



Interreg Europe

# Action Plan 2019-2023

Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Ministry of Social Affairs

Europe enabling Smart Healthy Age-Friendly Environments  
July 2022

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## General Information

**Project:** Europe enabling Smart Healthy Age-Friendly Environments – EU\_SHAFE

**Partner organisation:** Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Ministry of Social Affairs

**Other partner organisations involved:** Caritas Coimbra, Provincial Council of Bizkaia, Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia, Center for Assisted Living Technology - Aarhus Municipality, Technological University Dublin, ECHAlliance, University of Deusto, Louth County Council

**Country:** Germany

**NUTS2 region:** Hamburg

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## Policy context

**The Action Plan aims to impact:**

- ☒ **Investment for Growth and Jobs programme**
  - European Territorial Cooperation programme
  - Other regional development policy instrument

**Name of the policy instrument addressed:** European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

## ERDF and Action Plan vision

The main objective of Hamburg's Action Plan is **to generate support from the local and national ecosystem (citizens' organisations, businesses, research) to develop Hamburg into a Smart Healthy Age-Friendly City with the support of The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).**

This objective is in line with the aims of the City of Hamburg to promote high-level quality of independent living and to boost business opportunities for innovative and creative companies.



The ERDF finances programmes in shared responsibility between the European Commission and national and regional authorities in Member States. The Member States' administrations choose which projects to finance and take responsibility for day-to-day management. The ERDF aims to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions. While starting the project, the operational program (OP) in 2014-2020 was focused on the key priority areas: Innovation and research, the digital agenda, support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and low-carbon economy. In 2021 - 2027 it is foreseen to focus on investments in a smarter, greener, more connected and more social Europe that is closer to its citizens. From this, it can be concluded that the adjustment of the ERDF operational program has changed during the project period (2019 – 2023). Once an OP is completed, it is not possible or bringing value to retrospectively influence it. The OP 2021 – 2027 has been submitted to the Commission and is about to be approved. For this reason, this action plan mainly focuses on the new OP.

There are several reasons why the new ERDF OP is highly relevant to the EU\_SHAFE project. It intends to create a more competitive and smarter Europe and its regions, through innovation and support to SMEs, as well as digitization and digital connectivity. Moreover, the OP focuses on being near to citizens through supporting locally led development and sustainable urban development. One more important objective is the creation of more social regions through supporting effective and inclusive employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare.

### **Smart Healthy Age-Friendly Environments**

Within the EU\_SHAFE project, it has become clear, that the thematic fields of the ERDF OP are important for the development, implementation and sustainability of several Good Practices (GP) in partner regions:

#### Near to citizens

- Ardee Age Friendly Town, Ireland:

The GP intends to provide a choice of homes for older people supported by a range of services and meeting places in close proximity to enable them to remain active, healthy, independent and contributing to their community.

- Ageing Coimbra, Portugal:

The GP enhances the role of older people in society and implements good practices that foster their general well-being and active and healthy ageing by identifying, implementing, and replicating projects and programs of innovative good practices in the field of Active and Healthy Ageing.

#### Competitive and smarter regions (innovation, digitalization, digital connectivity)

- Hometab, Slovenia:

The GP led to an increase in the quality of life of older citizens by providing them the opportunities for independent living and ageing in place. Moreover, it intends to coordinate

the activities of daily life and to improve mental and physical well-being and social participation.

- Assisted Living Technology Educational Centre, Aarhus:  
The Assisted Living Technology Educational Center provides a platform where technologies are presented to citizens and employees so that citizens can become more self-reliant and the employees' working environment improves.

#### More social regions

- Detecting and preventing economic and physical abuse of older people, Spain:  
The GP is a social healthcare collaborative protocol to integrate the Individual care programme, which is particularly linked to assessing the dependency situation, in truly comprehensive healthcare.

#### Methodology

Since several years, smart health innovations at local and national levels of Hamburg have been supported by contributions from ERDF and other EU funding programmes. The Ministry of Social Affairs plays a strong supportive role by bringing relevant partners to the table and facilitating applications. These activities will be intensified towards the new ERDF. Special attention will be paid to smaller businesses and companies to improve the accessibility of these programmes.

#### Endorsement

It is very important that the Hamburg Government is aware of the Action Plan and supports the activities. For that reason, it will be presented to the decision-making level of the Ministry of Social Affairs and other ministries of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for health and social affairs related topics in the region. As a Ministry, it is responsible for the overall planning, financing, and controlling within these fields but also for legislative acts that go directly into Hamburg's parliament.

#### Details of the actions envisaged

##### Action 1 – Improve the accessibility of ERDF for SMEs and get funding

##### The background

Based on stakeholder needs and expectations evoked by project activities, it turned out that it is intensive to get access to ERDF funding. Particularly for SMEs. Local stakeholder meetings in terms of the Good Practice presentation and an interview with a key project manager showed that it is hard to get access, support, and funding of ERDF. In order to aim better quality of life, more inclusive and sustainable healthcare, access to services, systems and citizen's, it is important to give all actors the possibility to check their financial contribution.



