Meeting the Grand Challenge of Ageing
A New European Research Agenda

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MEETING THE GRAND CHALLENGE OF AGEING
A NEW EUROPEAN RESEARCH AGENDA

- A New Ambition for Ageing Research
- Background: Objectives, Participants
- Designing the Road Map
- Major Research Themes
- Changing the Landscape of European Ageing Research
A NEW AMBITION FOR AGEING RESEARCH

Ageing research is an area of great social, political and economic importance for the European Union... I want to re-focus research and innovation polices 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... These challenges can only be confronted if innovative and multi-disciplinary approaches are taken.

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn
Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation
15 April 2010
A NEW AMBITION FOR AGEING RESEARCH

“Innovation contributes to tackling the most critical societal challenges we are facing. Europe’s expertise and resources must be mobilized in a coherent manner and synergies between the EU and the Member States must be fostered in order to ensure that innovations with a societal benefit get to the market quicker. The launch of the pilot Innovation Partnership on active and healthy ageing is an important step in that context.”

European Council, 4 Feb 2011
A NEW AMBITION FOR AGEING RESEARCH

The Barriers:

- Society: the structural lag
- Science: overemphasis on disciplines, separation from users, inadequate knowledge transfer
- Policy: fragmentation of departments/approaches, inadequate funding for research on ageing
- European Union: the healthy life years gap, absence of permanent scientific coordination

The Need for a European Road Map
Meeting the Grand Challenge of Ageing
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THE FUTURAGE ROAD MAP

FUTURAGE
A ROAD MAP for AGEING RESEARCH
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
A DEFINITIVE ROAD MAP FOR AGEING RESEARCH IN EUROPE (FUTURAGE)

PARTICIPANTS

- 11 ERA-AGE partners
- University of Namur (Belgium)
- University of Heidelberg (Germany)
- Lund University (Sweden)
- Italian National Institute of Health and Science on Ageing
- Universities of Leicester, Sheffield, Newcastle (UK)
- University of Tampere (Finland)
- Research Users: AGE Platform Europe, Age UK
THE FUTURAGE ROAD MAP FOR AGEING RESEARCH IN EUROPE

DESIGNING THE ROAD MAP
What is a Road Map?
What is a Road Map?

Politics

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

NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL (WP1)

WP2 Biomedicine
WP3 Socio-Economic Resources
WP4 Environment and Ageing
WP5 Healthy Ageing
WP6 User Agenda

1st Scientific Workshops

COUNCIL OF SCIENTISTS MEETING 1 (WP7)
STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS 1 (WP7)

WP2
WP3
WP4
WP5
WP6

2nd Scientific Workshops

COUNCIL OF SCIENTISTS MEETING 2 (WP7)
STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS 2 (WP7)

THE ROAD MAP (WP8)
EIGHT OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

- An Holistic Person – environment Approach to Ageing (All Disciplines)
- A Life Course Perspective (Continuous Ageing)
- Multi-disciplinarity (The New Science of Ageing)
- User / Stakeholder Engagement (The Key Role of Older People)
- Knowledge Exchange (Impact on Policy, Practice, Product Development)
- Diversity, Cross-national, Cross-cultural (The European Research Area)
- Capacity Building (Following Generations, NMS)
- Maximising Technological Innovation (EU Priority)
DESIGNING THE ROAD MAP

Wide Range of Disciplines

- Biogerontology: biology, biomedicine and genetics
- Social and economic resources (including social support and care provision)
- Environments of ageing focusing primarily on the physical environment
- Healthy ageing and well being (physical and mental)
- User / Stakeholder Engagement
MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMME MODEL

www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk
THE NEW SCIENCE OF AGEING

INTRINSIC (genetic)  EXTRINSIC (environment/lifestyle)

AGEING (loss of function/adaptability)

AGEING IS INEVITABLE BUT MALLEABLE

Adapted from Grimley Evans (2004)
THE CASE FOR INTER/MULTI-DISCIPLINARITY

Interdisciplinary research should not be conducted for its own sake but, rather as a deliberate response to specific research needs.

