

Introduction: Goals and methodology

Action's coordination and achievement of the basic objectives

ProSEPS is an Action for the development of an innovative assessment of the state of European Political Science. While the work of the WGs included in the Action has focused on different aspects of the profession (see the reports from the 4 four WGs), the central coordination of the Action has offered a continuous effort to stimulate their work and to make them converging toward the development of a common framework for the understanding of Political Science's professionalization in Europe in the years to come. Moreover, according to the Action plan, the whole network of scholars involved has created the conditions to produce a comparative and integrative assessment of the degree of social impact produced by this academic discipline at a national and at a supranational level.

A fundamental preparatory work for the development of the action has been that of reaching a clear and shared measurement of the extent of the discipline and to get a comprehensive vision of its current state. Such a work was at the core of the basic objective of the action: **mapping the current state of professionalization and social impact of political science in Europe**.

An important exercise, in order to achieve this goal, has been the creation of a comprehensive directory of thousands of European political scientists. This outcome was produced after a work of operationalization developed by WG1 and a broad consultation with the Action members who served as “national experts” for this specific exercise (coordinated by WG3). Before launching the 2018 PROSEPS survey of European Political Scientists (see below) the whole

Action network was involved in a long collective preparatory work to create the directory of European Political Scientists, based on a few specific criteria. National supervisors and their teams started collecting data in summer 2017 and the whole contact file containing data from all countries became available about one year later. In order to identify a “political scientist” we thus looked at:

- when available: the **legal criteria provided in the domestic context** (e.g. national accreditation schemes; ministerial regulations)
- when official /legal criteria **did not exist (as in most of the considered countries)**:

(I) Institutional affiliation *or* PhD in Political Science *and*

(II) research record *or* teaching activities

We finally achieved a **directory of political scientists** including almost 11,500 persons, with their corresponding affiliations, basic sociologic features, areas of interests and email addresses.

A second fundamental objective of the Action was that of the **Consolidation of a common broad thematic framework to be applied to different projects some way connected to the research groups constituting the network**. The framework was re-discussed by the core team of the Action after screening the achievements and the prospects of the single WGs. This has made another general Action’s objective possible: **Promoting a truly cooperative and integrated network of scholars dealing with the study of political science’s professionalization**. The study of the evolving role of the discipline has been particularly at the core of WG4, which has developed a comprehensive qualitative study to support the overall picture provided by the survey data.

WG2 and WG3 have been concentrated on another fundamental objective of the Action: **Reinforcing the methodological instruments used for the**

comparative study of mobility and internationalization of political scientists (see WG2 report), as well as for the measurement of their social impact (see WG3 report).

A further step provided by the PROSEPS original action plan was of **developing adequate technical tools for the analysis of European Political Science professionalization.** This has been a continuous concern for the core group. Among the solutions defined for the achievement of such a goal, we should mention the discussion of different dynamic web-based data sources, the preparation of a permanent layout for the collection of expert surveys, the assemblage of domestic statistical summaries of existing sources of scientific impact, and other.

The circulation of short scientific missions and the dissemination of the results of the WG results via the whole community of Action members constituted the main instruments to achieve another fundamental objective: **Supporting the organization of training programmes and events designed to facilitate the socialization of junior and senior scholars with other professional groups interested in discussing the applicability of the outcomes of political science.** An important intermediate step in the achievement of such a goal will be the design thinking event to be realized in the Hague (in the occasion of the PROSEPS General Assembly 2019, see below). This represents an alternative way to look to the current state of the discipline and to discuss of its prospects via an exercise of gamification.

Together with WG the specific reports devoted to the future of institutionalization, mobility and internationalization, social visibility, advisory role of political scientists, the design thinking event is also conceived as a first moment of reflection in the attempt to reach another fundamental objective:

Clarifying strengths and weakness of the current degree of professionalization of the discipline. The discussion we are going to develop during the event is therefore projected to our future reflection about the possible strategies to be designed to make political science's findings more visible and relevant in social terms.

