

EN

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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.8.2026)

1. The Commission supports Member States and stakeholders in the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) via the 2022 ‘Healthier Together’ EU NCDs initiative¹, which recognises hearing loss as a factor contributing to dementia.

In May 2026, the Commission adopted a communication Enhancing the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities up to 2030, which reinforces its commitment to building a Union where the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities are fully realised. The strategy pays attention to accessibility as an enabler of rights².

In December 2025, the Commission proposed the revision of the EU legislative framework for medical devices, which also applies to hearing aids³. The revision will simplify procedures while maintaining patient safety and public health protection.

2. The Commission has provided financial support on dementia from the EU4Health programme⁴ to support collaborative work between Member States and stakeholder-led projects.

Under the joint action PreventNCD⁵ (EUR 76 million), Member States collaborate on developing and implementing prevention policies on NCDs and their risk factors. The joint action JADE-Health⁶ (EUR 4,5 million) aims to reduce the burden of dementia and other neurological disorders by transferring best practices from the EU Best Practice Portal on Public Health⁷.

The project Care4Elders⁸ (EUR 450 000) works on transforming dementia through innovative, digital, and person-centred approaches. Through the European Research Council the Commission also funds research in hearing and audio-based diagnostics. READIHEAR project⁹ funded under Horizon Europe¹⁰ aims to set the basis for a new generation of

¹ https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/d843d53e-c1c1-4664-b31e-febf618d011a_en?filename=eu-ncd-initiative_publication_en_0.pdf.

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/disability/union-equality-strategy-rights-persons-disabilities-2021-2030_en.

³ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulations (EU) 2017/745 and (EU) 2017/746 as regards simplifying and reducing the burden of the rules on medical devices and *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices, and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/123 as regards the support of the European Medicines Agency for the expert panels on medical devices and Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 as regards the list of Union harmonisation legislation referred to in its Annex I: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025PC1023>.

⁴ https://health.ec.europa.eu/funding/eu4health-programme-2021-2027-vision-healthier-european-union_en.

⁵ <https://www.preventncd.eu/>.

⁶ <https://jadementia.eu/>.

⁷ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/dyna/bp-portal/>.

⁸ <https://care4elders.eu/>.

⁹ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101044753>.

¹⁰ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

diagnostic and treatment devices for hearing loss.