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The potential contribution of the 7th Framework Research Programme (FP7) to disability equality research: Preliminary results of the EuRADE review of the FP7 work programmes

Prof. Lisa Waddington,
EDF Chair in European Disability Law,
Jantien Dekkers, Research Assistant,
Maastricht University (NL)

Structure of Presentation

1. Aims of the EuRADE Review of 7th Framework Research Programme (FP7)
2. Structure of the 7th Framework Research Programme (FP7) and Areas to be reviewed
3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme
4. Case Studies of Calls from the ICT Work Programme
5. Preliminary Results of the Review of the PEOPLE Programme

1. Aims of EuRADE Review of FP7 (1)

- A. To identify whether any current or upcoming calls allow for the possibility to fund the research proposals developed within EuRADE
- B. To identify the “match” between FP7 calls and the research priorities of DPOs as identified in the EuRADE consultation survey
- C. To identify the extent to which FP7 calls allow for the funding of disability related research

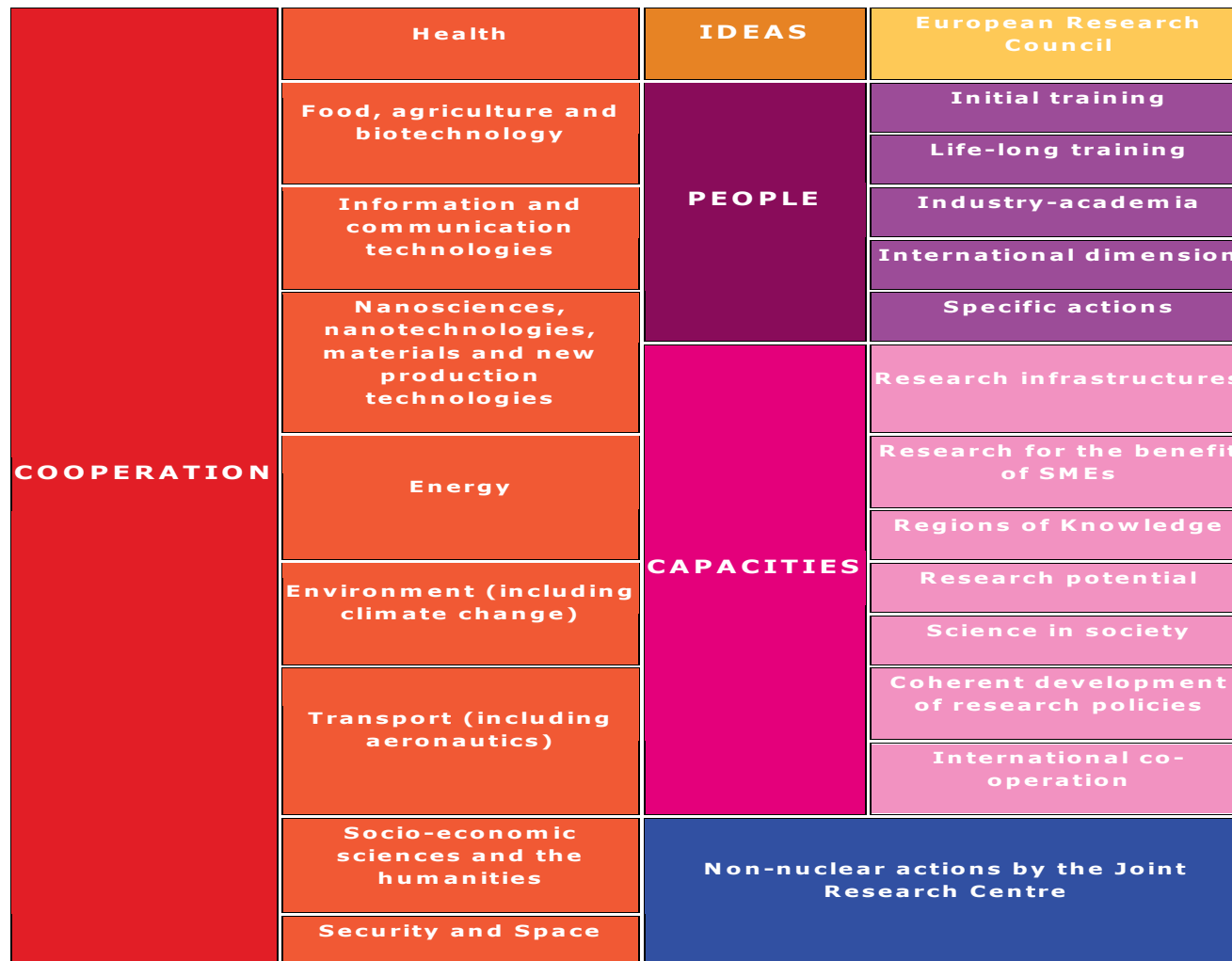
1. Aims of EuRADE Review of FP7 (2)

- D. To identify the extent to which FP7 calls allow for participatory research involving DPOs.
- E. To identify the room for campaigning to improve the “disability” dimension of future calls.

