



AAL
PROGRAMME

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Activities, Finance,
Communication

AAL Association

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Foreword of the President



Dear AAL members,

I am very glad to present AAL's 2019 Annual Report which provides an overview of the activities that the AAL Association has carried out over the year.

The report highlights the key actions and events of AAL, and the main financial records to provide a clear understanding of the Association to our members. I believe that the more we establish transparency and good communication, the stronger and more productive our collaboration will become, not only now, but also in our future joint ventures.

At the operational level, AAL launched the Call 'Sustainable smart solutions for ageing well'. Thanks to good promotion, we received 83 proposals, out of which 59 were Collaborative Projects and 24 Small Collaborative ones. This is the highest number of proposals received since 2014. In July, two other activities were launched: the latest edition of the Challenge Prize for smart innovations in the field of ageing, where the three winners will receive funding totaling 50.000 Euros; and the third edition of the AAL2Business, which is now more personalised and provides more of a hands on approach to project participants. The annual Forum took place in September in the city of Aarhus, Denmark, a city renowned for implementing innovative services and technology for the social inclusion of the older population. The event was animated by many excellent workshops, and keynote speakers, and it saw the highest number of exhibitions stands since the beginning of AAL (68 exhibitors!). I hope that you were able gather valuable insight into the presentations of lessons learned, and that you made the most of the brilliant new ideas expressed.

An innovative element of this year's Forum was the involvement of the European Innovation Programme on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA) who brought their Conference of Partners to the event as co-organisers. This strategic collaboration helped us focus on common interests during the forum and it sets the ground for a significant future collaboration.

Finally, in a continuous effort to get closer to European citizens, a new format was developed for delivering innovations and support the take up of solutions. The new 'Citizen Accelerator' format gathered early-stage entrepreneurs to concentrate on implementation strategies, overseen by experts and local citizens (users), who judged which product was most ready for the market. Let me conclude by thanking all our Members and the European Commission for their support and continuous efforts, and by expressing my wish for a growing collaboration into the next phase of AAL. I see plenty of opportunities to seize, and a realistic space to continue our collaboration.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this Annual Report.

PETER SARAGA

Introduction by Director



2019 has been a year of dialogue to advance the cause of ageing well by the AAL Programme and to provide direction for a continued European partnership into the next decade.

The AAL Association has successfully partnered up with other ageing initiatives within Horizon2020, notably with the European Innovation Partnership on Active & Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA) and with the Joint Programme Initiative 'More Years Better Lives'. The three partnerships came together at the AAL Forum in Aarhus while working together to promote a future partnership in Horizon Europe, which builds on their joint experience. At the same time, the narrative on ageing and digitalization has evolved as well as the actual support approach over this already 11-year old partnership. Next to the visible shift from a more applied research-driven programme in AAL1 to a closer to market innovation-driven AAL2, the angle on technology as well as on ageing has changed.

While 10 years ago a strong technological focus was on the most appropriate devices (i.e. smartphone, iPads, sensors) and user-interfaces (apps and TV platforms), today is much more about integrated digital platforms or the emerging use of Artificial Intelligence, for example. The ageing perspective has also widened from an 'ambient assisted living approach' (so older people can stay at home as long as possible) towards a 'third age consumer as well as labour market', an 'active ageing' angle. Opportunities of ageing are slowly but surely being balanced with the challenges of an ageing society. The new challenge prize on 'senior entrepreneurship' is a witness of that shift.

Our Association has also become more international in 2019 with the Ministry of Science and Technology of Taiwan (MOST) joining AAL. The Ministry is in charge of carrying out innovative technological development programs while linking up academic research with industrial opportunities. We look forward to a successful collaboration similar to the already well- established membership with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Finally, as the AAL2 Programme slowly but surely moves towards its last years of funding in 2020 and 2021, with two more Calls and two more AAL Forums to be organised, its governing bodies are strongly involved in future partnership options. Times have changed and a more health & well-being focused partnership will be envisaged in the new Horizon Europe. At the same time, Europe's health challenge is largely influenced by the increased digitalization of the whole economy including in health & care and by demographic change in the next decade. Therefore, the currently developed partnership proposal on 'health & inclusive care systems transformation in a changing and ageing Europe' provides opportunities to bring in the experience, knowledge, networks and funding capacity of the AAL Association and its members.

