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The Seventh Framework Program (FP7)

Introduction

The Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) refers to the actual programme in a series of multi-annual Framework Programmes that have been the European Union's main instrument for funding research and development since 1984. Programmes have so far been conceived for a period of five years. FP7, however, is for a period of 7 years between the 2007-2013.

The Main Objectives of FP7

FP7 aims for simplified instruments and procedures for funding and participation. Collaborative research will be based around broad research themes, rather than instruments, with much continuity from FP6 as well as the addition of two new topics, **space** and **security**.

The broad objectives of FP7 have been grouped into four categories: **Cooperation, Ideas, People** and **Capacities**. For each type of objective, there is a specific programme corresponding to the main areas of EU research policy. All specific programmes work together to promote and encourage the creation of European poles of (scientific) excellence.

1. Cooperation

▪ The specific programme on '**Cooperation**' supports all types of research activities carried out by different research bodies in trans-national cooperation. Eligible actions range from collaborative research projects and the creation of networks to the establishment of European Technology Platforms and the coordination of non-EU research programmes. International cooperation with non-EU countries is also included. Accounting for over half FP7's total budget, the 'Cooperation' Programme aims to gain or consolidate leadership in key scientific and technology areas.

Interantional cooperation actions will be:

-The opening of all activities carried out in the thematic areas to researchers and research institutions from all third countries, with a strong effort to encourage them to seize this opportunity.

-Specific cooperation actions in each thematic area dedicated to third countries in the case of mutual interest in co-operating on particular topics.



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Closely associated with the bilateral cooperation agreements or multilateral dialogues between the EU and these countries or groups of countries.

The programme will be sub-divided into nine distinct themes. Each one will be operationally autonomous while at the same time ensuring coherence within the Cooperation Programme and allowing for joint activities cutting across different themes, through, for example, joint calls.

The nine high level themes proposed for EU action are the following:

- Health
- Food, agriculture and biotechnology
- Information and communication technologies. ~~See also FP7 on IST~~
- Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies
- Energy
- Environment (including climate change)
- Transport (including aeronautics)
- Socio-economic sciences and the humanities
- Security and Space

In addition, two themes are covered by the Euratom Framework Programme:

- Fusion energy research
- Nuclear fission and radiation protection

2. Ideas

The specific programme for '**Ideas**' aims to support frontier research at the existing borders of knowledge, carried out by individual teams in all scientific and technological fields, including engineering, socioeconomic sciences and the humanities. This investigator-driven programme will be carried out by an independent **European Research Council (ERC)** to stimulate creativity, excellence and the discovery of radical, new knowledge.

3. People

The Specific Programme on '**People**' provides support to researchers, supporting their career development and mobility by means of an expansion of the existing 'Marie Curie' exchange programme. These actions will be reinforced and refocused on key aspects of skills and career development, while also strengthening the links with national research systems. The overall aim is to strengthen, qualitatively and quantitatively, human resources in the European research sector.



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4. Capacities

The specific programme on '**Capacities**' will focus on improving research capacities throughout Europe. The main actions include support to research infrastructures, research for the benefit of SMEs, regional research-driven clusters, help for convergence regions to unlock their full research potential, 'Science in Society' (activities aimed at strengthening the link between science and society in general) and horizontal activities of international cooperation.

In addition, there will also be a Specific Programme for non-nuclear research carried out directly by the **Joint Research Centre (JRC)** .

The Differences between FP7 and its predecessors

While building on the achievements of its predecessor, the Seventh Framework Programme will not be “just another Framework Programme”. In its content, organisation, implementation modes and management tools, it is designed as a key contribution to the re-launched Lisbon strategy.

The **new elements in FP7** include the following:

- Emphasis on research themes rather than on “instruments”
- Significant simplification of its operation
- Focus on developing research that meets the needs of European industry, through the work of **Technology Platforms** and the new **Joint Technology Initiatives**
- Establishment of a **European Research Council**, funding the best of European science
- Integration of **International cooperation** in all four programmes
- Development of **Regions of Knowledge**
- A Risk-Sharing Finance Facility aimed at fostering private investment in research.

3.Funding Schemes

The activities supported by the 7th Framework Programme will be funded through a range of “Funding schemes”. These schemes will be used, either alone or in combination, to actions implemented throughout the Framework Programme.



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The decisions for specific programmes, work programmes and calls for proposals will specify, as and when appropriate:

- The type(s) of scheme(s) used to fund different actions;
- The categories of participants (such as research organizations, universities, industry, SMEs, public authorities) which can benefit from it;
- The types of activities (such as research, and technological development, demonstration, management, training, dissemination—and other related activities) which can be funded through each of them.

Where different funding schemes can be used, the work programmes may specify the funding scheme to be used for the topic on which proposals are invited.

Funding schemes can be divided as follows:

- 1) To support actions which are primarily implemented on the basis of calls for proposals:
 - Collaborative projects: Support to research projects carried out by consortia with participants from different countries, aiming at developing new knowledge, new technology, products, demonstration activities or common resources for research
 - Networks of Excellence : Support to a Joint Programme of Activities implemented by a number of research organizations integrating their activities in a given field, carried out by research teams in the framework of longer term co-operation.
 - Coordination and support actions: Support to activities aimed at coordinating or supporting research activities and policies (networking, exchanges, trans-national access to research infrastructures, studies, conferences, etc).
 - Individual projects Support for “frontier” research: Support to projects carried out by individual national or transnational research teams. This scheme will be used to support investigator-driven “frontier” research projects funded in the framework of the European Research Council.
 - Support for training and career development of researchers: Support for training and career development of researchers, mainly used for the implementation of the Marie Curie actions.
 - Research for the benefit of specific groups (in particular SMEs) : Support to research and technological development projects where the



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- bulk of the research is carried out by universities, research centers or other legal entities, for the benefit of specific groups, in particular SMEs or associations of SMEs.
- 2) To support actions implemented on the basis of decisions by the Council and the European Parliament (or by the Council in consultation with the European Parliament, based on a proposal from the Commission, the Community will provide financial support to multi-financed large-scale initiatives.



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Budget breakdown of the Seventh Framework Programme

COOPERATION	Themes (Using all funding schemes. Including international cooperation.)	November 2007*
	Health	6100
	Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology	1935
	Information and Communication Technologies	9050
	Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies	3475
	Energy	2350
	Environment (including Climate Change)	1890
	Transport (including Aeronautics)	4160
	Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities	623
	Security and Space	Space 1430 Security 1400
Total COOPERATION		32413
IDEAS	European Research Council	7510
PEOPLE	Marie Curie Actions	4750
CAPACITIES	Research Infrastructures	1715

	Research for the benefit of SMEs	1336
	Regions of Knowledge	126
	Research Potential	340
	Science in Society	330
	Coherent development of research policies	70
	Activities of International Co-operation	180
TOTAL CAPACITIES		4097
Non-nuclear actions of the Joint Research Centre		1751
TOTAL EC		50521
Euratom for nuclear research and training activities		2751

* Council's compromise with Parliament of 13 November 2006.