Different measures that can help in the coming operational program to higher the accessibility for SME. It is now possible that single projects with a budget under 200.000 € can be controlled with context related indicators (milestones) and don't need to have a financial controlling for every single payment. This is very attractive for SME and especially start-ups that were in the past often cringed by the financial controlling regulations.

One other point is the further development of revolting financial instruments for start-up funding. These instruments allow to invest in a company itself in its starting phase and not only in projects. In the critical starting phase of a new company, it is very helpful to get thru this intervention with more financial flexibility.

#### Actions

##### Steps already done

- Perform an interview with a key project manager

##### Steps to be done

- Preparing results and deducing recommendations from the stakeholder meetings and interviews
- Network towards ERDF regarding the simplification for funding and accountability rules
- Enable and support proposal writing
- Organise local support and collaboration
- Create networks (at regional/local and European level)
- Install a support desk for smaller companies within the Ministry of Economy and Innovation as ERDF managing authority (compared to [www.rvo.nl](http://www.rvo.nl) in the Netherlands: Governmental agency for entrepreneurs in the Netherlands, they offer advice and information on funding programmes)
- Finalize a document with all activities involved

#### Players involved

- Citizen organisations
- Non-profit organizations
- Research centres and universities
- Business companies
- SMEs
- Associations

#### Timeframe

From September 2022 to September 2023

## Action 2 – Encourage funded projects by minimizing the administrative expense

### The background

While a project runs, it often turns out that the administrative burden is still high, especially for smaller projects. This is also confirmed by an interview with a key project manager for an ERDF-funded project.

The Hamburg Operational program 2024 - 2020 has very strict rules with very detailed financial control mechanisms. In our interviews with our beneficiaries, it was a clear message, that the combination of the high administrative costs in combination with funding rates based on the limitations of Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 are very difficult and cost-efficient especially for SME and social companies.

In this context the ERDF managing authority was contacted and different way to lower the administrative burden were discussed. It is planned to bring the results of this discussion on a paper and to give it to the ERDF managing authority to influence the governmental and control system of the 2021-2027 operational program.

### Actions

#### Steps to be done

Preparing a document with specific suggestions for improvement for the fields:

- Travel expense accounting
- Starting a project
- Mid-term reports
- General digitalization recommendations

### Players involved

Project key manager, project members, ERDF intermediate organization, ERDF managing authority

### Timeframe

- July 2022: analyses and align the interview with the project manager
- August 2022: create a first version of the document
- September 2022: circulate the document within the Division of international Affairs and Innovation of the ministry of social affairs Hamburg
- October 2022: present the document to the ERDF commission
- December 2022: check the sustainability and support the commission if needed



### Action 3 – Develop a proposal for implementing Aarhus GP DokkX in Hamburg

#### The background

DokkX is a welfare technology experience space funded by the City Council of Aarhus Municipality. At DokkX, citizens can get advice and guidance so that they can acquire the right technologies and tools that support an independent and active life. DokkX is also a space for innovation, in which education and research institutions, business and industry, the Municipality and the citizens can collaborate in the development of technological solutions for the future. The theme of the DokkX exhibition changes every six months, so there is a good reason to visit again and again.

The City of Hamburg offers a lot of innovative Healthcare solutions, that are worth being showcased. The implementation of an establishment based on the DokkX approach would offer the possibility to connect all these valuable innovations. Moreover, it can achieve to connect different stakeholders and actors within Hamburg's healthcare sector and beyond. Thus, citizens can be involved and reached through different channels which is essential in a vibrant and constantly evolving city.

In a first step different funding schemes will be screened to analyses which is the best one to realize this project. One possibility could be the ERDF 2021 – 2027 which should be signed by the COM and published by the ERDF managing authority during the summer 2022. In a next step we will inform local stakeholders about the idea and build up a consortium of project partners.

#### Actions

The aim of the action is to develop a concept following the DokkX principle to establish an AAL show room in a public center in Hamburg.

#### Steps already done

- Visited DokkX on site
- Developed first ideas of implementation
- Networked with healthcare providers
- Brainstorming about thematic fields

#### Steps to be done

- Interviews with stakeholders
- Set up a task force
- Networking with possible actors
- Prepare an implementation strategy within the task force
- Selection of possible external providers
- Present the plan to Hamburg's public authorities and other key players



Players involved

Project manager, task force members, stakeholders, and actors from the healthcare sector

Timeframe

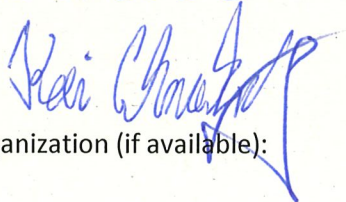
- September 2022: Set-up task force
- November 2022: Develop the first plan and write a proposal
- May 2023: Finalization of the concept

Signature

Date:

28.06.2022

Signature:



Stamp of the organization (if available):

Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg  
Ministry of Social Affairs  
Department of Healthcare Industry and International Affairs  
Hamburger Straße 47  
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