May this Annual Report provide you with food for thought and be a tool for your internal communication: about what your involvement in the AAL Association is all about! And above all a recognition of your continuous dedication, work and enthusiasm for working together in Europe and internationally.

KLAUS NIEDERLÄNDER

Programme Operations Overview

The AAL's Programme Operations has two key functions related to the management and monitoring of the annual Call for proposals, mobilising several hundreds of applicants and the provision of direct and indirect project support services at the disposal of the AAL community in key domains (such as assessment of on-going projects, market and co-design with end users and others).

CALL 2019

The title of Call 2019 was 'Sustainable smart solutions for ageing well'. Following the positive feedback received on the previous Call, it was decided to adopt an open approach also for 2019, applicants being free to submit a proposal in any of the AAL application areas. Proposers could choose to submit either a full Collaborative Project (CP) or a Small Collaborative Project (SCP), depending on the focus of the concept idea. The first type of project being focused on integration, prototyping, testing and validation and the second one having more of an exploratory approach and being shorter in duration.

The new submission and evaluation platforms, adopted for Call 2018, were further refined with new and more user-friendly functionalities. Feedback received by the platform users (applicants and evaluators) was very positive, proposers acknowledging the improvement of the new submission modalities and the experts being brought to evaluate the proposals in a more user-friendly and intuitive online platform.

Also, the application form for both Collaborative and Small Collaborative Projects was updated to make it leaner and logic in its structure (reducing the five original sections into three – Relevance and Scope, Implementation and Impact).

Following the central Info Day held in Brussels on 31 January (attended by more than 100 participants), the Call was officially launched on 4 February and closed on 24 May of the same year. An intensive collaboration took place between the National Contact Persons from the 21 involved national funding agencies and the Central Management Unit to provide applicants with answers to questions by proposers; regional and national info sessions were also organised.

In total, 83 proposals were received, out of which 59 were Collaborative Projects and 24 Small Collaborative ones. The Call, thanks to the promotion carried out at central and national level, was the one with the highest number of proposals received since 2014.

The below table provides statistics related to the Call 2019 proposals (more information can be found on the official [Call 2019 statistics report page](#)).

CALL AAL- 2019 ALL SUBMITTED PROPOSALS	CALL FIGURES
Total budget	117 MIO €
Total requested funding	76 MIO €
Average quota requested funding vs. total project costs	65 %
Total person-months efforts	14190
Total number of partners	536
Average partners per proposal	6.54
Average total budget per proposal	1.23 MIO €
Average funding request per proposal	926.82 €

Among the new areas covered by the proposals (especially SCPs) submitted in Call 2019, the following are worth being mentioned: car mobility, dental hygiene, rehabilitation through VR glasses, senior co-housing, use of VR in late stage of life.

2019 was the occasion to assess, for the first time, the implementation of the Small Collaborative Projects, the new instrument adopted by the Programme in the previous Call (2018). A distinctive process for the review of this type of projects was agreed with the funding authorities supporting the SCPs and some very interesting outcomes were achieved. The main feedbacks received by both project participants and reviewers were related to the shorter and leaner timeframe in which the consortium has to operate. It required the consortia to perform better and in a shorter time, but also provided the possibility to focus and explore new concepts in a fast way without having to participate in a full, lengthy Collaborative Project.

The central and national eligibility check was carried out in June, with the remote evaluation in July, while a day and a half evaluation panel meeting took place in Brussels on July 16-17. The ranking list was approved by the General Assembly in September 2019 with 19 proposals retained (out of which 4 were Small Collaborative Projects).

CALL 2020

The preparation of the 2020 Call text was done by a team composed by Gerda Geyer, Rik Wisselink, Dominique Repapis and Marco Carulli. The Call brought some novelties in terms of focus and content, trying to align with the discussions on the strategy for the future. The concept on ecosystems creation, activation and networking was made stronger in the Call text, asking proposers to specifically foresee a work package (in the Collaborative Projects) related to the involvement of local/regional ecosystems' main stakeholders. Also, a stronger focus on concepts such as 'healthy ageing' and 'positive health' was a main feature of the 2020 Call. Experts from the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing were invited to provide feedbacks on the text, in the framework of the consultation with external stakeholders. The same open approach was adopted by 2020 Call as in 2019, allowing proposers to submit a proposal in any of the AAL application domains (both for Collaborative and Small Collaborative Projects). A new, modern and eye-catching format of the Call text document was also developed.

