group is addressed outside the Commission and that a follow-up in the form of a survey of participants is made to find out to what extent the workshops are appreciated and produce outcomes.
- 17 A horizontal high level interface between the scientific community for social sciences and humanities and the research and innovation policy community should be organised at European level. Currently there are too few organisations supporting the position of these science areas in the ERA.
- 18 Despite the fact that dissemination is evaluated at the proposal stage and in the contract negotiations, greater emphasis should be given to this task in the project monitoring, and particularly when first results of RTD projects are realised. The Commission should withhold part of the payments until these deliverables are provided.

STRATA and CBSTII

- 19 The Panel proposes that on behalf of both the STRATA and CBSTII activities, a high level policy user platform is set up, inviting policy makers from members states and other commission services to discuss policy priorities and needs. This Panel could be assisted by a multidisciplinary, High Level Expert committee of researchers. Both units can help translate these needs into topics where European socio-economic research could contribute.
- 20 The policy driven mission of the STRATA and CBSTII units and the bottom-up call for proposal mechanism for funding are not always compatible. The units should be allowed to allocate some funding in addressing urgent policy needs in a more direct way.

Table 1 Key data IHP programme

	Raising Public Awareness	MCFs	Training Networks	Scientific Conf.	STRATA	CBSTII	Key Action RTD	Infra-structures
# of calls closed in 2001	1 call for AM + TN July 2001	4 calls + 1 which has not been finalised	1 call 4 th May	1 call 1 st Feb	1 AM call 1 TN call	1 call two closure dates	No RTD calls closed in 2001* 1 AM call	1 call 15 Feb
# of proposals received	63	2396	604	467	39	20.	52	149
# of proposals recommended	14	968	161	176	9	7	24	92
# of contracts signed to date	Not yet	226	Not yet	168		4	71	80
Financial contribution committed		111.3 €Million		10.3 €Million	3.7 €Million	1.86 €Million	2.7 €Million	53.88 €Million
Approx. time to contract	5-6 months	6-9 months	10-12 months					Batch 1 8,5 months Batch 2

* due to lack of funds the 2000 call for RTD + TN proposals was negotiated and committed in 2001. Of 374 proposals, 71 were selected and 5.5 €million committed. The time to contract was exceptionally long due to changes in the allocation of funds in budget year 2001.

RTD = Research and Technological development projects

AM = Accompanying measure

TN = Thematic networks

PART B:

**Responses of the Programme Management to the
external Monitoring Report**

IHP Monitoring 2001 – IHP

	<u>MP Recommendation</u>	<u>Commission's Response</u>	<u>Milestones for implementation</u>
1.	<p>The IHP overall should put more effort into defining the desired outcomes and impacts that it envisages with through the respective activities and should subsequently develop assessment indicators that fit these envisaged objectives. The Commission should be prepared to have results of the impact studies ready for the Five Year Assessment exercise</p>	<p>The Commission is aware that progress has to be made in the assessment of the impact of its actions. Up to now, for Marie Curie Fellowships, Research Training Networks and High Level Scientific Conferences activities, results are measured through annual reports, mid term reviews and questionnaires, administrative monitoring, scientific workshops, monitoring missions, etc. These different instruments allow checking if the initial objectives as defined in the technical annexes of the contract are met. Furthermore, impact assessment studies are to be launched shortly for the Marie Curie Fellowships and in 2003 for the Research Training Network. In addition, for FP6 an internal working group has been set up in order to include impact assessment indicators from the very start of the activities.</p> <p>As part of its mandate to coordinate the integration of socio-economic research in the specific programmes of FP5, the EC launched the preparation of a synthesis report with the ultimate objective to assess the socio-economic impact of RTD projects including the projects financed in the IHP programme. As immediate step, the socio-economic intensity will be measured from qualitative and quantitative approaches.</p> <p>The IHP-ARI action is conducting regular technical reviews of all supported contracts. One such review is under way and will be concluded by early 2003. The Commission services responsible for this action will also explore the possibility of conducting a long-term impact study of projects supported under previous FPs, possibly on a limited sample or 'case studies'.</p>	<p>MCF: already announced in the OJ and deadline for submission at the end of 2002 RTN: 2003</p> <p>- Results of IHP-ARI Technical Review (early 2003). - If exploratory phase positive a call for tenders for an impact study could be launched in Spring 2003</p>
2.	<p>We suggest that the impact on less favoured regions and candidate countries should be addressed in the next FP. For less-favoured regions and candidate countries it may be possible to introduce special training fellowships addressing the auxiliary human resource development needs, perhaps through team fellowships (e.g. researcher-technician-manager-documentalist teams) proposed by research institutions in those regions or countries</p>	<p>Under FP6 support of technical staff is being seriously considered as part of the eligible research costs for very specific and punctual training related to a project within the Marie Curie Hosts Fellowships Transfer of Knowledge scheme. For Marie Curie Excellence grants, the teams to be supported could include technical staff. Concrete actions have been taken and implemented in view to increase support and impact in the next FP on candidate countries, especially as part of the third/last call of the Key-action and through a special long lasting mission devoted to this subject by a head of unit.</p>	<p>Negotiation of selected new projects from third call of Key-action under progress. Long lasting mission in east Europe on-going</p>

