



ESHET

European Society for the History of Economic Thought

<http://www.eshet.net/>

Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon

President of the European Research Council

20 September 2017

Dear President Bourguignon,

In my capacity as president of the *European Society for the History of Economic Thought* (ESHET) and in concert with the presidents of several national and regional societies in the same discipline, I am writing to you with regard to the recent change in the classification of the ERC Peer Review Panels. It has been brought to our attention that the history of economic thought has been shifted from sub-panel SH1 (= Individuals Markets and Organisations) to sub-panel SH6 (= The Study of the Human Past). We find this decision most unfortunate and inappropriate, as it is likely to have negative consequences for research in our area.

Without informing any of the involved academic societies, it appears to have been argued that the history of economic thought belongs to the history of science, seen as a sub-discipline of History, and hence belonging to panel SH6. However, the history of economic thought has always been part of Economics as a discipline, and it helps to counteract the fragmentation of the discipline that has developed with increasing research specialization. ESHET has more than 400 members, and the other societies that sign below have more than 500 members altogether. Most of them are economists, not historians, by training and affiliation.

The reclassification of the history of economic thought as a subject for sub-panel SH6 implies a high risk of mismatch in the qualification profiles of applicants and peer reviewers, insofar as the latter are less likely to have a sufficient background in Economics. Moreover, the reclassification at the level of the ERC panels may affect the structures of peer-reviewing in the

major research funding agencies of EU member states. In a cascading process, the ERC reclassification tends to reduce the chances of projects in the history of economic thought to receive competent assessments.

We, the presidents and representatives of

the European Society of the History of Economic Thought (ESHET),

the Association Charles Gide (France),

the Ausschuss für die Geschichte der Wirtschaftswissenschaften, Verein für Socialpolitik (VfS - Austria, Germany, Switzerland),

the Associazione Italiana per la Storia dell' Economia Politica (STOREP - Italy),

the Associazione Italiana per la Storia Pensiero Economico (AISPE – Italy),

The History of Economic Thought Society (THETS – Ireland, United Kingdom), and

the Asociación Ibérica de Historia del Pensamiento Económico (Portugal, Spain)

therefore ask the European Research Council to kindly reconsider the recent change and to reintroduce the previous sub-category “History of economic thought” in SH1 (under SH14, together with Economic history, if possible and so desired by our colleagues).

Sincerely,

Professor Dr. Hans-Michael Trautwein (Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, ZenTra)
President, European Society for the History of Economic Thought

Professor Sylvie Rivot (Université de Mulhouse, BETA)
President, Association Charles Gide

Professor Dr. Volker Caspari (Technische Universität Darmstadt)
Chairman, Ausschuss für die Geschichte der Wirtschaftswissenschaften im Verein für Socialpolitik

Professor Maria Cristina Marcuzzo (Università di Roma “La Sapienza”)
President, Associazione Italiana per la Storia dell' Economia Politica

Professor Gianfranco Tuset (Università degli Studi di Padova)
President, Associazione Italiana per la Storia Pensiero Economico

Professor John Vint (Manchester Metropolitan University)
Chairperson, The History of Economic Thought Society

Professor José Luís Cardoso (Universidade de Lisboa)
Representative, Asociación Ibérica de Historia del Pensamiento Económico