The Future of Ageing Research in Europe

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FLARE Summer School, Varna, Bulgaria
28th September 2010
The Future of Ageing Research in Europe

- The Emergence of European Coordination
- Towards a European Research Area
- The European Research Road Map
- A New European Research Programme?
**MILESTONES IN EUROPEANISATION OF AGEING RESEARCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991-93</td>
<td>European observatory on Ageing and Older People</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Eurobarometer</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>European Year of Older People and Solidarity Between Generations</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>UN Year of Older People (the society for all ages)</td>
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<td>1998-2002</td>
<td>FP5 Key Action 6</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>First European Forum on Ageing Research</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>FORUM, SHARE</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>ERA-AGE</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>AAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>LINK AGE, AGE-ACTION</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Why We Age, FP7 Road Map</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>ERA-AGE2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FUTURAGE</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>JPI</td>
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COORDINATING EUROPEAN RESEARCH ON AGEING

www.ageingresearch.group.shef.ac.uk

www.era-age.group.shef.ac.uk

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THE NEED FOR EUROPEAN COORDINATION

- No systematic linkages between centres of excellence
- Duplication of effort
- Missed Opportunities
- Absence of a concerted European perspective

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Towards a European Research Area
COORDINATING EUROPEAN RESEARCH ON AGEING

http://www.shef.ac.uk/ageingresearch/

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RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EUROPEAN FORUMS

- Essential that ageing features prominently in Framework Programmes
- Establish a European Institute on Ageing (virtual)
- Promote multidisciplinary collaboration
- Ensure commitment to user involvement
- Build capacity: attract and support new generation of researchers to the ageing field

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### Partner Countries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Associate Partner</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Quebec</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>United Kingdom (Coordinator)</td>
<td>Saxony (Germany)</td>
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<td>Israel</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA IN AGEING

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THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA IN AGEING (ERA-AGE)

OBJECTIVES

➢ To facilitate coordination of existing ageing research programmes
➢ To promote multidisciplinary research activities between countries
➢ To share good practice in coordination and management of ageing programmes
➢ To develop European ageing research programmes
➢ To help break down the barriers between ageing research and policy and practice

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THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA IN AGEING (ERA-AGE)

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- A joint post-doctoral fellowship scheme
- The creation of national agency research forums in 11 countries (based on the UK model)
- A unique database of European research programmes on ageing
- A database of European research centres
- The production of a comprehensive schedule of key research priorities for future ageing research
- Two good practice guides on research programme management a involving older users in research
- Establishment of partnerships among ERA-AGE members

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ERA-AGE AMBITIONS

- Extension of membership to a critical mass
- Involvement of key stakeholders (regional, national, European)
- Provide infrastructure for FLARE
- Develop and implement FLARE 2
- Develop Europe’s first ageing research programme

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The Future of Ageing Research in Europe

The European Research Road Map

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THE DEFINITIVE ROAD MAP FOR AGEING RESEARCH IN EUROPE (FUTURAGE)

OBJECTIVES

- State-of-the-art assessment of research priorities, emerging fields and methods
- Wide involvement of Europe’s leading scientists in the ageing field
- Full engagement with key non-academic stakeholders in ageing research
- Public information about ageing research
- Launch the definitive road map

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THE DEFINITIVE ROAD MAP FOR AGEING RESEARCH IN EUROPE (FUTURAGE)

PARTICIPANTS

- 11 ERA-AGE partners
- University of Namur (Belgium)
- University of Heidelberg (Germany)
- Italian National Institute on Ageing
- Universities of Leicester and Sheffield (UK)
- University of Tampere (Finland)
- Research Users: European Older People’s Platform (AGE), Age UK
ROAD MAP KEY PRINCIPLES

- A Life Course Perspective (Continuous Ageing)
- Multidisciplinarity (The New Science of Ageing)
- User/Stakeholder Engagement
- (The Key Role of Older People)
- Knowledge Transfer (Impact on Policy, Practice, Product Development)

