

# Preface

The concept of “Ambient Assisted Living” (AAL) has become deeply relevant for the present and future challenges. This is strongly motivated by the fact that the annual growth of the older population is significantly higher than that of the total population. For this reason, good aging and AAL activities are the focus of many national and international R&D projects. In this regard, the European Commission has proposed extended funding for doing research on Ambient Assisted Living, which will run alongside the new Horizon 2020 program. The new proposal suggests that Ambient Assisted Living Joint Partnership (AAL JP) will receive over €700 million between 2014 and 2020.

AAL needs to involve and combine multidisciplinary research fields, such as cognitive sciences, computer science, industrial design, user interfaces, electrical engineering, etc., in order to extend the time older people can live in their preferred home environment. Their use of ICT products and remote services will allow them to be more autonomous and assist them in carrying out activities of daily living, thereby enhancing their quality of life.

The Fourth Italian Forum on Ambient Assisted Living (ForItAAL2013), held in Ancona, Italy, in October 2013, was the annual showcase event, which brought together developers, producers, service providers, carriers, and end user organizations working in the different fields of technology and applications of AAL. This book summarizes the main results of the Italian Forum and addresses the issues and new technological developments, which support the autonomy and independence of individuals with special needs through an innovative and integrated approach, designed to respond to the socioeconomic challenges of an aging population. AAL is seen here from different perspectives and within different topical areas. The knowledge and insights provided in this book can not only help researchers but also all people involved in the AAL to understand the new societal trends, the new technological developments and pressing and future challenges concerning Ambient Assisted Living.

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