A common tool for the Action: the PROSEPS survey of European Political Scientists

As said already, the survey has been one of the main concern in the action of the Action coordination, given its strategical importance for the development of the work of all the WGs. WG3 has taken the responsibility to conduct and manage the Survey. The first invitations for our multilingual web-based questionnaire covering several attitudes of political scientists –such as **mobility, advocacy, media involvement and civic engagement**– has been sent in March 2018 and three reminders have been sent since then. The Presidents of the various National Political Science Associations have been periodically contacted in order to ask for supporting our project and advertising the survey among their members. All Cost members also engaged in promoting the survey among colleagues in their own countries. The last reminder before the closing of the survey has been sent in mid-November. A total of about 500 persons has been progressively excluded from the list of respondents because of invalid or undelivered emails, new position outside Europe, refusal, temporary unavailability or retirement, while about 300 email changes occurred because of new affiliations. In the space of about nine months we were able to collect almost 2500 full questionnaire responses (+ about 1000 incomplete) from 37

European countries plus Israel and Turkey¹. As shown by table 1 below we had a highly differentiated response rate among countries. This problem, together with the inevitable risk of self-selection in the responses (we expected more internationalized and publicly involved political scientists to be more likely to answer), suggest a certain caution in presenting all these findings as representative of the characteristics and attitudes of the population we intend to investigate. Still, to the best of our knowledge, this is the most complete survey ever realized among European Political Scientists², and as such the huge dataset we were able to construct may be of great interest for all scholars engaged in the study of the development of Political Science as an academic discipline.

¹ The investigation in Turkey started few months later compared to the other countries and was concluded in February 2019.

² Few months after the closure of our survey, ECPR and IPSA –respectively celebrating their 50th and 70th anniversary– launched a similar survey entitled the “World of Political Science survey (WPS-2019)”. Yet, their focus is not only European, and the dataset that will be released in early-2020 get more or less the same number of responses we had but from 102 different countries from all around the world.

Table 1. Responses to the General Survey

	Respondents	%	Population	%	Response rate
	N.		N.		
Albania	7	0,3	11	0,1	63,6
Austria	52	2,2	192	1,6	27,1
Belgium	87	3,7	329	2,8	26,4
Bosnia-Herzegovina	12	0,5	32	0,3	37,5
Bulgaria	15	0,6	72	0,6	20,8
Croatia	24	1,0	75	0,6	32,0
Czech Republic	44	1,9	151	1,3	29,1
Denmark	61	2,6	298	2,5	20,5
Estonia	11	,5	44	0,4	25,0
Finland	35	1,5	157	1,3	22,3
France	122	5,2	562	4,8	21,7
Germany	305	13,0	2071	17,5	14,7
Greece	65	2,8	362	3,1	18,0
Hungary	66	2,8	225	1,9	29,3
Iceland	8	0,3	22	0,2	36,4
Ireland	15	0,6	79	0,7	19,0
Israel	41	1,7	287	2,4	14,3
Italy	177	7,5	290	2,5	61,0
Latvia	13	0,6	36	0,3	36,1
Lithuania	46	2,0	197	1,7	23,4
Luxembourg	4	0,2	16	0,1	25,0
Macedonia	15	0,6	61	0,5	24,6
Malta	7	0,3	18	0,2	38,9
Montenegro	7	0,3	21	0,2	33,3

Norway	67	2,8	340	2,9	19,7
Poland	84	3,6	395	3,3	21,3
Portugal	40	1,7	136	1,1	29,4
Republic of Moldova	12	0,5	59	0,5	20,3
Romania	45	1,9	187	1,6	24,1
Russia	107	4,5	434	3,7	24,7
Serbia	23	1,0	92	0,8	25,0
Slovakia	38	1,6	203	1,7	18,7
Slovenia	16	0,7	88	0,7	18,2
Spain	140	5,9	461	3,9	30,4
Sweden	93	4,0	404	3,4	23,0
Switzerland	56	2,4	235	2,0	23,8
The Netherlands	84	3,6	456	3,9	18,4
Turkey	97	16,7	579	4,9	16,8
United Kingdom	213	9,0	2150	18,2	9,9
Total	2,451	100	11,827	100	20,7