By the time of publishing the Call, all the commitment letters from 21 of our members were received by the CMU, which was another positive aspect in the preparation and publication of the Call. In such letters our members were asked to informally indicate the amount to be committed for Call 2021.

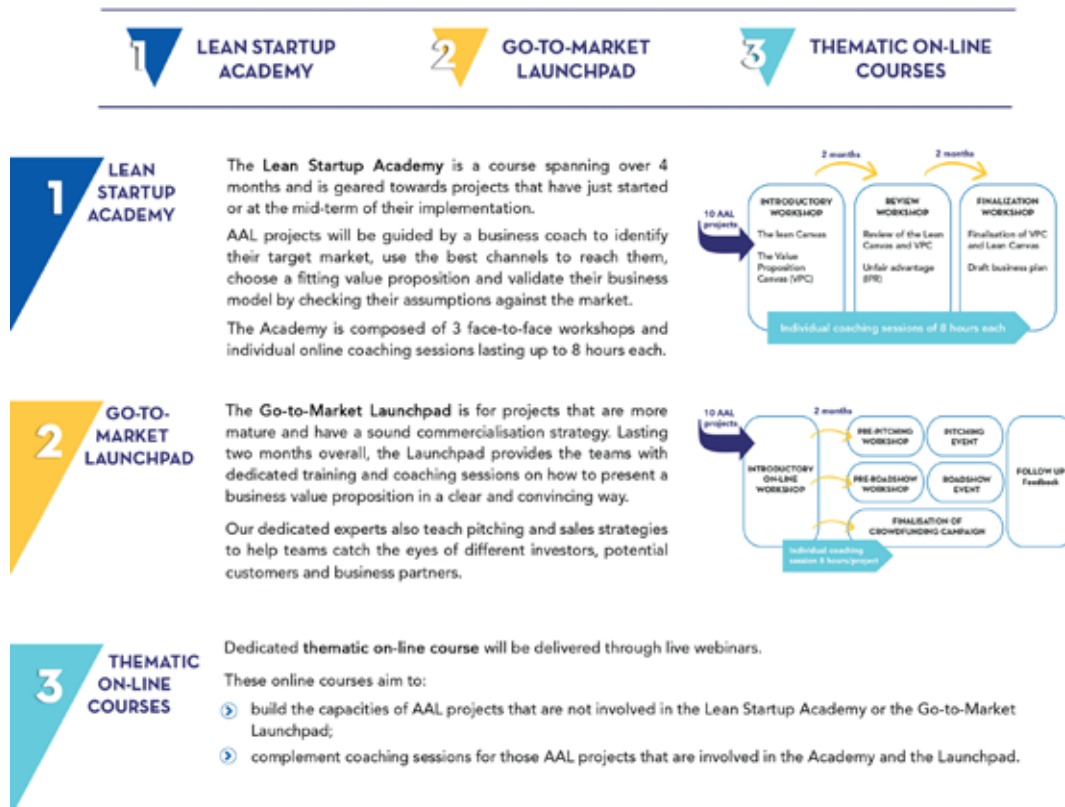
GENERAL PROJECT SUPPORT

Mid- and end-term project reviews are part of the core activities undertaken by the AAL Programme Operations, to guarantee proper monitoring of the actions funded by the Programme. A physical review is carried out at mid-term and a remote review (through an online conference with the reviewers and representatives from the consortium) at the end of the project.

A periodic overview of the performance of the AAL funded projects, both at mid-term and final stage, highlighting the problematic and particularly promising ones is being provided. In 2019 a total of 15 mid-term and additional reviews took place as well as 15 final reviews were carried out.