IHP Monitoring 2001 – IHP

	<u>MP Recommendation</u>	<u>Commission's Response</u>	<u>Milestones for implementation</u>
3.	The contract preparation form (CPF), which now consists of many pages, should be simplified	The Commission is actively promoting the simplification process particularly for the 6 th FP including amongst other issues the CPF.	
4.	The Commission should support a closer interaction amongst NCPs. This should start in 2002, being the concluding year of FP5 and the preparatory year for FP6. Regular meetings should be scheduled	The Key Action attempted to facilitate and support a closer interaction amongst NCPs but without much success. In 2002, the Commission services organised one meeting with IHP NPCs in April, the next meeting is scheduled for October to inform them on the implementation of the FP6. Two to three meetings with NCPs are normally scheduled per year. "The General principles for setting up systems of National Contact Points for FP6" will also apply to the new Human Resources and Mobility activity.	
5.	Preparations and training for the practical implementation of FP6 should cover all IHP activities. Transparency should be given to the various user groups of IHP on the changes in FP6, both in terms of contents and research management	A series of actions are foreseen in terms of communication after identifying the different target groups. An ad hoc communication campaign is foreseen and each operational unit will prepare and disseminate information tools to the attention of the concerned target groups. Furthermore, FP6 will be officially launched during a conference organised in Brussels on 11-13 November 2002. Additionally, the Commission services are working on an improved helpdesk for the new Human Resources and Mobility activity. A Working Document on the support of Research Infrastructures in FP6 has been put on the web as a way to stimulate discussion with potential stakeholders. A working seminar with stakeholders is foreseen on 26 June 2002	11-13 November 2002 - Working Document on the web (2 May 2002). - Working seminar with stakeholders (26 June 2002).
6.	The Annual Monitoring exercise is a heavy administrative burden on the Commission services. Due to its late start the preparation of self-assessment reports clashes with end of year priorities. A less frequent rhythm within the five-year planning cycle could be found to ease this burden	Directorate D agrees with a less heavy monitoring exercise. Indeed the actual exercise starts in November, which is the heaviest time of the year. The Commission is currently discussing the possibility of a new system.	November 2002
	Marie Curie Fellowships and Research Training Networks		
7.	The Panel would like to see the MCF web-site complemented by a database with short CVs of young researchers with an interest in a fellowship. Industrial hosts could use this to identify appropriate fellows	This is an interesting idea, which will be explored. CVs of Marie Curie fellows will be on the Circa web site for those who will give their approval (rules concerning privacy). Furthermore, the web portal will obviously have a deep link to the vacancy tool on the Cordis web site in order to retrieve the relevant information.	

