

# The need for European cooperation in the strategic fields of innovation



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of research & innovation (from scientists to companies), and health and ICT (from doctors and care-professionals to patients and consumers). The aim is to address the ageing challenge through smart innovation with ICT. The mission of the EIP-AHA is ambitious and appealing: to add, by 2020, 2 healthy life years to the life of the average European citizen. In November 2011 the Steering group of the Partnership (some 30 high level stakeholders) selected 5 (+1) actions to accomplish this mission:

1. Innovative ways to ensure patients follow prescriptions – an action in at least 30 European regions;

2. Innovative solutions to prevent falls and support early diagnosis for older people;

3. Co-operation to fight functional decline and frailty, with a particular focus on malnutrition;

4. Spread and promote innovative models for integrated care (such as remote monitoring) for older patients with chronic diseases, in a number of the EU's regions;

5. Improve the interoperability of ICT independent living solutions through global standards, to help older people stay independent, mobile and active for longer.

The sixth action is about networking and knowledge sharing on

innovation for age-friendly buildings, cities and environments.

### From plan to action

ICT and innovation are keywords for all these actions, and they should between now and 2015 lead to a triple win for citizens, society and economy: a better health and quality of life for (especially older) European citizens; more efficient and sustainable health & social care systems; and a better competitiveness of EU health and care industry through an improved business environment.

On 29th February 2012, the Commission launched a Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, to support the implementation of the Strategic Implementation Plan, including the 5 (+1) actions. From now on it is crucial to get all relevant stakeholders on board, committed to the actions and to form Action Groups that will actually carry out the actions. The Commission recently launched the Invitations for Commitment and on April 3rd Vice-President Neelie Kroes and Commissioners John Dalli and László Andor kicked off a conference to get 'from plan to action'. Around 600 participants registered, which showed the enthusiasm with which the EIP-AHA has been met. This event allowed people, organisations and companies, that are active in the field of care and ageing, to present their integrated projects (very promising projects can apply as a candidate reference Site). At that day it will be launched an interactive platform – the marketplace for innovative ideas - on which the AHA-network can grow,

to exchange views and cooperate across all conceivable boundaries: countries, regions, private - public sectors, etc.<sup>1</sup> Only an integrated approach can remove the barriers for large scale implementation of projects that contribute to the actions above.

### No new funding but interaction

The EIP-AHA is not a new funding instrument, but seeks to leverage and focus programmes like Health for Growth, FP7, CIP, ESF, ERDF, Horizon 2020 and CEF. Important elements of that focus are the demand side perspective, the active use of innovative procurement, innovative incentive mechanisms, and options for venture capital support, all to mobilise resources from the actors interested

in bringing forward some or all the Actions.

It is up to the European Parliament, Commission, Council and Member States to create favourable framework conditions, such as regulatory and standardisation conditions and effective funding within the current set of instruments, to support the implementation of the actions.

The ageing European society is a huge challenge. The EIP-AHA seeks to turn that challenge into an opportunity for economy and society. Active and healthy ageing can be an economic multiplier and driver for innovation. The investments of today in innovation for active and healthy ageing are the way forward for a better quality of life, more efficient and

sustainable care, innovation and economic recovery.

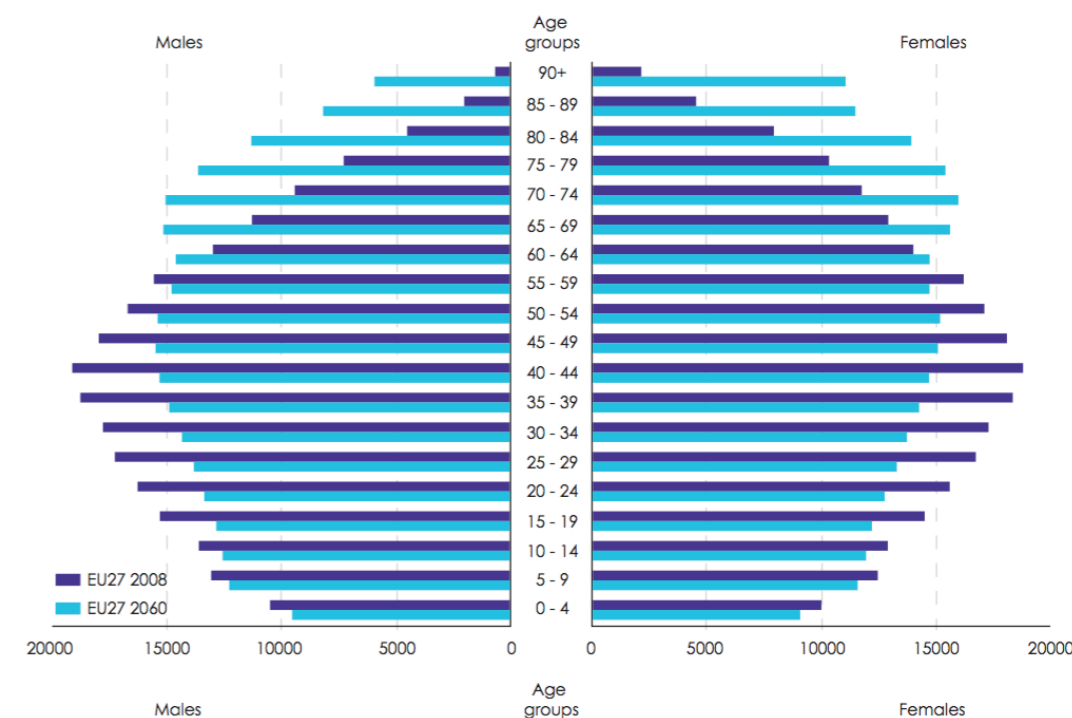
*The views presented are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official view of the European Commission on the subject.*

### A powerful partnership for change

The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA) is new. It is the pilot of a new policy instrument proposed in the Innovation Union. It has been selected to tackle the demographic challenge: Europe is ageing and this has dramatic consequences for the cost and sustainability of our health and care systems. The EIP-AHA is a unique attempt to bring together all relevant stakeholders in the fields



Population pyramids (in thousands), EU27/EA, in 2008 and 2060



1. The Marketplace for innovative ideas is open to all stakeholders willing to get involved in the EIP-AHA. It can be found at the EIP-AHA home site: <http://ec.europa.eu/active-healthy-ageing>.