SPECIFIC PROJECT SUPPORT - AAL₂BUSINESS

The third edition of the AAL₂Business Support action was kicked off in July 2019 with a brand-new consortium composed by two Italian organisations, namely Meta and APRE. The support action, built upon a new set of services for AAL project beneficiaries and the community, is now more personalised and provides more of a hands-on approach. The first Lean Startup Academy has been implemented by the time of writing this report, as well as a set of online webinars dealing with topics such as intellectual property rights, investments and others. Below is a snapshot on the type of services offered in the framework of AAL₂Business.



Further, through the BEN-Business Experts Network, it will be possible for project participants to receive advice on European/National regional funding instruments, as well as support to identify suitable investors with whom to work with. A new website (<https://www.aal2business.com/>) was published by the contractors to give an overview for all of the available activities.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

In 2019 a new impact assessment of the outcomes produced by the Programme was carried out with the help of an external consultancy. The assessment was carried out both through questionnaires sent to the AAL participants and interviews to stakeholders, members of the constituency and project participants. It was focused on the three overarching goals of the programme and identified some interesting outcomes in the areas where the Programme has been able to deliver (see below).

The results of this first round of Impact assessment were useful to prepare the discussions held in the occasion of the 2019 EC review; the action will be repeated and finetuned in 2020, targeting more project participants.

Proactive end-user involvement throughout the life of the project is helping bring solutions to market that address the needs of users



3RD EDITION OF AAL CHALLENGE PRIZE

The third edition of the AAL Challenge Prize was kicked off in July 2019. After a scoping exercise carried out with the AAL constituency and the EIP on AHA members, to identify the topic of the challenge. As a result, the following topic was selected: 'Senior enterprise - solutions that empower older adults to engage in entrepreneurship'. A judge panel composed of eight members was set up and the competition officially opened on 11 November, with the deadline to submit an entry on 26 February. It is expected to receive a relevant number of proposals from all over the European Union, as well as the states associated to Horizon 2020, all of them competing for the 50.000 € prize pot. A website (<https://aal.challenges.org/>) for the competition has been published by Nesta, the organisation collaborating with AAL in preparing the competition.

Programme Communication, Networking and Public Affairs

To always improve the visibility of the Programme, AAL implemented a blended approach to communication activities, which included digital and offline marketing, public information, event planning, and public affairs.

The strategy of AAL was aimed at raising awareness about the funding opportunities and at introducing the support actions that the Programme offers for going to market and to network in the domain of Active Ageing. AAL's narrative focused on a positive health and on the opportunities that the ageing society creates for society and economy, rather than the challenges.

The Forum, the 2019 Call Info Day and the Citizen Accelerator in Aarhus, were the main events of 2019. The AAL Forum, which took place between 23 and 25 September 2019, gathered some 700 attendees from all Europe. For the first time, the Forum was co-organized with the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA), so the annual event was also instrumental in underpinning the Public Affairs objectives of AAL. It provided space for the Annual Conference of Partners of this organization and it created a momentum for establishing a joint network within the two communities and to discuss issues around AAL by organizing workshops, keynote presentations and a large exhibition area.

Moreover, in Public Affairs, AAL has worked heavily to build and push a new European Partnership for Sustainable Healthy Systems together with the EIP on AHA and the More Years for Better Lives Initiative. This goal has been pursued by proactively supporting the new narrative alignment proposal for the Member States of the General Assembly and, by providing coordination to the Strategic Advisory Group, through the maintaining of close ties with MEPs in order to influence the European Parliament's agenda on Demographic Change and the agenda of the Framework Programme Horizon Europe.

COMMUNICATION

AAL's approach to communication in 2019 continued the new strategy started in 2018, which relied on two main areas: the digital communication (including the website marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), social media activity, organic and paid, newsletters), together with the marketing work that envisaged the writing and design of fliers, a booklet, the Annual Report and the Executive Summary of the Forum.

The two websites' homepages of AAL, both the corporate and the Forum, were redesigned to allow for more interaction with our social media feeds and analytic needs, and to provide a better navigation and an easier understanding of the main call to actions and the story telling of the organization. The contents of the pages, mainly the posted articles and the pages, were written by following a (SEO) logic to allow for a better indexation of the AAL's content in the world wide web.

