

Digital Single Market

Policies for Ageing Well with ICT

Team responsible

[DG CONNECT](#) ^[1]

ICT can help older people to stay healthy, independent and active at work or in their community. The European Commission funds several research projects in the field.

One in three Europeans will be over 65 by 2060. The ratio of working people to the 'inactive' others is shifting from 4 to 1 today to 2 to 1 by 2060 (source: [the 2015 Ageing Report](#) ^[2]). Already by 2020 we will face up to 2 million vacancies in health and social care. For the EU between 2010 and 2060 total government spending on pensions, healthcare, long-term care, unemployment benefits and education will increase by almost 20 per cent (or 4.1 percentage points of GDP), while expenditures for long-term care will double.

Care has to be more patient centred, with more focus on prevention, early diagnosis and chronic conditions. Industry for ageing well must invest and innovate, in close cooperation with users and consumers. And all of us must get smart and feel empowered to integrate ICT-products and services for ageing well in our private lives and professional practice.

Europeans over 65 already have a spending capacity of over €3,000 billion and the number of people with age-related impairments will grow from 68 million in 2005 to 84 million in 2020. Europe boasts an innovative ICT industry with large companies but also innovative SMEs, developing many new products and services. In view of the market opportunities arising from public and consumer expenditure related to the rights, needs and demands of the growing population over 50, the European Commission has launched a [Silver Economy strategy](#) ^[3].

The European Commission funds [research and applied research](#) ^[4] under the Seventh Research Framework Programme and its successor, [Horizon 2020](#) ^[5]. With the Member States the European Commission participate in the [Active and Assisted Living Joint Programme](#) ^[6] (AAL JP). In 2011 the Commission started the [European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing](#) ^[7] (EIP-AHA). The partnership brings together government, care professionals, industry and users across borders to scale up and bridge the gap between seller and buyer, producer and user.

The EU-funded [CommonWell project](#) ^[8] and the UK's [Whole System Demonstrator](#) ^[9] provide good examples of successful projects.

[Active and Healthy ageing](#) ^[10] EU-funded research and innovation projects that are commercially viable.

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