Bridging Disciplines in the Brain, Behavioural and Clinical Sciences, 2000, p.4.
THE FUTURAGE ROAD MAP FOR AGEING RESEARCH IN EUROPE

MAJOR RESEARCH THEMES
SEVEN MAJOR RESEARCH THEMES

- Healthy Ageing for More Life in Years
- Maintaining and Regaining Mental Capacity
- Inclusion and Participation in the Community and Labour Market
- Social Protection: Quality and Sustainability
- Ageing Well at Home and in Community Environments
- Unequal Ageing and Age-related Inequalities
- Biogerontology
SEVEN MAJOR RESEARCH THEMES

Common Format

- Significance
- Fundamental Insights Necessary for Future Research
- Overview of Current Knowledge
- Main Priority Sub-topics
- Specific Research Questions
SEVEN CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH ON HEALTHY AGEING

Model of health transitions (WHO, 1984)

Carol Jagger, 2011
SEVEN CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH ON HEALTHY AGEING

1. Healthy ageing and frailty – understanding the process and defining the concepts

- Can we agree a definition of healthy ageing and its dimensions that crosses cultures and societies?
- How does frailty progress and can we identify biomarkers to intervene earlier?

Carol Jagger, 2011
SEVEN CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH ON HEALTHY AGEING

2. Organising and delivering interventions for health promotion

• How late in life can changes to negative lifestyles be made to impact on healthy ageing?
• Developing a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary understanding of the science of behaviour change

Carol Jagger, 2011
FROM DISCIPLINES TO WORKING GROUPS

Disciplines
- Architecture
- Biology
- Biomedicine
- Biotechnology
- Demography
- Design
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- Epidemiology
- Genetics
- Geography
- Geriatric medicine
- Health sciences
- Law
- Management
- Occupational therapy
- Philosophy
- Physiology
- Psychology
- Public health
- Social policy
- Social work
- Sociology
- Technology & ICT
- Urban planning

Working Groups
- Biogerontology
- Social & Economic Resources
- Environments of Ageing
- Healthy Ageing

September 2009 to October 2011
FROM WORKING GROUPS TO MAJOR THEMES

WORKING GROUPS

- Biogerontology
- Healthy Ageing
- Environments of Ageing
- Social and Economic Resources

MAJOR RESEARCH THEMES

- Healthy Ageing
- Biogerontology
- Unequal Ageing
- Social Participation
- Social Protection
- Mental Capacity
- Home and Community
THE PRIORITY OF ACTIVE AGEING

Healthy Ageing

Mental Capital

Inclusion and Social Participation

Social Protection

Unequal Ageing

Home and Community

Bio-gerontology

Active Ageing Across the Life-course
Meeting the Grand Challenge of Ageing
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CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE OF EUROPEAN AGEING RESEARCH
FOUR IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

- Framework Programme Priority for Ageing Research
- Infrastructure: A Virtual European Institute
- Capacity Building: Multi-disciplinarity, New Member States and the Next Generations
- Funding for User Engagement / Knowledge Exchange
THE NEW LANDSCAPE OF EUROPEAN AGEING RESEARCH

- More Multi-disciplinary
- More Diverse in Methods (e.g. Translational, Social and Biological, Longitudinal)
- More Holistic Approach to Ageing (Life Course, Diversity, Contextual)
- Closer Reference to End Users, Including Older People (from subjects to partners)
- Greater Emphasis on Impact (the 3p’s)
- Close Cooperation Between all Member States (European Institute)

More Responsive to the Grand Challenge
POLITICAL SUPPORT

‘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...’

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- Conclusion
REALISING THE AMBITION

Challenges to Stakeholders:

- Policy Makers and Research Funders (Regional, National, European)
- End Users (NGO’s, Practitioners, Business)
- Scientists
- Older People and Other Citizens

THE NEED FOR CONCERTED ACTION
MEETING THE GRAND CHALLENGE OF AGEING
A NEW EUROPEAN RESEARCH AGENDA

THANK YOU
WITH THANKS TO.......
ALSO THANKS TO...

- The Council of Scientists
- ERA-AGE Partners
- All other Participants
- European 7th Framework Programme (Health - 2007-3.4-5 A road-map for ageing research)