Social media channels were heavily involved in the outreach in 2019. Twitter and Facebook proved to be the most effective means of dialogue with our audience, while LinkedIn usage was increased. The latter is currently the channel for the professional knowledge exchange of AAL. Organic traffic was alternated with paid online campaigns to reinforce our reach in Eastern European countries. Such was the case of the paid campaigns utilised in the Baltic countries namely, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, as well as Poland and Romania, during the Challenge Prize marketing campaign.

Another newsletter was launched in 2019. The Public Affairs newsletter was conceived with the intention to offer thought leader opinions in the public health and ageing domains. The bulletin is a bi-monthly insight on the main dynamics and news taking place at the policy and political level in Europe and nationally. The newsletter's title is 'Ageing & Well-being in European policy perspective' and its recipients are European and national policy makers and politicians.

To cover and present AAL's annual activities, this Annual Report describes the overall work of the association to its members, while another significant effort is represented by the Forum Executive Summary that incorporates not only the descriptions of the sessions, but it presents the most provoking thoughts emerging from the annual event through the form of interviews and journalistic reports. Moreover, a booklet illustrating the AAL's legacy and future direction has been created in both a printed and website-friendly form to show the main impacts of the Programme and the way forward.

MAJOR AAL EVENTS IN 2019

INFO DAY 2019

The 2019 AAL Info Day took place on January 31, 2019 at the MCE - Management Centre Europe in Brussels. The purpose of this year's event was to inform the European community about the next Call challenge of the AAL Programme 'Sustainable Smart solutions for Ageing Well'. During the event, the Call text, as well as the norms and rules to participate in the Call 2019 were presented. Moreover, match-making meetings were organised in order to bring together companies, deployers, investors, corporations, researchers, to help them seize opportunities and build (technological and/or commercial) collaboration across the borders. In parallel of the matchmaking sessions, informal meetings on the AAL Call and Programme were organised. The event was also video recorded and later published on the AAL corporate website.

AAL FORUM 2019

The AAL Forum 2019 took place in the city of Aarhus in Denmark – a city that embraces technology to help older people live happy, healthy and fulfilling lives in their own homes for as long as possible.

Hosted by the Municipality of Aarhus and taking place at the Aarhus Congress Centre, the event welcomed approximately 700 delegates to take part in exciting talks, interactive workshops, an exhibition displaying the latest technology and services, and many other opportunities to be immersed in the world of active and healthy ageing in Europe.

The event this year was made special by the fact that, for the first time, it was run in collaboration with the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA). This collaboration was reflected in three joint workshops, as well as plenary discussions involving both parties.

The exhibition hall was the focal point of the Forum for networking, meeting and seeing the best that Europe has to offer in the world of active ageing. Set over two floors, it consisted of a wealth of projects and other actors demonstrating their latest products, services and idea to the people there. For the first time ever, AAL provided a number of guided tours through the exhibition, with participants able to select their area of particular interest and meet like-minded people. Poster sessions also took place during the event, allowing people to showcase their work with a short presentation.

An award for the best exhibitor was given this year and, after careful consideration by the judges, was given to omiVista Mobii, a self-contained portable system that enables any room to be transformed into an interactive floor. The company has led the way in providing intergenerational projections in homes, hospitals and specialist centres since 2005. With a dedicated team of engineers, designers and health-care specialists they have created a bespoke range of products that provide meaningful activities for all ages and abilities to encourage movement, active participation and shared enjoyment.

The first ever AAL Forum Citizen Accelerator Award was eventually given to Danish company Manigrip, for its multifunctional grip which allows those with limited hand mobility to hold small, narrow objects such as cutlery or paintbrushes while ensuring a good, stable grip.

THE CITIZEN ACCELERATOR 2019 - A NEW INNOVATIVE FORMAT

At this year's AAL Forum, the traditional hackathon format was reworked into an entirely new concept – the Citizen Accelerator. This took place over the two days preceding the forum, with the winner announced at the closing ceremony.



The Citizen Accelerator was a two-day event in which start-ups and scaleups were given qualified feedback and market validation from experts and citizens. Seven companies from Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Latvia, Italy and the UK were led through a structured process in which users and experts provided advice to ensure a better product-market fit.

