

## **Report of Working Group 1 “The State of Political Science in Europe”**

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This draft provides a developed executive summary of key trends when it is possible to identify them. To a large extent these lacunae have to do with the lack of resources for performing research but these difficulties are by themselves meaningful. They allow us to identify further challenges ahead and to formulate potential recommendations to political/social science and higher education/research stakeholders.

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This WG1 report deals with « the state of the political science in Europe ». It is based on a process of data collection coming from a cluster of 39 countries located in Europe and around. The introduction offers methodological remarks about the way information has been gathered.

We suggest that whilst research outputs derived from ProSEPS may move fruitfully beyond the organizational framework of the project, this report should follow it to reflect the original intent of the scholars involved in the Action. As a consequence this draft report relies on, and overall sticks to, the questionnaire about the state of political science. The questionnaire has developed through the discussion and input of members of WG1.<sup>1</sup> The development was a two stage process. First, in early 2018 a pilot questionnaire was prepared and tested among the members of WG1. On

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the basis of those experiences and followed by further theoretical and pragmatic discussion a revised questionnaire was prepared by the autumn of 2018 and was sent out to each and every country representative participating in the Action. This report is the executive summary of the findings. The questionnaire has been organized around a set of themes, namely (i) the structuring of the discipline, (ii) the framework for political science education, (iii) political research, (iv) prospects and visibility of the discipline, with an extra-WG2 section about (v) internationalization. Answers were due by the end of February 2019.

From a methodological viewpoint, one must stress the difficulty to provide a genuinely comparative framework due to the significant variance, and often lack of national data availability. Be it because data are indeed not accessible or because of the impossibility or limited capacity to actually perform research without resources specially devoted to data production within the framework of the Action, answers vary in terms of both quantity and depth. Knowledge gaps do not coincide from one country to another. Nevertheless, this ambitious undertaking has produced some valuable results about the state of the discipline in our times.

## **B. THEMES – questionnaire findings**

Key themes are those structuring the WG1 questionnaire. They deal with the structuring of the PS community, the educational framework, the situation of political research and prospects for the future. These themes will be discussed below.

### **1. Structuring of the political science community**

The academic community-building process of political science in Europe, mainly addressed in questions 1 to 8 and in the final section of our WG1 questionnaire, displays considerable variation among countries. This is explained by the difference of historical and cultural traditions, domestic and international political context and by the variety of national funding capacities (be it in terms of wealth or country size). By and large, some countries, mostly Western, were privileged places for the development of institutions where political issues are studied and proceed (often applied) training. Whilst sometimes very early attention has been devoted to political issues, the rise of political science as the discipline usually took place in different moments of the twentieth century

as a starting momentum. It seems justified to claim that those momentums should need attention whose consequences still persist and have an impact on the development of our discipline in our time. This implies that indeed the structuring momentums can be highly different and differently evaluated by the country experts.

In contrast to the above variation, a general and overarching attention appears to be paid to the rise of mass higher education and advanced social science research, which mostly developed in Europe after WWII, immediately after the war in most of the Western countries, later after the fall of authoritarian rules elsewhere (most of Southern and Eastern Europe), though this area often displays parallel signs of formal institutionalization (associations of scholars, chairs, departments, degree, journals and so on) (see table 1).

Table 1. Indicators of the institutionalization of political science as a discipline in Europe and neighbouring countries.

Periods	19 <sup>th</sup> century or before	1900-44	1945-1969	1970-1988	1989-2000	After 2000	NA
First PS chair	Belgium (1889) Ireland (1855) Russia (1804) Sweden (1622) Turkey (1859)	Finland (1921) Germany (1920) Switzerland (1902) United Kingdom (1912)	Albania (1965) Bosnia and Herzegovina (1961) Croatia (1962) Denmark (1950s) France (1970s) Greece (1963) Israel (1949) Italy (1966) Netherlands (1948) Norway (1965) Poland (1967) Serbia (1960) Slovenia (1961)	Bulgaria (1981) Hungary (1984) Iceland (1970) Macedonia (1982) Portugal (1975) Spain (1985)	Czech Republic (1989) Estonia (1994) Lithuania (1993) Moldova (1989) Romania (1990) Slovakia (1990)	Luxembourg (2006) Montenegro (2003)	Austria Latvia Malta
Formative period of PS		Finland	Austria Belgium Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia	Bulgaria (beginnings)	Bulgaria (continuing) Czech Republic Estonia Hungary	Albania	Latvia

