Participation in a research and development programme: enhancing the quality of life of older people through the use of new ICT

2007/0116(COD) - 09/07/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to enable EC financial contribution to the AAL Joint Programme.

LEGISLATIVE ACT : Decision No 742/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Community's participation in a research and development programme undertaken by several Member States aimed at enhancing the quality of life of older people through the use of new information and communication technologies

CONTENT: this Decision provides that, in implementing the Seventh Framework Programme, the Community shall make a financial contribution to the ambient assisted living joint research and development programme (the AAL Joint Programme) undertaken jointly by Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Hungary, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom (the participating Member States) as well as Israel, Norway and Switzerland.

The Community will pay a **financial contribution amounting to a maximum of EUR 150 million** for the duration of the Seventh Framework Programme for the implementation of the AAL Joint Programme, in accordance with the principles set out in Annex I, which forms an integral part of the Decision. Further financing options may be available, inter alia, from the European Investment Bank (EIB), in particular through the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility developed jointly by the EIB and the Commission pursuant to Annex III to Decision 2006/971/EC.

The Community financial contribution will be paid from the general budget of the EU allocated to the information and communication technologies (ICT) theme of the Specific Programme "Cooperation".

The programme, "**Ambient Assisted Living" (AAL Joint Programme),** seeks to enhance and improve the quality of life of older people whilst strengthening the industrial base in Europe through the use of ICT. In addition, it has the following **specific aims**:

- to foster the emergence of innovative ICT-based products, services and systems for ageing well at home, in the community, and at work, thus increasing the quality of life, autonomy, participation in social life, skills and employability of elderly people, and reducing the costs of health and social care;

- to create a critical mass of research, development and innovation at EU level in technologies and services for ageing well in the information society, including the establishment of a favourable environment for participation by SMEs;

- to improve conditions for industrial exploitation by providing a coherent European framework for developing common approaches and facilitating the localisation and adaptation of common solutions which are compatible with varying social preferences and regulatory aspects at national or regional level across Europe.

The participating Member States have agreed on a dedicated implementation structure to implement the AAL Joint Programme. This dedicated implementation structure will be the recipient of the financial contribution from the Community and ensure the efficient execution of the AAL Joint Programme.

The AAL programme is the first of four initiatives based on article 169 of the EC treaty that are planned during the course of the EC's 7th Research Framework Programme (2007 to 2013). Article 169 regulates the participation of the Community in research programmes jointly undertaken by several EU Member States, including participation in the structures created for the execution of those programmes.

Reports:the annual report on the Seventh Framework Programme must include a report on the activities of the AAL Joint Programme. An interim evaluation will be carried out by the Commission two years after the start of the Programme, but in any case no later than 2010. Further interim evaluations may be carried out. The interim evaluation will cover the progress towards the objectives of the AAL Joint Programme set out in Annex I, including recommendations on the most appropriate ways to further enhance integration, the quality and efficiency of the implementation, including scientific, management and financial integration, of the AAL Joint Programme and whether the level of the financial contributions of the participating Member States, Israel, Norway and Switzerland is appropriate, given the potential demand from their various national research communities. Experience from other joint programmes carried out under Article 169 of the Treaty will also be taken into account. At the end of 2013, the Commission will conduct a final evaluation.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 02/08/2008.