Product-market fit – the degree to which a product satisfies a strong market demand – is core to the success of any start-up, and essential to bringing the products to users in the best way. Through different exercises, the panel of citizens and experts helped the start-ups and scaleups find a better product-market fit and accelerate their access to implementation in the market. And, through a series of workshops and mentor sessions, the start-ups and scaleups were provided with a wealth of useful information, after which they finally pitched their company to the jury.

At the end of the two days, the jury selected the three best candidates – including the winner of the first-ever AAL Forum Citizen Accelerator Award. All three of these candidates then had a turn to get on stage and present their product as part of the closing ceremony on Wednesday.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AAL adopted an inclusive approach to Public Affairs in 2019. The collaboration with the EIP on AHA and with the MYBL was increased to reach a common strategic platform for offering the European Commission, namely the DG RTD, SANTE and Connect, a realistic content and plan for a future Partnership on Sustainable Health Systems in an Ageing Society. The collaboration concretized during several strategic meetings with these organizations to align the respective organizations' agendas and to gather the largest possible consideration from Member States and Regional stakeholders.

The three organizations also gathered repeatedly with European Commission officials, while AAL involved its Strategic Committee Members in the design of the overall objectives for AAL in the Horizon Europe Programme. Such work allowed to create a closer relationship with another initiative in the potential next European Partnership, To Reach, and to address one of the EC's goals for the next Framework Programme, namely the aggregation of already existing know-how and experiences in the field of Health and Ageing.

Therefore, the AAL Forum was a highly relevant event, which assisted in strengthening the building blocks of the collaboration laid out with the EIP on AHA and the MYBL. During the 2019 edition, in fact, the Conference of Partners of the EIP took place in the same premises of the Forum. These types of events are key for building trust among the people that work together in moving all the initiatives ahead. At the same time, they provide a great opportunity to brainstorm at high strategic level and interact with EC's officials and country's representatives.

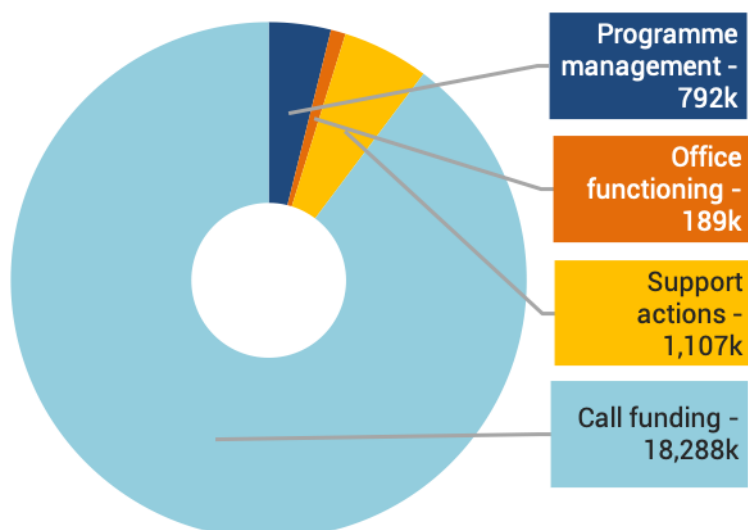
Finance Activities

The following section will provide a short overview of the AAL programme finances in terms of 2019 spending and the evolution of the membership call commitments in AAL2.

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE 2019 PROGRAMME EXPENSES

The table below provides a breakdown of the different expense types incurred during the year 2019.

2019 AAL PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



The largest part of the AAL financing is directed towards the annual Call funding of the EC contribution representing a little more than 18 million Euros in payments to the AAL members. This amount includes all transfers executed in 2019 for Call 2009 up until the Call 2018. The considerable increase compared to last year's 10 million Euros can be explained by the final closing of the AAL.1 programme.

The second largest part of the expenses were used for the provision of project support activities, such as the AAL Market Observatory, the AAL Challenge Prize, the AAL2Business activities and the AAL Forum. Approximately 1,107k Euros were spent in 2019 on these activities.

The Programme management expenses amounted to approximately 792k Euros including personnel of the AAL Association, AAL governance as well as the yearly organization & implementation of the Calls. Finally, the functioning of the central office expenses amounted to roughly 189k Euros, which includes the rental costs, the IT infrastructure, depreciations as well as the daily office running costs.