			Denmark France (beginnings) Germany (beginnings) Ireland Israel Italy (beginning) Netherlands Norway Russia (beginnings) Serbia Slovenia  Sweden (continuing) Switzerland (German-speaking) Turkey United-Kingdom	France (continuing) Germany (continuing) Greece Iceland Italy (continuing) Luxembourg Macedonia Malta Portugal Slovakia Spain (beginnings)	(beginnings) Lithuania Moldova Poland Romania Russia (continuing)  Spain (continuing)	Hungary (continuing) Montenegro	
First chair or department exclusively in PS	Belgium Sweden United Kingdom (?)	Finland Turkey	Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia Denmark Germany Greece Ireland Italy Netherlands Norway Poland Serbia Switzerland	Bulgaria France Iceland Macedonia Malta Spain	Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Lithuania Moldova Portugal Romania Russia Slovakia Romania	Albania Luxembourg Montenegro	Austria Israel Latvia Slovenia
First mention of PS in a PhD program/degree	Belgium France Sweden	Finland Spain	Denmark Netherlands Poland Slovenia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria Greece Ireland Lithuania Moldova Romania Russia Serbia	Albania Iceland Luxembourg Montenegro	Austria Croatia Czech Republic Estonia Germany Hungary Israel

					Slovakia		Italy Latvia Macedonia Malta Norway Portugal Switzerland Turkey United Kingdom
First PhD exclusively in PS	Sweden	Finland	France Israel Netherlands Poland	Bosnia and Herzegovina Italy Spain	Belgium Bulgaria Czech Republic Denmark Hungary Ireland Lithuania Serbia Slovakia	Albania Croatia Estonia Iceland Lithuania Malta Moldova Montenegro	Austria Germany Greece Latvia Luxembourg Macedonia Norway Portugal Russia Slovenia (none) Switzerland Turkey United Kingdom
First national political science association		Finland (1935)	Croatia (1966) Denmark (1960) France (1949) Germany (1951) Greece (1957) Netherlands (1950) Norway (1956) Poland (1957) Serbia (1955) Slovenia (1968) Sweden (1970) Switzerland (1959) Turkey	Austria (1970) Belgium (Flemish) (1988) Bulgaria (1986) Hungary (1982) Ireland (1982) Italy (1981)	Belgium (French-speaking) (1996) Czech Republic (1994) Iceland (1995) Israel (IR) (1995) Lithuania (1991) Moldova (1991) Portugal (1998) Russia (1991, with antecedent 1960) Slovakia (1994 ?)	Albania (2000) Israel (2000) Luxembourg (2012)	Bosnia and Herzegovina (none) Estonia (none) Macedonia (date unknown) Montenegro (none) Romania (none) Latvia

			(1964) United Kingdom (1964) Slovenia (1968)		Spain (1993)		
First journal	Sweden (1887)	Germany (1907) Turkey (1931)	Belgium (1959) Croatia (1964) Denmark (1969) Finland (1955) France (1951) Netherlands (1946) Poland (1967) Serbia (1949) Slovenia (1964) Switzerland (1960) United Kingdom (1953) Slovenia (1964)	Austria (1972) Greece (1981) Ireland (1986) Israel (1972) Italy (1971) Norway (1985) Portugal (1985)	Bulgaria (1991) Czech Republic (1994) Estonia (1999) Hungary (1992) Lithuania (1989) Moldova (1993) Romania (1991) Russia (1991) Slovakia (1998) Spain (1999)	Albania (2006) Iceland (2006) Luxembourg (2011) Macedonia (2002) Montenegro (2012)	Bosnia and Herzegovina (none) Latvia Malta (none)