IHP Monitoring 2001 – IHP

	<u>MP Recommendation</u>	<u>Commission's Response</u>	<u>Milestones for implementation</u>
8.	<p>The Fellows in Research Training Networks should actively be encouraged to move within the network from one laboratory to another in order to enrich their research experience. Additionally, joint RTN courses on horizontal issues such as ethical issues or research management should be organised</p>	<p>Mobility inside a network already exists in RTN activities and is already happening for a substantial portion of the Networks. This practice is actively encouraged by the EC services that are regularly suggesting Networks coordinators to make researchers aware that EC funds could be used for short visits and secondments over and above the traditional Networks meetings. This question is systematically addressed for example at Mid Term Reviews meetings. Furthermore the Commission find the recommendation to promote courses on horizontal issues of particular interest and actively seek to develop it in FP6 and make it accessible in the most appropriate way to the Network fellows. This will also be dealt within the work programme and the coordinators guidelines for FP6.</p>	<p>Current on going projects and Mid Terms Reviews</p>
9.	<p>The RTN evaluation panel meetings should be held at the same time in order to increase interaction between panels. This would be beneficial as many of the applications are multidisciplinary</p>	<p>Measures have been taken in RTN to ensure that multidisciplinary proposals were evaluated by experts with the required expertise by allocating the same proposals to experts from different background, including experts from different panels. The EC services will investigate means to further promoting interaction between panels including through the organisation of all panel meetings at the same time.</p>	<p>Next call Evaluation in 2003</p>
10.	<p>The new Industrial Host Fellowship demands a new approach in terms of proposal evaluation and impact assessment, particularly in the case of SMEs. In this type of activity we would expect additional applied research and development to be carried out with a possible aim towards technological innovation and commercialisation goals</p>	<p>In FP6, industry participation is foreseen in host driven activities in the fellowships for early stage training, where it can provide training opportunities for researchers, and within the transfer of knowledge scheme where industry in particular SMEs can benefit of the participation of more experienced researchers.</p>	
11.	<p>Training objectives (not only training instruments, i.e. seminars, workshops, graduate courses etc.) should be stated with clarity in all mobility proposals. The training objectives should be used in self-evaluation exercises by hosts and in the assessments included in the intermediate and final reports</p>	<p>The Commission fully agrees with this recommendation – training objectives will be highlighted at all stages of the implementation of the FP6 HRM activities.</p>	

IHP Monitoring 2001 – IHP

	<u>MP Recommendation</u>	<u>Commission's Response</u>	<u>Milestones for implementation</u>
	High Level Conferences & Public awareness		
12.	<p>The Commission should encourage and support courses in research management and not only courses in research itself. The effectiveness of research will increase if young researchers are trained in managing their projects well</p>	<p>The Commission is aware of the needs for courses in research management and has foreseen this issue in the design of the "Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses" activity in FP6.</p>	
13.	<p>The Panel believes that the public awareness concept must continue to be supported. News of European science and technology accomplishments and their impact on the quality of life should reach an even larger audience. Promotion of science in Europe should be raised through increased public awareness. This can be achieved by making better use of synergy with national public awareness campaigns, as well as science and technology initiatives by other international organisations. Stand alone initiatives without visibility in the Member States will remain sub-critical</p>	<p>Actions to increase the impact of Raising Public Awareness of Science and Technology and the Science Week activity are key features of the Science and Society Action Plan. In addition, the 4th call for Raising Public Awareness launched in January 2002 gave the possibility for the support for public awareness activities in support of the Commission's own initiatives.</p>	
14.	<p>The Archimedes prize has not been successful and the Commission should consider reforming this initiative, taking on board the lessons learnt from its shortcomings. The Panel suggests that the Prize system needs to be rethought. One possibility is to open the contest to all fields of science and possibly also to students who already have a Master degree. We suggest that alternatives could be explored, such as supporting Science and Technology summer schools for 15-18 year olds and Science Fairs for young people of secondary school age</p>	<p>The Commission has an established a contract with external consultants for the strategic evaluation of the DG RTD system of prizes. This work will be undertaken in the second half of 2002 and will consider the Descartes, Archimedes and the EU Young Scientist Contest.</p>	

IHP Monitoring 2001 – IHP

	<u>MP Recommendation</u>	<u>Commission's Response</u>	<u>Milestones for implementation</u>
15.	<p>Mainstreaming the gender issue is very important, but at the moment it is still important to support the issue through specific measures. The Panel recommends that this issue be specifically addressed in the work programmes for FP6</p> <p>Key-action: Socio-Economic Research</p> <p>The dialogue workshops, bringing together researchers and policy makers, organised in the Key-action have been an innovative and useful activity. The Panel nevertheless recommends that a wider user group is addressed outside the Commission and that a follow-up in the form of a survey of participants is made to find out to what extent the workshops are appreciated and produce outcomes</p> <p>A horizontal high level interface between the scientific community for social sciences and humanities and the research and innovation policy community should be organised at European level. Currently there are too few organisations supporting the position of these science areas in the ERA</p>		
16.		<p>A short questionnaire on valuation of dialogue workshops is being currently developed and will be piloted towards the end of the year 2002</p>	<p>Utilising the questionnaire in one workshop in 2002</p>
17.		<p>The Commission is currently exploring the feasibility to set up a “high level” support group on “Social Sciences and Humanities” to cope with the challenge of the ERA”. At this stage, the scientific community and researchers involved look to show a very strong support for this initiative.</p> <p>The Barcelona Conference of 6-7 May on Research on Social Sciences in Europe , jointly organised by the Spanish Presidency of the European Union Council and the Commission, also contributed to the set up of this interface. It was to underscore the contribution of Social Sciences to the understanding of the conditions and implications of the knowledge society for European economic competitiveness, social cohesion, and political governance. This initiative builds up on the work initiated and carried out by previous European Presidencies, aimed at highlighting and promoting the role of Social Sciences in Europe within research and other European policies. It aimed at bringing together an interdisciplinary group of top scientific experts, including both leading social scientists and policy-makers at the European, National and Regional levels, who presented and discussed the state-of-the-art in research on social sciences with special reference to the knowledge society.</p>	<p>Set up of the Advisory Group for FP6 on priority 7</p> <p>Proceedings under progress</p>

