European innovation partnership on active and healthy ageing

2012/2258(INI) - 29/02/2012 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: Communication on the Strategic Implementation Plan of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing.

CONTEXT: demographic ageing is one of the most serious challenges Europe is facing. According to recent projections, the number of Europeans aged 65 and over will almost double over the next 50 years, from 87 million in 2010 to 148 million in 2060. If this demographic transition is not tackled head-on, it will raise considerable concerns for the financial sustainability of health and care systems. Public spending on health already accounts for 7.8% of GDP in the EU, and by 2060, public expenditure on acute health care and long-term care is expected to increase by 3 % of GDP due to ageing.

The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (the Partnership) has been selected as a pilot to tackle the challenge of an ageing population in the context of the Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative "Innovation Union". It sets a target of increasing the healthy lifespan of EU citizens by 2 years by 2020, and aims to pursue a triple win for Europe by: (i) improving health and quality of life of older people, (ii) improving the sustainability and efficiency of care systems and iii) creating growth and market opportunities for businesses.

The Partnership brings together **public and private stakeholders** to accelerate the deployment of major innovations by committing them to undertaking supply and demand side measures across sectors and the entire innovation system. The Partnership is neither a new funding programme or instrument nor a new legal entity, and does not replace existing decision-making processes. It plays a part in achieving some of the objectives that the EU set itself for 2012 in the context of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

CONTENT: this **Communication is the Commission's response to the Strategic Implementation Plan, the first landmark document of the Partnership.**

1) The Strategic Implementation Plan: the Plan adopted by the Partnership's Steering Group in November 2011, focuses on actions developed around 3 pillars: (i) prevention, screening and early diagnosis; (ii) care and cure; and (iii) active ageing and independent living. The Commission welcomes the Plan, and **affirms its commitment to the Plan's implemen**tation and sets out the ways in which it will support the Plan at EU level. Through the implementation of the Plan, the Commission expects to see a major acceleration of innovation for healthy and active ageing and progress towards achieving the Partnership headline target and objectives. This requires new forms of cooperation among the many actors concerned – those already involved in the preparation of the Plan and those ready to engage in its implementation.

2) Favourable regulatory framework: the document stresses the need to support the development of a new EU framework for interoperability testing, quality labelling and certification of eHealth, integrated care, independent living and active ageing solutions and platforms. To support the set-up of favourable framework conditions, the Commission will:

- take into account the objectives and priorities of the Partnership as defined in the Plan in the revision of relevant EU legislation such as on medical devices (Directives 90/385/EEC, 93/42 /EEC and 98/79/EC) and a **proposal for a European Accessibility Act;**

- accelerate standards development under the standardisation mandates on ICT, built environment and mainstreaming accessibility. A first set of new standards for accessibility should be in place by 2013;

- support relevant stakeholders at appropriate levels in developing specific incentives schemes to enable deployment of solutions;

- support the development of standardised terminologies, data, clinical information and medical models as well as support public authorities in undertaking pre-commercial procurement and the procurement of innovative solutions, through the EU's research and innovation programmes;

- support work with public and private sector stakeholders to improve forecasting of health workforce needs and to adapt skills and competences;

- make use of the instruments under Directive on patients' rights in the cross border care to support implementation of relevant actions identified in the Plan.

3) Effective funding mechanisms: the Communication sets out the ways in which the Commission is linking up advanced and applied research and large-scale validation of innovation for the Plan's actions. The Commission will, amongst other things:

- ensure the effective use of funding allocated to the Partnership Plan priorities, in particular the ICT part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) in support of the validation and deployment of services, interoperability, evidence aggregation and capacity building; the AAL Joint Programme, the FP7 for ICT research in 2013 and Health Programme for 2012-2013;

- take account of relevant priorities of the Plan together with input from other stakeholders for future research and innovation work programmes and instruments (i.e. Horizon 2020).

4) Marketplace: in order to facilitate exchange of ideas and cooperation of partners, irrespective of specific actions submitted under the Partnership, the Commission will, from 2013, set up a digital based platform open to all stakeholders ("marketplace"). This platform will help stakeholders to find partners, share practices and projects, access robust data and evidence, and link to other innovation and age-related platforms. Interested actors who are not in a position to mobilise sufficient critical mass in order to be directly involved in implementation of the Plan will be invited to participate in and contribute to this marketplace. The Commission will also contribute to the collection, categorisation and analysis of relevant evidence and data, and their open and shared access, from 2013, with the support of the Joint Research Centre and the Partnership's stakeholders.

5) Launching actions on the ground: participation in the Partnership provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to benefit from political support, share risks, lower costs by increased economies of scale and sharing of solutions, as well as save time and effort and increase credibility by joint collection and dissemination of evidence.

The Commission proposes two distinct modalities to deliver the Plan:

- the design and launch of "invitations for commitment" by the end of February 2012;

- the identification and assessment of candidate "reference sites" by 2013.

"**Invitations for commitment**" will focus on implementing specific actions of the Plan, while "**reference sites**" will provide an inspiration through examples of existing and successful integrated solutions to active and healthy ageing.

6) Monitoring and assessment of progress: the Commission will:

- with support of the Joint Research Centre, build a **monitoring and assessment framework** (with a first version by early 2013), drawing on the various actions undertaken by stakeholders in line with the priority action areas identified in the Plan, taking account of their timeline and nature;

- report on the progress of the Plan's implementation, to the European Parliament and the Council on an annual basis, starting from early 2013.

7) Governance: to ensure delivery of actions as set in the Plan, the Commission will:

- put in place a simple and flexible governance model (Action Groups, interim Steering Group, Conference of Partners) to operationally and strategically guide the two modalities for the Plan implementation from first quarter of 2012;

- provide a progress report on the EIP by 2013.

The Communication concludes that valuable experiences have been gained in the development of this Partnership and its implementation. The Commission will continue to include these lessons in its proposals for the development and design of future EIPs addressing other societal challenges, as set out in the Innovation Union strategy com10546. It will organise a review of all the EIPs during 2013 to take stock of progress.