The issue of the original background of the first PS professors does not allow identifying a clear pattern due to the lack of homogeneity in the answers. If law, history, philosophy, sociology and economics are confirmed as the expected providers of expertise about politics in the foundational moments, and if some countries are marked by their enduring influence, comparative insights are difficult to highlight. However, an interesting underestimated feature is that academic late comers in the field sometimes benefited from the help, in the beginning, of national political scientists trained abroad in countries where the discipline was existent and more or less developed while absent in their motherland. Another remark can be made: political science sometimes had to fight for recognition as a discipline still this does not necessarily imply that its relations with other disciplines are conflicting: organizational transfers or intellectual shifts sometimes benefited to PS. Regarding the institutional birth of PS, typical scenarios were suggested as presented in table 2. Though the European landscape displays some variety, the most frequent pattern is the creation of the discipline within the official education system as a new department or, to a lesser extent



In this process, political science associations, when present, may play a significant role. Though they do not appear as key actors in the daily running of academic life, their role seems instrumental in the historical structuring and in the representation of political scientists. These associations are very different in terms of membership ranging from less than 50 in some countries to more than 1500 in the United Kingdom or Germany (table 3), even if the figure sometimes include scholars that are in the database of national associations while others only include those who actually paid their membership fees. Variation in size also reflects the size of the political science community per se in the given countries.

Table 3. Membership size of national political science associations.

Size	1-50	51-99	100-199	200-299	300-399	400-499	500-1000	More than 1000	Collective membership	NA
Countries	Bulgaria Croatia Macedonia Serbia	Lithuania Slovakia	Greece Ireland Israel Norway	Finland Slovenia	Belgium France Italy Netherlands Portugal	Austria	Iceland Poland Russia Spain Sweden Switzerland	Germany United Kingdom	Denmark Sweden	Albania Bosnia and Herzegovina Czech Republic Estonia Latvia Luxembourg Malta Moldova Montenegro Romania Turkey

## 2. Political science education

Within this section of the questionnaire there were three main issues that have implications for the state of the political science profession: how the institutional context (particularly universities) offer opportunities for political science education; how the profession develops in this framework as compared to other social science disciplines; and how the reproduction of political science is ensured in this context. These three aspects will be analysed in turn.



## **2/a Institutional stability and transformation**

The transformation of the higher education system together with intra-university changes has been reported in every case. As it is formulated in one report, a “kind of fatigue of permanent reforms” prevails. Although this is not formulated this explicitly in all the country cases it can be rightly stated that this is the reality in the majority of the countries. The number of higher education institutions either declines or increases substantially but even in those countries where the number itself would indicate stability important structural changes or/and contradictory developments can be found in the background. Some of these have obvious implications for political science.

Centralisation steps and the merger of several institutions is one major policy trend. The positions of political science have been affected by these changes, its autonomy has been challenged as formerly independent units had been incorporated into larger entities. A further development is the upgrading of colleges of different kinds to the university level. The governments justified this policy to elevate the importance of applied research (claiming that this was rather the feature of college level as opposed to university level). With the more opaque boundaries between the two types of institutions the research functions of the “traditional” universities have diminished particularly because this transformation went together with lower state funding. Clearly, this change appears as a challenge to the research ethos that tended to feature political science in academia.

As a contrast to the former examples, in some countries there was a conscious government policy to decentralize higher education so that universities exist not only in the older established centers but in depopulated or less frequented regions as well. This happened in diverse countries with diverse motives: to spread higher education for good or establish institutions against the more “independent” ones. Irrespective of the original policy reasons, however, quality concerns and the positions of political science have become an issue in these cases.

