Université catholique de Louvain UCL

EPP meeting on simplification: The way ahead

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Rector of UCL

30 November 2010

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2 sites in Belgium:

Louvain-la-Neuve

Brussels (Woluwe-Saint-Lambert)

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3 Sectors :

- **Science and technology**
- **Medical sciences**
- **Humanities and social sciences**

14 Faculties

21 Research institutes

25 000 students

5 000 members of staff:

- **1 400 academics**
- **1 800 scientists**
- **1 800 administrative staff**

3 Science parks

2 University hospitals

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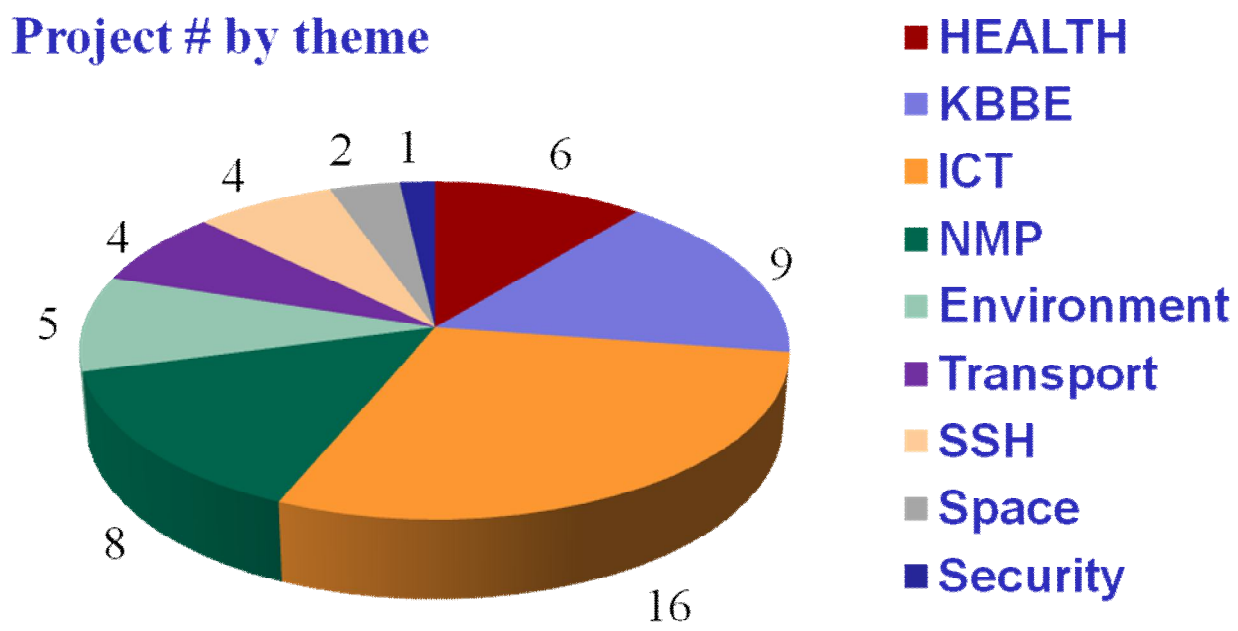
Participation of UCL to FP7 ➔ already 90 contracts

Cooperation Programme



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Participation of UCL to FP7

Programmes	# of projects
EURATOM	
Nuclear Fission and radiation Protection	4
CAPACITIES	
Infrastructures	5
Research to the benefit of SME	1
PEOPLE (Marie Curie)	20
ERC	
Starting grants	3
Advanced grants	2

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FP7 survey at UCL (February 2010)

➔ Feed-back from the researchers

Positive aspects of FP7:

- Networking allowing exchanges of high level and ambitious projects
- Multidisciplinarity
- Source of funding for research

Bottlenecks:

- Heavy administrative procedures for preparation, evaluation, negotiation and reporting of projects
- Timing not adequate (too much time from submission to signature of the contract)
- Too many different complicated rules between FP7 programmes
- Lack of continuity in the calls for proposals
- Lack of flexibility in terms of consortia size and composition
- Insufficient funds for fundamental research

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UCL recommendations

UCL has also participated to a work-group that was organized under the auspice of belgian Presidency of the EU Council, to write a belgian position paper on the FP simplification.

UCL would like to stress the following recommnendations:

- Harmonize the rules across the different programmes
- Improve the evaluation process : more transparent, and based on excellence
- Encourage more two-stage proposal submission procedures
- Reduce the time between application and signature of contract
- Developp better centralised IT tools for the management of projects
- Introduce more bottom-up approach in the definition of projects
- Introduce more flexibility on the consortia composition
- Reinforce the funding for fundamental research
- Accept usual accounting practices of each institution
- Abolish the use of time-sheets for personnel
- Drop recovery of interest on pre-financing

Issues to be carefully discussed:

- The proposed move towards a « **result-based » funding** has to be considered very carefully !

  How to define « results » or « outputs » of a research?
  In research, the absence of result being a result in itself!

  This approach could lead to favor less risky projects, this would be against the concept of innovation !

- The introduction of **lump-sums** could be considered with great care:

  only if they are used on a voluntary basis,
  and if they are based on the actual costs of each institution.

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Thank you for your attention!

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