



Managing an Aged Society: The future strategy of the AAL Joint Programme - MEP Becker and Van Nistelrooji strongly endorse the follow-up

Brussels, 17 October 2012

The Ambient Assisted Living Association (AALA) held an event on 16 October at the European parliament, hosted by **Mr Heinz K. Becker MEP and Mr Lambert van Nistelrooji MEP** to present the outcomes of the AAL JP following five years of stimulating innovation in the field of ICT for ageing (resulting in SMEs and other organisations building new supply chains and collaborations) and to illustrate the advantages of a follow-up Joint Programme across Europe for the period 2014-2020.

The event was the opportunity for a diversified audience to understand the substantial progress of projects funded under the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme, which are now showing real results. **The conference had two main outcomes: firstly, the robust commitment of both Members of the European Parliament, who strongly endorsed the follow-up of the AAL Joint Programme in the period between 2014 and 2020 and secondly the interactive demonstrations of the AAL JP projects, which clearly presented the services and devices developed to help older adults living more independently and healthily.**

The afternoon panel discussion featured Mr **Mike Biddle**, President of the AAL Association, **Dr. Zoran Stančič**, Deputy Director-General in the European Commission (Directorate General Communications Networks, Content and Technology), **Anne- Sophie Parent**, Secretary General of Age Platform, **Renate Heinisch**, Member of the European Economic and Social Committee **and Bart Schelfhout**, from the European Affairs office of Philips.

The session was opened by Mr Heinz Becker MEP and Mr Lambert Van Nistelrooji MEP. **Mr Heinz K. Becker**, who is also co-chair of the Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, expressed his full commitment to boost social and technological innovation. As part of this, he claimed "the AAL Joint Programme demonstrated to us and to the European Commission its successes and the creativity of the people who are working on these projects." And he concluded: "we want the prolongation of the AAL Joint programme with at least the same volume and content to support social innovation in the field of active ageing." **Mr Lambert Van Nistelrooji**, is actively involved in the European Year 2012 for Active and Healthy Aging and Solidarity between the Generations and is member of the



Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity. He welcomed the initiative of the AAL Association and claimed his full support for a follow-up programme “that demonstrated remarkable and tangible results for the daily lives of older adults in Europe.”

The three projects presenting their services and products were: *Is-Active*, which developed a sensor-based system that helps home become the main care environment, where older adults can receive real-time feedback in order to monitor, self-manage and improve their physical condition according to their specific situation; *Connected Vitality*, that created a video communication network, coined ‘The Connected Vitality Network’, enabling immobile senior citizens to organise their social network and choose the activity and select levels of social interaction according to their individual needs, abilities and chosen lifestyle; *Domeo*, which developed “*Compai*” (companion in Basque language), a mobile robot that can help older persons in their houses to remember to take their prescribed medicine or to notify care givers (family members, nurses, etc..) in case of emergencies.

“One of the most important achievements of the AAL JP so far” said **Mr Mike Biddle** “has been the supply chains that have been built and consolidated across this emerging sector, connecting SMEs and other organisations with new suppliers and customers. The AAL JP is well positioned to drive opportunities for economic growth across Europe that the demographic shift represents and has had other significant achievements. That is why, today, we presented our strategy for a follow-up to the AAL Joint Programme.”

Finally, **Dr Zoran Stancic Deputy Director-general in the EC** (Directorate General Communications Networks, Content and Technology) noted the strong connection of the joint programme with the daily life of older adults. “It is certainly true that innovation takes time to be accepted by people” he said. “But what we have with this joint programme” he continued, “is an already up and running human centred and user tested programme that is truly addressing the needs and wishes of older adults. “

In view of the follow-up of the joint programme, the partner countries of the joint programme have already expressed their appreciation through the [AAL Eindhoven Declaration](#). A codecision process with the European Council and the European Parliament is likely to start in March 2013.

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