Table 4 summarizes the number of institutions where political science is taught at the BA and MA level as well as the number of students. With the exception of the most populated countries (France, Germany, Turkey, and the UK) and those where only a single institution is involved in political science education the differences in the number of institutions are not huge, and –with a few exceptions – stability seems to be the norm. The number of institutions where PS is taught

does not offer the full picture about the state of the discipline, however. As against the number of institutions the number of programs and their diversity have implications about the state of the discipline. Several departments, subfields or even disciplines offer programs together with political science at the BA and MA levels. This is one of the consequences of institutional integration mentioned above although other, namely disciplinary explanations could also be in the background as program orientation is more explicit in countries where political science has a longer history and less so in the newer countries (with the possible exception of the Baltic region). The program focus might imply broad and generalizing attention, and certainly offers less visibility for political science per se: within the programs the profile of political science remains less clear cut. These tendencies should not be left unnoticed in the evaluation of the institutional development of political science.

As for the number of students the fluctuation of the student body per se represents a potential threat to stable institutionalization. In some countries student fluctuation has been abrupt occurring within the two given time periods, specified in the questionnaire, thus it does not show in the table. In addition, declining student numbers is a sign of shaking stability. Three main patterns can be observed: abrupt changes feature some countries; stability prevails in others while decline is explicit in a number of cases. In addition to the sheer numbers the connection between the BA and MA figures reveals the recognised prospects of the discipline. In some countries after the BA level the MA level is increasingly depopulated, in others there is a growing interest in the MA level as well, an indication of stability and popularity of the discipline. Occasionally there is even a substantial transfer to political science MA from diverse BA programs, a clear sign of the influence and health of the discipline.

Marketization tendencies generally have an impact on the institutional developments of political science – as for the stability aspect, for example, they might influence enrolment figures – but for the newcomer democracies some aspects of marketization have been even more important. As the first example, the role of private institutions deserves attention. With the democratic turn private institutions were allowed to get established and political science (social sciences in general) seemed to be an easy route to offer and get diplomas – for money. In virtually all post-communist countries this was a cause of serious quality concern and took some time to neutralize or eliminate these types of institutions. Altogether, the share of private institutions (including a PS profile) is higher in most new democracies than in the older ones.

Table 4 Number of Institutions with BA or MA in Political Science and the number of students

	HE Institutions with PS				PS Students in HE Institutions			
	BA		MA		BA		MA	
	2000 - 2009	2010 - 2018	2000 - 2009	2010 -2018	2000 – 2009	2010- 2018	2000 - 2009	2010 -2018
Albania	5	5	7	7				
Austria		3		6	1400	3700	170	1400
Belgium	9			8	3250	3000	1840	2260
Bosnia and Herzegovina								
Bulgaria	9			8		700		200
Croatia	1	1	1	1	800	500	100	120
Czech Rep	9	9	8	9	2500	1800	1000	1200
Denmark	6	6	6	6	900	1000	600	700
Estonia	2	2	2	2	600	400	200	200
Finland	6	6	6	6	13 th	30 th	37 th	19 th
France	17			103	3700	9400	22.5 th	19.8 th
Germany		150		160	35 th with public administration		47 th with public administration	
Greece	8			8	5300	5800	1150	2050
Hungary	9	9	8	8	2900	2700	1000	650
Iceland	1	1	1	1	290 (i)	220 (d)	340 (i)	380
Ireland	8	7	7	7	760	1100	440	460
Israel	13			7		4800 (d)		2900 (d)
Italy	5			4	60 th	48 th	32 th	28 th
Latvia								
Lithuania	5	9	5	5				
Luxembourg	1			1				35
Malta	1			1	140	151	78	89
Moldova	22	7	1	5	5500-1700	1550	250	500-900

Montenegro	1			4	1000	2100	270	450
Netherlands	10			10	32 th	68 th	11 th	30 th
North Macedonia	6			6	150	200	30	30
Norway		8		5				
Poland								
Portugal	17	17	15	15	3334	3718	687	927
Romania	17	12	12	11	13 th-48 th	34th-15 th		
Serbia	2			4	5100	5700	1600	3400
Slovakia	9	14	7	12	4 764	2 807	2 477	2 388
Slovenia	1	1	1	1	2328*	6004	n/a	1372
Spain	10	27		36	11 th .	11 th .	1700	2300
Sweden	17	19	14	14	3492		3293	
Switzerland		6		6				
Turkey	51	268	38-86	110		12 th		5.5 th
UK		109		98		32 th		8.5 th

(i)and (d) indicate that within the period either increase or decline are substantial

A further marketization aspect is the introduction of tuition fees, which is widespread in new democracies. The motivation of tuition fees is possibly the same everywhere. Tuition fees result from a complex set of government policies, where efficiency claims, and service claims (the academia should serve the society) are intermingled. In the new democracies these considerations – in addition to financial constraints – are occasionally complemented by political contestations at the electoral level and become highly contested political issues.