IHP Monitoring 2001 – IHP

	<u>MP Recommendation</u>	<u>Commission's Response</u>	<u>Milestones for implementation</u>
		<p><i>The last call for proposals (budget of 63 M€) was oriented deliberately to facilitate the transition to FP6 and in particular to assist the researchers to prepare the ERA. This call mainly aimed at meeting the needs for research required by the "Lisbon strategy" and was broken up into three sections:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the first gathering around the topics of the key action, the research necessary for the development of this strategy: the challenge of the socio-economic development models for Europe; individual and social well-being; societal tendencies, implications of the structural changes and of technological development; citizens, governance and the dynamics of integration and of enlargement. - the second on the development of the European infrastructures for comparative research in the social sciences. - the third on specific activities to support the development of social sciences and society in the ERA. <p>One illustrative project from this third call, still under negotiation with the Commission aims at mapping social sciences and humanities research in Europe. Co-ordinated by the European association of rectors conferences, this project will play a key role in this interface.</p>	<p>MORESS (Mapping of Research in European Social Sciences and Humanities) subject to success of negotiation.</p>
18.	<p>Despite the fact that dissemination is evaluated at the proposal stage and in the contract negotiations, greater emphasis should be given to this task in the project monitoring, and particularly when first results of RTD projects are realised . The Commission should withhold part of the payments until these deliverables are provided</p>	<p>These matters are arranged by the contracts between the Commission and the research organisations. In these contracts there is a linking of payments to deliverables. This cannot extend beyond the end of the period covered by the project - when most exploitation actually takes place, as this would undermine the financial position of research organisations.</p>	

IHP Monitoring 2001 – IHP

	<u>MP Recommendation</u>	<u>Commission's Response</u>	<u>Milestones for implementation</u>
19.	<p><u>STRATA and CBSTII</u></p> <p>The Panel proposes that on behalf of both the STRATA and CBSTII activities, a high level policy user platform is set up, inviting policy makers from members states and other commission services to discuss policy priorities and needs. This Panel could be assisted by a multidisciplinary, High Level Expert committee of researchers. Both units can help translate these needs into topics where European socio-economic research could contribute</p>	<p>This recommendation is essential for the future foresight and indicators activities which will aim, in the course of implementation of FP6, at setting up a Knowledge Sharing Platform in the related area. There is a need to reflect on the ways to involve policy-makers from Member States and other Associated States in the definition of priorities and needs.</p>	
20.	<p>The policy driven mission of the STRATA and CBSTII units and the bottom-up call for proposal mechanism for funding are not always compatible. The units should be allowed to allocate some funding in addressing urgent policy needs in a more direct way</p>	<p>The top-down approach has also been applied in these activities by commissioning specific studies and by creating expert groups dedicated to analyse specific themes (STRATA ETAN-like groups) like the one on "Regional Foresight" referred in page 9 of the report.</p> <p>CBSTII is particularly aware of this problem and made substantial use of calls for tenders under public procurement procedures to place studies and implement its work via a relatively top-down approach during the first years of FP5, 1999 and 2000. CBSTII balanced this by using the bottom-up call for proposals approach in 2001. However neither of these routes is ideal for implementing all aspects of the policy support work of CBSTII and neither calls for tender nor calls for proposals allow for rapid reaction to policy driven needs. Also their use does not necessarily lead to the best or most appropriate consortia being contracted to do the work and thus the quality of the results may not be the best possible.</p> <p>The STRATA and CBSTII teams are looking at how the existing and new instruments which will become available under FP6 can best be used to reply to their policy driven missions.</p>	