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IMPLEMENTATION

- Priority scientific themes: biogerontology, social and economic resources, environments of ageing, healthy ageing
- A life course perspective
- Close engagement with users (especially older people)
- Process: scientific and stakeholder workshops, European Forum, Council of Scientists
THE DEFINITIVE ROAD MAP FOR AGEING RESEARCH IN EUROPE (FUTURAGE)

THE ROADMAP (WP8)

COORDINATION TEAM (WP11) + NETWORK STEERING COMMITTEE (WP7)

1° Scientific Workshop

COUNCIL OF SCIENTISTS (WP7)

STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS (WP7)

WP2
WP3
WP4
WP5
WP6

Biomedicine
Socio-Economic Resources
Environment and Ageing
Healthy Ageing
Users Agenda

2° Scientific Workshop

COUNCIL OF SCIENTISTS (WP7)

STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS (WP7)

WP2
WP3
WP4
WP5
WP6

THE ROADMAP (WP8)

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THE DEFINITIVE ROAD MAP FOR AGEING RESEARCH IN EUROPE (FUTURAGE)

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POLITICAL SUPPORT

‘Ageing research is an area of great social, political and economic importance for the European Union.’

‘I want to re-focus research and innovation policies very clearly on developing a coherent strategic research agenda which will tackle the grand societal challenges, which include both the promotion of healthy living and healthy ageing.’

‘It is not the ageing of the population per se that is the challenge but rather the challenge to keep older people healthy.’

‘These challenges can only be confronted if innovative and multi-disciplinary approaches are taken.’

Márie Geoghegan-Quinn
Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation
15 April 2010

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‘For example, the ‘Futurage’ initiative is an FP7 European project which aims to produce a definitive road map which will guide European research on ageing for the next ten years to come. The ‘Futurage’ programme is undertaking the most extensive consultation ever conducted in this field and it is mobilising stakeholders, including medical practitioners, policy makers, industry and representatives of older people to work out the terms of this road map...’

Márie Geoghegan-Quinn
Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation
15 April 2010
THE ROAD MAP : EMERGING PRIORITIES

1. ENVIRONMENTS OF AGEING

- Research to clarify the role of different types of home settings for the future (full range of older adults including those with cognitive impairment / disability)

- Research to clarify the potential of safe and satisfying mobility for the future (full range of older adults including those with cognitive impairment / disability)

- How will technology change the quality of later life?

- Research on the potential of work environments for older individuals must gain high priority

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1. ENVIRONMENTS OF AGEING

GENERAL ISSUES:

- How to make a “unique” Road-Map for Europe?
- Specific EU-related research priorities (e.g., research on ageing and environments as joint effort between countries)
- Strategies how to generate relevant research questions (e.g., forthcoming cohorts; critical role of end user)
- Critical reflection of the area of ageing and environments among scholars (e.g., definition of levels/domains of the environment; value and critique of a mixed methods approach, and of implementation research)
THE ROAD MAP : EMERGING PRIORITIES
2. HEALTHY AGEING

EMERGING RESEARCH THEMES 1:

- Modelling links between disease and functioning (physical and cognitive) over the life course
  - Disease impact may vary across environments
  - Important for planning for the future
- Healthy ageing, work and retirement
  - Links between exit from labour market and pensions, socio-economic status, cultural expectations
- Interrelationship between health and functioning in the oldest old
- What do oldest old value for quality of life and well-being?
THE ROAD MAP: EMERGING PRIORITIES
2. HEALTHY AGEING

EMERGING RESEARCH THEMES 2:

- The diversity of public policy on health related services
  - Identification of exemplars and wider implementation
  - Comparative effectiveness research
  - Primary and secondary care, access, service configuration, delivery and organisation, relationships with social care

- Ensuring translation of new and existing knowledge
  - Economic modelling/cost benefit/cost utility of technologies
  - Translation to clinical practice

- Identifying target groups for promoting health and wellbeing
  - Anticipatory care systems
EMERGING RESEARCH THEMES 3:

