

People – 2011 Work Programme

During his presentation of the responsibilities of the new commissioners on 27 November 2009, President Barroso explained that Marie Curie Actions will be transferred from DG Research to DG Education. The new Commission is expected to take up office on 10 February. The timetable for adopting the People WP 2011 is likely to remain similar to the one notified earlier to the Programme Committee with adoption foreseen in July 2010.

In view of the imminent transfer of responsibility, it is not appropriate at this stage to circulate the full draft Work Programme. However, to assist discussion at the meeting on 5 February, some issues resulting from the previous discussion are summarized in this note. This is of course without prejudice to the possibility that DG Education may wish to raise other issues following the transfer of responsibilities once they have had an opportunity to review the development of Marie Curie actions in FP7 and how these actions correspond to other programmes which they manage.

During the last Programme Committee meeting on 22 October 2009, the Commission services presented for discussion a note outlining a broad strategy for the 2011 work programme (attached at Annex I). During the meeting, a number of points were raised, notably:

- Budget distribution among the different actions: 8 delegations had the opinion that an evaluation should be carried out for the new actions COFUND and IRSES prior to any budget increase, and thus supported the transfer of this budget increase to well-established actions such as IAPP, ITN and Individual Fellowships (IEF, IIF, IOF).
- COFUND: 4 delegations considered any major change premature before the interim review of this action. 7 delegations were in favour of increasing the duration of the funding (from 48 to 60 months) and 6 delegations would support an increase in the maximum overall budget from 5 to 10 million EUR. 4 delegations were favourable towards an increased co-funding rate for the new schemes, though one was opposed;
- IRSES: 5 delegations advised to increase the level of the allowance offered, which would make the programme more attractive. The result of this would reduce the success rate currently at ca 60%.
- ITN/IAPP: 5 delegations supported an increase in the budget for the management costs. Currently, these are at a maximum of 7% for ITN and 3% for IAPP.

- Simplification: 5 delegations supported the proposition in the strategy note to simplify further the administrative and reporting requirements.

Concerning the Policy Actions, activities that were discussed in October will take place with the exception of the support to set up the preparatory phase for an EU-Pension Fund and the setting up of a EURAXESS Researcher's Card. It is foreseen rather to have a feasibility study for the "Researchers Card" in 2011. Consequently the budgetary requirements for the planned work for 2011 amount to 7.6 million EUR (instead of 11.7 million EUR) from the People Budget.

In addition to these points, the following further issues are proposed for discussion during the next meeting:

- Future of ERG action: Possibilities are to maintain it as it is, abolish it, or modify it.

In its current form the ERG action, consisting of integrating Marie Curie fellows into a work position at the end of their fellowship, without the requirement of transnational mobility, is not demonstrating clear impact for the ERA. Therefore the abolition of the action could be considered. As an alternative, to improve the European impact, a possible modification could be to make transnational mobility a requirement for the award of the grants, and also open up the action to all researchers, independently of whether they had a previous Marie Curie fellowship or not. A merge with IRG into a single action could be envisaged.

- Simplification of allowances:

Possibility to reduce the number of cost categories by combining mobility, travel and career exploratory allowances into a single allowance, in both the host driven and the individual fellowship actions.

- ITN action:

- This action could be further focused on the training of ESRs and the key competences necessary to improve their employability and their career prospects both in the academic and the private sectors. Possible ways of doing this are:

* abolishing the specific category of Visiting Researchers while retaining the possibility for the network to continue to benefit from

experienced researchers with outstanding experience in international training via the Transfer of Knowledge cost category. This would also constitute an additional simplification.

* paying particular attention to the meaningful exposure of ESRs to the private sector/business environment through well targeted secondments.

- How can we encourage the private sector, and particularly SMEs, to be more actively involved in the training of the future generation of researchers? Could the recruitment of ERs be used as an incentive to encourage this participation?

Attachment:

Annex I- Strategy Note (discussed during the last meeting on 22/10/2009)

The 2011 PEOPLE Work Programme: Elements for a first discussion

Strategy

The People Specific Programme identifies the Marie Curie and other policy actions as the instruments to enhance the training, mobility and career development of researchers in the ERA and its international dimension.

Within the existing Framework Programme legislation, the 2011 Work Programme would fully support the researchers' related ERA-initiatives as proposed by the Commission in 2008¹. These initiatives seek to make Europe decisively more attractive for researchers and to establish a balanced "brain circulation" within the EU as well as with third countries.

The Marie Curie Actions identified in the People Specific Programme are now functioning fully. Certain actions have been simplified and made more responsive to the needs of the European Research Area. No new schemes are foreseen in 2011, though the new actions introduced in FP7 will be further developed.

The 2011 Budget of 767 Million EUR represents a 52% increase over the average annual budget available for the period 2007 – 2010, and a 40% increase over the 2010 budget. The 2011 budget would be allocated to meet the overall funding objectives established in 2007 for the key policy areas, and would take account of the levels of demand for the different schemes. It would allow the funding of some 8900 fellows, of which about one third relate to the international dimension, in particular the World fellowships. The budget would also allow funding of 1700 initial training fellowships; 2900 fellowships for life-long training and career development, the majority under COFUND; and 1200 under the industry academia partnership action.

Inter-sector mobility would therefore continue to be a priority. Such mobility should have a structuring role and impact positively on researchers' employability. This issue is particularly addressed through the host-driven actions. In the 2011 WP there would be calls for both the ITN and IAPP actions. The participation of SME's would continue to be actively encouraged.