Overall, the transformation of the economic and social context, government policy goals and expectations explain the complex transformation of the institutional coordinates of political science. Still, against this changing background stability and stabilization are the dominant institutional attributes.

## **2/b Connection to other social science disciplines, BA, MA, PhD levels**

Connectedness to other disciplines is important at the BA, MA – as well as the PhD level because the patterns here would influence the visibility of political science. In addition, the patterns of cooperation with other disciplines have a function for identity formation particularly at the PhD level.

The types of cooperation, and the involvement of political science in other educational programs was the focus of enquiry in this regard. Only a small minority of countries report that political science is included in more than 50% of other social science- educational programs, while a large majority (21 country cases) report that this involvement is rare, under the 20% level. Even more importantly however, in five cases this goes together with decline and in another 14 cases with stagnation. For the moment being it seems that political science is rather losing ground in this area.

As for the independence or connectedness to other disciplines at the PhD level according to the qualitative comments there seems to be a dividing line between older and newer democracies: the former tend to incorporate several old and new fields and sub-disciplines, the latter rather tend to regard political science in a strict sense and their programs are formed accordingly. Paradoxically, in some new democracies political science was often in the position to incorporate other social science fields that seemed to have even fewer resources and less independent status than political science. This first step ensured an elevated role and eventually proved advantageous for developing an own, separate identity. Furthermore, subfields that have been present in older, more established countries for some time and have become rivals and partners in establishing programs have not yet become strong enough in the newer countries. For example, joint PhD programs with other disciplines are more numerous in old and Southern European democracies while they hardly exist in new democracies. The financial conditions in relation to the PhD programs are not structured only on the old democracy – latecomer democracy divide although the lack of funding in PhD programs mainly relates to latecomer countries. In addition, three huge communities are in the process of change in this regard. In France structurally organised PhD programmes do not exist. The degree is professor driven and doctoral school driven. In Germany “structured PhD programmes “are a phenomenon of the last 15 years the most. Thus tradition, university education system, its hierarchical nature, its personalisation attributes, its centralisation had a large impact on how PhD develops. In the UK it depends very much on the institution but according to the country report around 20 per cent of PhD students have scholarships to cover their tuition fees and living costs. There is also a number of students whose studies are supported by

foreign grants. The rest take loans or work during their studies. The competition for funded PhD places is incredibly intense. (See table 5).

Political science education is nowadays open to multilingual settings. With the exception of the countries where English is the national norm (UK, Ireland, Malta), though the national language(s) are mainly in use, English is spread as a secondary and sometimes, typically in North-Western Europe, as a dominant working language for PhD dissertation and/or master programs. Conversely, BA programs are mostly taught in national languages. Some countries, with no clear pattern, accept another language (usually with many speakers, like German or French, or from neighbouring countries) to write a doctoral dissertation. Spain includes the possibility to write academic dissertations in regional languages.

Table 5. The funding of PhD students nowadays.

Always	Usually	Rarely or never	NA
Denmark	Austria	Albania	Latvia
Estonia	Belgium	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Malta
Italy	Bulgaria	Croatia	Poland
Norway	Czech Republic	Germany	
Sweden	Finland	Greece	
	France	Macedonia	
	Hungary	Moldova	
	Iceland	Montenegro	
	Ireland (frequent)	Serbia	
	Israel	United Kingdom	
	Lithuania		
	Luxembourg		
	Netherlands		
	Portugal		
	Romania		
	Russia (partial funding)		
	Slovakia		
	Slovenia		
	Spain		
	Switzerland		
	Turkey (with variations)		