The AAL Membership commitments 2014-2019 The table below shows the evolution of the AAL member commitments to the Calls in AAL2.

TOTAL COMMITMENTS 2014-2018

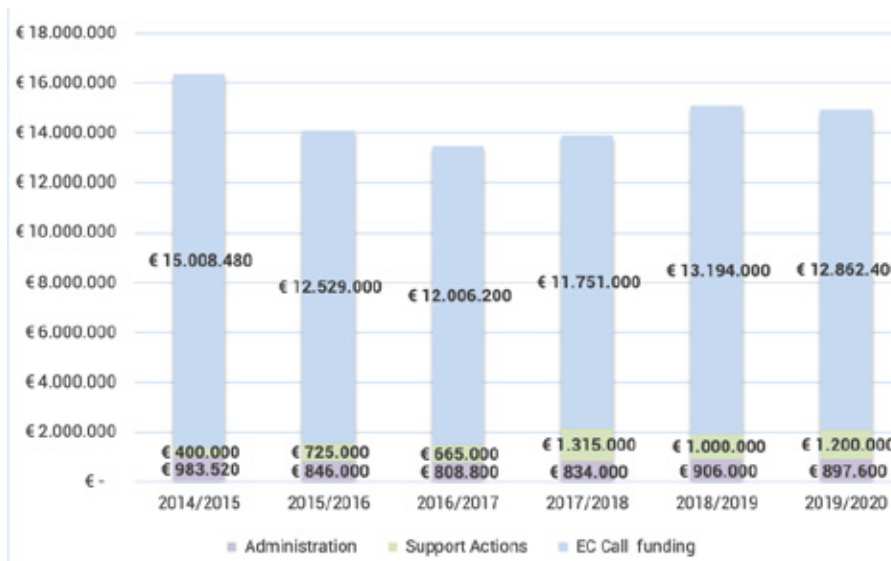


The above table provides the data on the evolution of the total actual commitments by our members. After a dip in 2016, the membership commitments started to increase and stabilise with commitment in 2019 of approximately 15 million Euros.

THE EC COUNTERPART EVOLUTION 2014-2019

The table below provides a breakdown of the EC counterpart contribution.

EVOLUTION AAL.2 MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENTS & BREAKDOWN IN ADMINISTRATION, SUPPORT ACTIONS AND CALL FUNDING - PERIOD 2014-2019



Outlook for 2020

The first year of the new decade will be on the one hand a continuation of the well-developed AAL Programme activities, such as the annual Call, the AAL Forum and a number of Programme support activities.

On the other hand, new elements will be brought into the Programme recognizing the continuous dialogue with AAL members and the AAL community, in order to stimulate new innovation. The 2020 Call for proposal will provide a stronger focus on healthy ageing while recognizing the need to integrate developed services into the socio-economic fabric of local/regional health eco-systems. The third Challenge Prize will be revealed during the AAL Forum focusing on the promotion of senior entrepreneurship. Finally, a new support action will be launched about the role of data privacy and ethics for AAL developed solutions, which is a direct result of a workshop at the 2019 AAL Forum in Aarhus.

As this report goes into printing, the 2020 AAL Forum had to be moved from the originally planned location in Nice, due to the city's decision to withdraw its candidacy. Thanks to the cooperation with the Friuli Venezia Giulia region in Italy, a new venue has been found in Trieste, in order to ensure the successful organisation of this important annual event in November 2020.

With regard to the future partnership options in Horizon Europe, the efforts of the AAL Association's internal strategy work as well as with the relevant European Commission working group have led to a first result: a number of AAL member countries are currently actively involved in the development of a new partnership proposal, which takes into account the learnings and focus of the AAL programme. 2020 will be crucial in coming up with an appealing partnership proposal on 'health and care systems transformation' for current AAL members to commit to. At the same time, a timely start in 2021/22 will be equally important to keep momentum.

We look forward to an engaging year with members, which marks also the start of the 'healthy ageing decade' as declared by the World Health Organisation.

KLAUS NIEDERLÄNDER



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