- Identification of markers of ageing from cellular to societal level
  - Do markers modify success of medical interventions?
  - Can biomarkers measure the efficacy of interventions?
- Physical activity, diet/nutrition, obesity management
  - How can functional decline and onset of new diseases be reduced in different populations and subpopulations?
- Intervention and implementation
  - What subtypes of activity are effective for which outcomes?
  - When can physical activity or nutrition be used as alternatives to medication?
THE ROAD MAP : EMERGING PRIORITIES
2. HEALTHY AGEING

EMERGING RESEARCH THEMES 4:

- Social/Behavioural Genetics
  - Disentangling genetic, behavioural and environmental influences on healthy ageing
- Life course transitions
  - Impact of health events on restoration or decline of functioning and social/psychological processes involved
- Personal factors and healthy ageing
  - Clarifying how personal attributes (personality, ethnicity, gender) impact on healthy ageing
- Connectedness and orientation
  - ‘Productive ageing/‘shrinking’ of the life space
2. HEALTHY AGEING - CROSS CUTTING

- The “Healthy Ageing” construct
  - Relative importance of physical health and psychological well-being across the life course and in frail populations
  - Integration of views of older people themselves

- Health behaviours and influences on behaviour change
  - Integrated science of behaviour change

- Research to underpin comparative measures to monitor healthy ageing
  - Indicators of SES, functioning, multimorbidity, social engagement

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THE ROAD MAP : EMERGING PRIORITIES
2. HEALTHY AGEING - CROSS CUTTING

- Infrastructure
  - Europe as a comparative laboratory
  - Capacity development

- Integration of disciplines
  - Social exclusion & frailty as vulnerability & risk needs biology, psychology and sociology

- Making the best use of what we already know
  - Existing cohorts
  - “Implementation science” / knowledge transfer

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HEALTHY AGEING: GAPS

- Overlap with biogerontology and genetics
- Mental health
- End of life – ‘healthy ageing and good death’
- Drugs
- Priorities for Eastern Europe
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A New European Research Programme?
‘The New European Dynamics of Ageing’

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ROAD MAP KEY PRINCIPLES

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MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMME
MODEL

www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk
The NDA is a multidisciplinary research collaboration to both investigate the new dynamics of ageing and the various influences shaping them; and to show how their consequences can be managed to achieve the maximum benefits for older people and society.

- Top Quality Science and Engineering
- Multi-disciplinarity
- Impact on Policy, Practice, Product Development
THE NEW DYNAMICS OF AGEING RESEARCH PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- Generate new knowledge: life course influences, changes and increasing diversity in meaning and experience of ageing
- To encourage and support the development of new multi- and interdisciplinary perspectives on ageing
- To encourage comparative research and provide new opportunities for UK science to link with other countries
- To support a new generation of multidisciplinary researchers
- To provide a sound evidence base for policy, practice and product development so that research contributes to well-being and quality of life

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THE NEW DYNAMICS OF AGEING RESEARCH PROGRAMME

RESEARCH THEMES

1. Ageing Well Across the Life course
   i. Active Ageing
   ii. Autonomy and Independence
   iii. Later Life Transitions
   iv. The Oldest Old

2. Ageing and its Environments
   i. Resources for Ageing
   ii. Locality, Place and Participation
   iii. The Built and Technological Environments
   iv. The Global Dynamics of Ageing

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OBJECTIVES

➤ Ensure the Programme reflects perspectives of older people

➤ Monitor outputs and consider implications for older people

➤ Provide a resource for the Programme

➤ Give advice to projects
AGEING IS INEVITABLE BUT MALLEABLE

INTRINSIC  (genetic)

EXTRINSIC  (environment/lifestyle)

AGEING
(loss of function/adaptability)

Adapted from Grimley Evans (2004)

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LIVE LONGER, DIE FASTER

- Prevention (postponement)
  - lifestyle: education, knowledge, opportunities, incentives
  - public health and medical care
- Enabling environments
  - architecture, transport, education, working conditions, culture and sport, safety
  - prosthetics: physical supports, ICTs
- Disability-reducing interventions

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What should be the main thematic focus of a European research programme on ageing?

What are the 3 key scientific topics for such a programme?

What infrastructure is needed to mount such a programme?
RESEARCH FOR A BETTER OLD AGE

THANK YOU

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