## 2/c education and the profession

Generally speaking, the tenured careers of the profession are very similar internationally. What

makes some variation is that career stability with relatively small numbers in the academic profession prevail in latecomer countries while more career uncertainty with higher numbers in the profession prevail in older democracies. To formulate differently, more traditional and more flexible employment forms feature the two groups of countries respectively. Flexibility might be a euphemism however as detailed qualitative summaries paint a darker picture in this regard. For example, it is claimed in one report that the role of the academic is being ‘unbundled’ in the sense that more people are being appointed to either teaching-only roles or research-only roles (across the university) and early career researchers operate on rolling fractional and temporary contracts and the share of permanent contracts is on decline. Expectedly, the difference between older and new democracies will soon diminish or disappear as the newcomers follow the trends in most aspects of institutional transformation of the forerunners.

As for the job market Table 6 presents a general picture. With hardly any exception, career opportunities lead first towards the state bureaucracy and second towards the private sector, which latter is unrelated to the academic field. New jobs are rare in the academia, only three countries report that academic jobs appear at the second place. In addition to consultancy, within the “other” option media jobs, local bureaucracy and NGO positions can be found.

Table 6 Career trajectory of political science graduates

country	Q19 career				
	State Bureaucracy	Academia	Consultancy	Private Sector	Other
Albania	1	2	4	5	3
Austria					
Belgium	1	5	4	2	3
Bosnia and Herzegovina					
Bulgaria	3	4	2	1	
Croatia	1	4	3	2	
Czech Rep	1	3	4	2	5
Denmark	1	4	3	5	2
Estonia					
Finland	1	5	3	4	2
France					
Germany	2	3	4	1	
Greece	2	3	4	1	
Hungary	1	4	3	2	
Iceland	1			3	2
Ireland	2	3	4	1	5
Israel	1	3	4	2	
Italy	1	5	4	2	3
Latvia					

Lithuania	2	5	4	3	1
Luxembourg	1	3		2	
Malta	1	4	3	2	5
Moldova			2		1
Montenegro	1	4	3	2	
Netherlands					
North Macedonia	1				
Norway	1	2	3	4	
Poland	1	4	3	2	
Portugal	3	2	4	1	
Romania	1	5	2	4	3
Serbia	2	4	3	1	
Slovakia	2	4	5	1	3
Slovenia					
Spain	4	3	1	2	
Sweden	2	4			1
Switzerland	1	4	3	2	
Turkey	1			2	
UK	1	4	3	2	

In terms of professional outputs, in an overwhelming majority of countries people who earned their PhD in political science mostly work in state bureaucracy or in the private sector unrelated with political science while academia is very rarely mentioned as a quantitatively important opportunity. This is interesting information: at a time in which political scientists are often asked to prove their ‘usefulness’ intended as a direct contribution to the job market, there is no such thing as a self-reproducing ‘ivory tower’ in Europe.

As far as the academic job market is concerned, it seems that a majority of countries are able to provide political scientists with an academic career intended as a long-during profession, be it de jure (as permanent civil servants or under a private contract) or de facto (with a succession of fixed-term contracts). However this also shows that in many countries a substantial part of the academic workforce is working in precarious conditions, sometimes as a dominant feature.

As for the institutional power of different agents at the different stages of the profession (from hiring to promotion) a highly varied picture evolves which would require further elaboration.

### 3. Political science research

Questions dealing with research in the questionnaire offer interesting insights.

The financial conditions for doing political science are overall described as challenging, difficult or



insufficient, with an exception of a limited of mostly North-European countries in which political scientists express some degree of satisfaction. One should stress that answers shed light on two different questions: the level of wealth (are resources potentially available for research in country X) and the accessibility to research money (when there is money, how difficult is it to obtain it)? Here it appears that it is possible though complicated especially when competitive schemes of funding are organized through a national body, as in several countries, and without mentioning European funding which, it should be stressed, seems to be a major source for political scientists lacking of domestic financing. The extreme variety of national situations and the *ad hoc* description colleagues were constrained to provide in lack of information, when the information is given, makes the comparative attempt difficult to reach. To a large extent, the same applies to the way research performance is rewarded and to how funding allocation is organized.