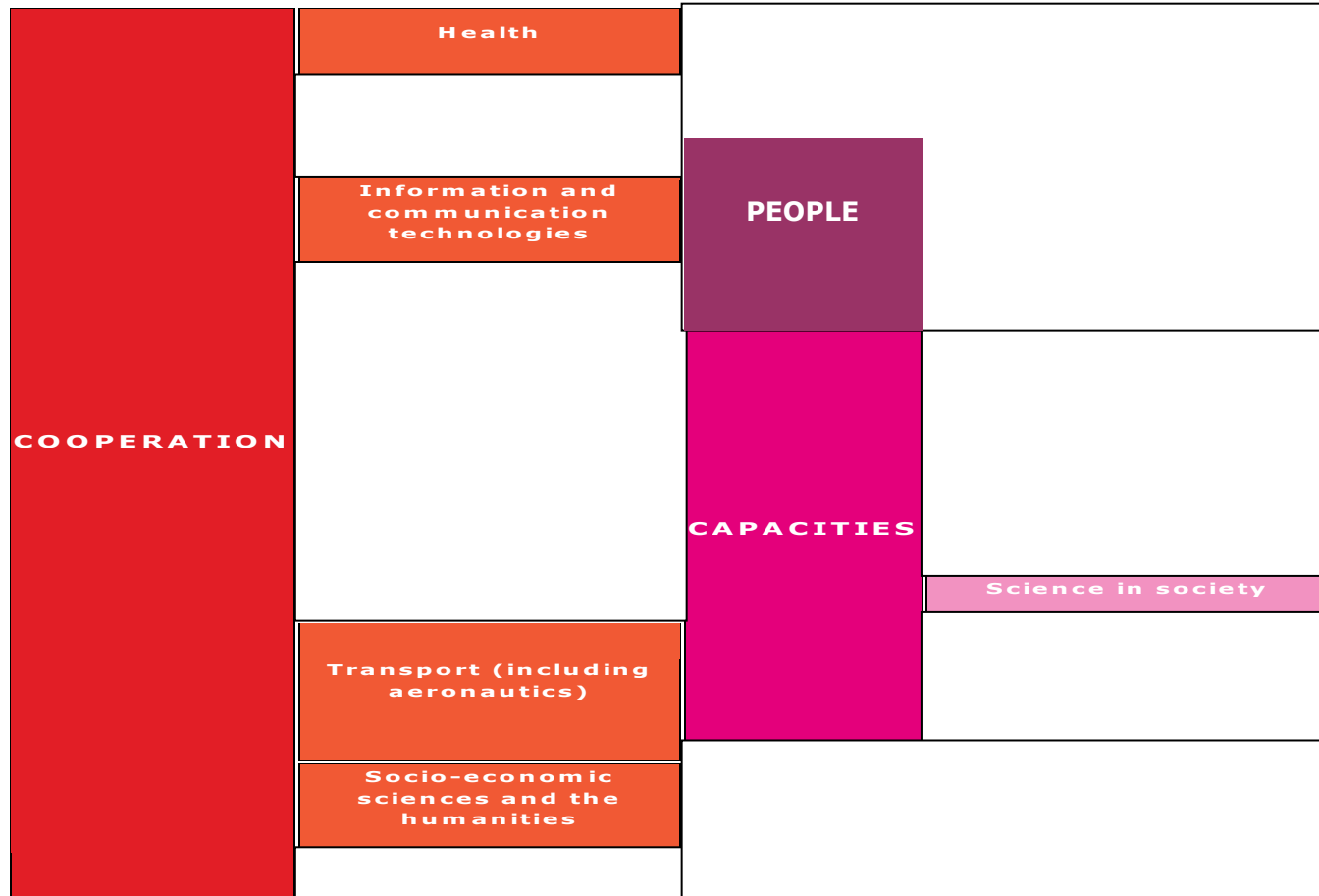
2. Structure of FP7 and Areas to be Reviewed (1)

- The EU funds an enormous amount of research.
- Funding: 5.3 billion euros in 2006 and more than 10 billion euro by 2012.
- Funds research carried out by academics, industry and SMEs.

2. Structure of FP7 and Areas to be Reviewed (2)



2. Structure of FP7 and Areas to be Reviewed (3)



2. Structure of FP7 and Areas to be Reviewed (4)

- For each theme or area, there is a specific work programme.
- The work programme consists of a large number of calls, each setting out the nature of the research to be funded and the expected goals to be achieved by the research.
- Researchers submit their proposals under a specific call and these are reviewed.
- Proposals which are awarded the highest grade are most likely to receive funding.

2. Structure of FP7 and Areas to be Reviewed (5)

- Calls which explicitly refer to disability and likely to:
 - stimulate researchers to take account of disability in their proposals
 - lead to research projects which take account of disability being funded

3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (1)

- Generally speaking, individual calls within a work programme can:
 - Address disability specifically.
 - Address mainstream issues, but include a specific reference to disability in the context of the research.
 - Address mainstream issues, but include a generic reference to e.g. “vulnerable groups”, “combating discrimination” etc., which could “open the door” to disability related research.

