Active and assisted living research and development programme: participation of the Union

2013/0233(COD) - 15/05/2014 - Final act

PURPOSE: to directly support and complement the Union policies in the field of active and healthy ageing.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision No 554/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the participation of the Union in the Active and Assisted Living Research and Development Programme jointly undertaken by several Member States (ALA Programme).

CONTENT: this Decision is **part of a package of four legal acts for a new generation of public - private partnerships** that will allow large-scale, long-term innovation projects to be carried out under the umbrella of Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation framework programme.

Three other public-public partnerships will be further developed on research programmes jointly undertaken by Member States with the participation of the Union in the areas of:

- a second research and development programme aimed at supporting research and development performing small and medium-sized enterprises (‘Eurostars-2’);
- a European research and innovation programme on metrology (EMPIR) ;
- a second partnership programme between European and developing countries countries on clinical trials (EDCTP-II).

Objective: the Decision establishes the **rules for participation** for the Union in the Active and Assisted Living Research and Development Programme ("**AAL Programme**") jointly undertaken by Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Decision.

Any Member State and any other country associated to Horizon 2020 may apply to join the AAL Programme at any time, provided it fulfils the conditions regarding financial contribution.

Programme objectives: the ALA programme has the following objectives:

- accelerate the **emergence and take-up of relevant, affordable and integrated innovative ICT-based solutions** for active and healthy ageing at home, in the community, or at work, thus improving the quality of life, autonomy, social inclusion, participation in social life, skills or employability of older adults and contributing to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of health and social care provision;
- support the **development of solutions that contribute to the independence and alleviation of a sense of social isolation** of older adults, in such a way that the ICT component does not reduce human contact, but is complementary to it;

- develop **cost-effective, accessible and energy-efficient solutions**, which are compatible with varying social preferences, socio-economic factors (including energy poverty, social inclusion), **gender aspects**, and the protection and security of personal data.

The AAL Programme should also ensure the promotion of **gender equality** and comply with **ethical principles** as set out in Horizon 2020.

Union financial contribution: the Union financial contribution covering administrative costs and operational costs shall be up to **EUR 175 000 000.** This contribution shall be paid from appropriations allocated to the relevant parts of the Specific Programme implementing Horizon 2020.

Implementation: the Participating States have agreed on the implementation structure for the AAL Programme and set up in 2007 the "Ambient Assisted Living" aisbl, an international non-profit association with legal personality established under Belgian law ('AALA'). **The AALA** should be used as the implementation structure and should take the role as allocation and monitoring body of the AAL Programme. It should manage the Union's financial contribution and should ensure an efficient implementation of the AAL Programme.

Calls for proposals should be launched at the latest by 31 December 2020. In duly justified cases they may be launched by 31 December 2021. Calls for proposals should also be published on the **single portal for participants** as well as through other Horizon 2020 electronic means of dissemination managed by the Commission.

In order to **protect the Union's financial interests**, the Commission should have the right to reduce, suspend or terminate the Union's financial contribution if the programme is implemented inadequately.

Evaluation: by 30 June 2017, the Commission shall carry out an interim evaluation of AAL. It shall send that report to the European Parliament and to the Council by 31 December 2017. The result of the interim evaluation of the programme shall be taken into account in the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020.

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