



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Cabinet of Commissioner Johannes Hahn  
Head of Cabinet

Cabinet of Commissioner László Andor  
Head of Cabinet

Brussels, 20. 02. 2012  
JP/hc Ares(2012)

**Re: New structural funds 2014-2020 to promote the transition from institutional to community-based care: cooperation with the European Expert Group**

Dear Madam and Sirs,

We wish to thank you for your letter and your readiness to continued co-operation with the Commission on promoting the transition from institutional to community-based care. Since the very start of the European Expert Group's work our services have contributed to its work and benefitted from insights from the group on deinstitutionalisation in relation to the policies of active inclusion, child poverty and long-term care as well as regional policy.

The Commission's proposal for the new regulations of the Common Strategic Framework funds, including the European Social Fund and the Regional Development Fund, foresees a regulatory structure in which Member States will be in the position to implement policies including on deinstitutionalisation. Operational programmes will have to describe the actions taken to promote equal opportunities and prevent any discrimination. For the ERDF and ESF all operational programmes will need to include specific actions to promote equal opportunities and anti-discrimination during their preparation, design and implementation. In particular, access to funding for groups at risk of discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons are criteria to respect in defining operations co-financed by the ESF and ERDF.<sup>1</sup> As for the ESF, the proposal provides for a thematic objective on the promotion of social inclusion and the combating of poverty covering investment priorities which are relevant to deinstitutionalisation. Moreover, it stipulates that the ESF shall promote social innovation

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2011) 615 final of 6.10.2011 (Article 87(3)(a))

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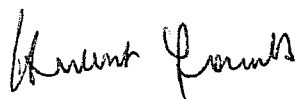
which can also involve this theme. A specific investment priority for the ERDF to support investments in health and social infrastructure, including the transition from institutional to community-based services is foreseen<sup>2</sup>.

Measures to support the shift from residential to community based care are included under the "criteria for fulfilment" of the ex ante conditionality "Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty"<sup>3</sup> in the context of national strategies for poverty reduction. These measures will make transformational changes not only eligible for the next programming period, but also set up obligations for Member States with a clear mandate<sup>4</sup>. This is fully in line with your approach of prioritising the transition to community care using Structural Funds. Under the Commission's legislative proposals, it will be the Member States who will assess whether the applicable ex ante conditionalities are met and where this is not the case they should set out the actions they plan to take in order to ensure that the necessary conditions for the effective use of Union support are in place. The fulfilment of these requirements will be assessed by the Commission in the framework of its appraisal of the Partnership Contract and programmes submitted by the Member States.

Following the publication of the proposal, discussions with national authorities, the European Parliament and other stakeholders have started. Although the adoption of the regulations is not expected before late 2012, preparations for the next step towards the 2014-2020 period, that is the planning and negotiation of partnership contracts and operational programmes will be started soon. In this effort, the continued cooperation of the two DGs and the expert group can rely on the knowledge of the European experts and the country-specific knowledge on structural funding of our geographical desks. The Commission welcomes the guidance paper currently under preparation by the European Expert Group on de-institutionalisation and is prepared to discuss its potential further use and dissemination.

For any matters related to the work of the expert group and the preparation of the guidelines and the toolkit, please contact

Yours sincerely,



Hubert Gams  
Head of Cabinet  
Commissioner Johannes Hahn



Anabela Gago  
Head of Cabinet  
Commissioner László Andor

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<sup>2</sup> COM(2011) 614 final of 6.10.2011 (Article 5(9))

<sup>3</sup> COM(2011) 615 final of 6.10.2011 (Annex IV, point 10)

<sup>4</sup> COM(2011) 615 final of 6.10.2011 (Article 17)