3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (2)

- Address mainstream issues, and include no reference to disability even though this would be appropriate.
- Address issues completely unrelated to disability
- Allow for (or not allow for) the involvement of civil society in the research (participatory research) or allow for end users to test results of research, i.e. allow for DPO involvement.

3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (3)

How does the ICT Work Programme address disability /involvement of DPOs?

- Many positive aspects in the ICT work programme.
- An interesting set of disability specific calls.
- Some involvement for users is provided for.

3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (4)

- One the research priorities identified in the EuRADE consultative survey is also addressed in the work programme:
 - research to promote the development of information and communication systems, resources and products inclusive and accessible to disabled people

3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (5).

But, three shortcomings:

A. Some mainstream calls make no specific reference to disability, or the needs of disabled users, even though this would be appropriate.

- As a result, researchers will not be encouraged to address the disability dimension in their research proposal.
- Mainstreaming of disability is required in FP7 work programmes – to encourage researchers to address disability in their research proposals, and ensure funded research addresses disability.

3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (6)

B. Calls designed to influence the development of general ICT standards do not mention the need to ensure design for all (universal design)

- It is important that such standards incorporate the needs of all potential users, i.e. that they are based on design for all principles.
- The ICT Work programme includes a number of calls which will fund research designed to develop standards, but there is no mention of the need for those standards to embrace design for all principles or incorporate the needs of users with a disability.

3. Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (7)

- Generally, there is a need to recognize the importance of standards which are based on design for all principles throughout all FP7 work programmes.

Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (8)

C. No possibility for participatory research – some limited possibility for user involvement in dissemination of information or testing

- Participatory research involves civil society organizations / DPOs participating as equal partners in research projects – setting the agenda and contributing to the research where appropriate.
- There is no possibility for participatory research of this nature in the ICT work programme.

Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (9)

- However, to address this issue, it is not sufficient for the work programmes to require that user groups / civil society orgs., such as DPOs, are involved in carrying out the research.
- Research in fields such as ICT and transport is highly technical – requires specialized knowledge.
- In order to allow for participatory research, it is important that FP 7 work programmes provide funding to allow user groups and civil society organizations, including DPOs, to develop capacity to engage with researchers.

Preliminary Results of the Review of the ICT Work Programme (10)

- This would include both training on relevant research methodologies and the content of research.
- Some of the calls in the ICT work programme do allow for user involvement – e.g. in testing ICT products or disseminating information.

4. Case Studies of Calls from the ICT Work Programme

Main Shortcomings

- A. Some mainstream calls make no specific reference to disability, or the needs of disabled users, even though this would be appropriate.
- B. Calls designed to influence the development of general ICT standards do not mention the need to ensure design for all (universal design)
- C. No possibility for participatory research – some limited possibility for user involvement in dissemination of information or testing

A. No Specific Reference to Disability in Mainstream Calls

- Research in ICT can be of great relevance to people with disabilities
- To encourage relevant research, it is important to refer to disability in the calls
- Call 4.2 Technology-enhanced learning
- There is a need for mainstream products to be disability accessibility and for disability specific products where necessary
- However, Call 4.2 makes no reference to disability

B. Calls to develop Global ICT Standards do not refer to the need to take account of Design for All

- Call 1.1 'The Network of the Future'
Aim: development of "novel internet architectures and technologies", including development of global standards

The internet can currently be inaccessible to pwd
- Global standards can facilitate accessibility by incorporating Design for All principles
- Call only includes vague reference to 'multiplicity of user requirements' - does not refer to Design for All

C. Limited possibilities for user involvement or participatory research

- Researchers can have insufficient knowledge of disability
- DPOs can have insufficient knowledge of technology
- Cooperation can lead to better research
- No possibility for participatory research in Work Programme – but some possibility for a Coordination Action under the disability specific call (e.g. Users groups and researchers)

Shortcomings of the ICT Work Programme - disability perspective

- Call 4.1 'Digital Libraries'
 - No mention of need to incorporate requirements of users with a disability
 - No involvement of users with a disability foreseen

Shortcomings of the ICT Work Programme - disability perspective

- Suggestions for improvement Call 4.1:
 - Reference to disability accessibility / design for all
 - All potential users involved in development process
- Result: better product for the user, the industry and the market.

5. Preliminary results of the People Programme (1)

- The PEOPLE programme is designed to increase mobility and life long learning for researchers.
- PEOPLE covers salary and mobility (travel between host and home country).

5. Preliminary results of the People Programme (2)

- Individuals with a disability can experience higher costs when they move to a new Member State to carry out research:
 - higher transport costs
 - costs related to adapting workplace
 - higher housing costs
- To increase the opportunities for researchers with a disability, it would be appropriate for PEOPLE to provide researchers with disabilities with additional funding, if the nature of their disability / situation justifies this.