Points of convergence exist, however:

i) research is almost everywhere expected from the staff as a principle (though the way this rule is implemented is rarely carefully detailed and we are left with the impression that it might be ineffective or depending more on an individual ethical commitment than on a systemic rule where pressure may be very high;

ii) overall, evaluation procedure has become almost everywhere more frequent and, even if when stable, more demanding. The implications of such a trend are rarely commented but when they are political scientists express some concern because this appears as an excessively time-consuming activity which deprives them from the time to perform actual research;

iii) the distinction between research-oriented and teaching-oriented universities appears to be irrelevant in almost all cases (as a consequence of higher education and research staff expected to perform research) though the distinction between highly performing and less performing research units is sometimes mentioned;

iv) the existence of separated research institutes is not a frequent case. When there are some (e.g. French CNRS) their contribution to political science and their relations with other bodies (typically universities) is rarely made explicit.

The comparative insights about rules for funding academic units, assessing the impact of individual research in terms of funding and career and institutional layering regarding key elements of academic life (hiring procedures, rules of individual promotion, rules of institutional development) appear extremely fragmented. If, for instance, the department level (or what is understood as its equivalent) very often constitutes a key actor in the hiring process, the role of specific committees

or the intervention of university bodies are not systematically mentioned nor explained. This seems to be one of the most challenging task ahead.

#### **4. Prospects and visibility**

Questions regarding prospects for political science and visibility (final section) largely confirms some expected features about political science in Europe:

i) in many countries political science journals are published (the most populated the country, the higher the number of outlets) , often but not always in the main national language;

ii) in many countries (except the smallest), political science books are published, with a greater or lesser degree of academic specialisation among publishers. Rather than having political science publishers, there are usually academic publishers that include political research in their editorial policy; sometimes, political scientists may publish books for the more general (educated) public;

iii) in many if not all countries (with exceptions often characterized by the small size of given countries), a political science association does exist, though its public visibility, its impact on academic activities and its funding capacities are described as very modest or non-existent;

iv) as a consequence, it is not surprising that political science is seen in a large majority of countries as an acknowledged distinct discipline; it is quite noticeable that it is not seen under threat though some concern is expressed with political attacks in some countries and that it is often seen as characterized by a growing complexity and/or fragmentation, mostly expressed in terms of hyper-specialisation in larger political science communities. As for publication strategy unsurprisingly and in harmony with former knowledge international journals gain importance while publication at the national level is also preserved.

#### **C. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A major suggestion derives for the overall lack of previous investigation, data collection and comparative analysis. Apart from some meaningful but limited individual exceptions, the study of political science as a discipline is not by itself a subfield and the lack of systematic European research is obvious.

This COST Action will contribute to reduce this gap. But we must stress that only a collective effort can overcome the severe lack of information. This has remained an issue for decades now. As a consequence, a strong suggestion is to mobilize, as a minimal action, national political science associations (which, where not present, should be created in countries hosting political scientists), their European Confederation and possibly other meaningful actors (ECPR especially for research-related issues, and IPSA) to agree upon a sort of monitoring that would provide comparable data and thus would make comparative analysis feasible and that would, on the other hand, reinforce the sense of professional identity among political scientists but also their sense of Europeanness as scholars.

An important finding is that in certain respects substantial and fundamental similarities, the same developmental trends, or even the same concerns prevail about the state and the developments of political science discipline in this large country group. In this regard the institutional opportunities and constraints at the university system, the career conditions as well as the increasing demands that the professional community must face should be exemplified. In other respects however differences and variation can be observed, potentially on two grounds: one is the resources that are available in the different countries, and the other is the countries' more established or newcomer status with regard to the profession. While the former problem is more difficult to "handle" (possibly a more spread and more flexible cooperative and international funding could be a temporary solution) in the latter respect processes of integration can be the welcoming prospects as the academic demands and adjustment requirements eventually would trigger similar moves with regard to the profession of political science.