The People Specific Programme will remain the most open of the Framework Specific Programmes to international cooperation, with over a quarter of the budget for this objective.

In a more comprehensive way than in the past, fellows would be encouraged to participate actively in outreach activities.

Some of the most recent major calls witnessed significantly increased numbers of applications (up 40-50%). This demonstrates that the already high demand for training and mobility is even stronger during the recession.

¹ "Better careers and more mobility: a European partnership for researchers" (COM(2008)317 final of 23 May 2008) and "A strategic Framework for EU International S&T cooperation" (COM(2008)588 final of 24 September 2008)

Since June 2009, all the Marie Curie Actions have been implemented by the new Research Executive Agency and in 2011 all actions other than those linked to policy formulation will be implemented by the REA.

Policy Actions

The actions to promote the implementation of the European Partnership for Researchers (EPR) for better careers and mobility that have been developed to date including stakeholder consultation, data collection and the EURAXESS "Researchers in Motion" activities would be continued. The 2011 Work Programme would include continued support as well as new actions, such as a Researcher Card (a card that would facilitate access to information and services, discounts, and at the same time help managing data on the mobility flow of researchers and their families); the New Links strategy (a new approach to EURAXESS links with built-in provisions for communication and collaboration, and the objective to have a total of 6 countries or regions as a hub by 2013); preparatory provisions for a Pan-EU Pension Fund; and further analyses and preparation of policies concerning researchers' mobility and career paths and patterns, especially with the mandate of the EPR Communication ending in 2010.

Complementary actions on researchers-related policies could also be funded through the FP7 Capacities 'Support for the Coherent Development of Research Policies' work programme.

Budget

The relative priorities foreseen for the whole FP7 period have been respected so far, and would be continued in 2011.

People Budget - Indicative Relative Allocation to date²

Action line/scheme	Indicative Share foreseen for 2007 to 2013	Share up to WP 2010
Initial training of researchers	ca. 40%	41%
Life-long training and career development	25-30%	30%
Industry-academia pathways and partnerships	5-10%	8%
International dimension	25-30%	25%
Policy actions (+ Evaluations etc)	ca. 1%	2%

The average budget expenditure to date on an annual and call basis and a possible indicative 2011 allocation, together with an estimate of the numbers of fellows the actions would support, is summarised in the table below.

² The percentage of "International dimension" includes the World fellowships, as well as part of the other actions that have an international component without being primarily oriented towards it (IRG, part of ITN and IAPP). As a consequence the total percentages exceed 100%.

Possible Indicative WP 2011 Budget

Action line/scheme	Average annual budget spend up to 2010 (M€)	Average call budget up to 2010 (M€)	Community Budget in WP 2011 (M€)	Estimated number of fellows to be supported in the WP 2011
Initial training Networks	209	278	300	1,700
Life-long training and career development	141	159	200	2,900
<i>IEF</i>	86	86	110	650
<i>COFUND</i>	55	73	90	2,250
Reintegration	28	28	40	400
<i>ERG</i>	9	9		
<i>IRG</i>	19	19		
Industry-academia pathways and partnerships	38	51	75	1,200
World Fellowships	72	78	120	2,700
<i>IOF</i>	27	27	35	150
<i>IIF</i>	27	27	35	200
<i>IRSES</i>	18	24	50	2,350
Policy actions	8	10	15	
<i>NIGHT</i>	3	3	4	
<i>EURAXESS</i>	1	3	3	
<i>Policy Actions (Non call based)</i>	4	4	8	
MC Actions subtotal	496	604	750	8,900
Other spending (experts, impact assessments, etc.)	7	7	17	
Grand TOTAL	503	611	767	8,900

The most recently adopted Correction Coefficients and annual inflationary indexation would be used for salaries and allocations in grant agreements eventually concluded under the WP 2011.

Simplification

A number of simplifications have been made in FP7, e.g. in terms of eligibility rules and the abolition of the nationality rule; and the extension of fixed allowances or flat rates.

IRSES and COFUND, for example, are easier to implement, as allowances are fixed in the contract.

In 2011 some further specific simplifications for the ease of applicant and for the operation of the programme could be examined. Areas that could be reviewed include:

- Eligibility for the mobility, family and travel allowances;
- Increased flexibility for Visiting Researchers in Host Actions (e.g. duration and costs claims);
- Possible discontinuation of the European Reintegration Grants;
- Harmonisation of management costs for IAPP and ITN (at 7% of total EC contribution)
- Clarification of the Grant Agreement Annex III relating to revision of correction coefficients.

This is obviously not an exhaustive list. The views of the Programme Committee are welcome.

COFUND and IRSES

These two schemes are new in FP7. Separate discussion papers have been circulated to the Programme Committee about their possible future development, following the experience of the first calls.

Outreach

In order to increase the impact and visibility of research in the ERA, it is proposed to strengthen the encouragement given to proposers to identify outreach activities to society at large in proposals, and to introduce appropriate guidelines for applicants and evaluation criteria. To give some importance to this it would apply to proposals for both individual fellowships and host-driven actions.

To respond to demand, the budget for the NIGHT Action should be re-examined.

Other Activities

It will be necessary to increase the budget for Expert Evaluators, in line with the expected higher numbers of applications already seen in the most recent calls.

Timetable to the 2011 WP

Draft Work Programme	March 2010
Interservice consultation, Programme Committee opinion,	from May to June 2010
Adoption of the 2011 Work Programme	from June to July 2010
Publication of the 2011 Work Programme	July 2010
	before end of July 2010