

An elderly couple is walking away from the camera on a grassy path, likely a golf course. The woman on the left is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and light yellow shorts. The man on the right is wearing a pink polo shirt and khaki trousers. They are holding hands. The background is a blurred green landscape with trees and a white building in the distance.

ERA AGE 2

European
Research
Area in
Ageing

**A better future
for ageing**



ERA-AGE background and objectives

ERA-AGE is the European Research Area in Ageing.

Its objectives are:

- To facilitate the coordination of existing ageing research programmes.
- To promote joint multi- and interdisciplinary research activities between countries.
- To share good practice in the coordination and management of ageing research programmes.
- To support the production of European priorities for ageing research.
- To help break down the barriers between ageing research and policy and practice so that Europe's older people may benefit from research.

To mark the end of its first phase and to launch the next one, ERA-AGE organised, in partnership with the EESC, a major conference in Brussels, on 2nd February 2009, devoted to the Future of Ageing Research in Europe.





ERA-AGE 2 objectives

The main aim of this second phase of ERA-AGE is to enable the continuation of highly successful work in order to secure, for the long term, the European Research Area in the ageing field. The existing consortium has not only met but also exceeded all of its initial goals and is now committed to the joint funding of Europe's first research programme on ageing. This phase of work is intended to deliver the joint programme together with a second round of the pioneering FLARE (Future Leaders of Ageing Research in Europe) post-doctoral programme and the light touch infrastructure necessary to ensure that European potential in this critical field is realised. The partnership will also be extended progressively to include new members.



Aims:

- Continue to provide the European framework for the existing FLARE programme and to develop and implement the framework for a second call for the FLARE postdoctoral programme - FLARE 2
- Ensure that the key stakeholders regionally, nationally and European are engaged in the activities of ERA-AGE and, thereby, contributing to the research response to the ageing challenge.
- Continue ERA-AGE essential knowledge transfer activities including further development of its databases aimed at providing evidence for policy, practice and product development in response to the ageing challenge.
- Engage the majority of European countries as ERA-AGE members following an explicit programme of engagement and clear eligibility criteria. In effect an open call for membership will be made.
- Ensure a lasting basis for strategic collaboration between the ERA-AGE partners.



FLARE is the first European programme on ageing research funded by the Member States themselves.

FLARE has two innovative features: part of the fellowship must be spent in another country and involve a cross-disciplinary collaboration. These novel features reflect the strong scientific consensus in ERA-AGE on the need to develop a multi-disciplinary approach to ageing research and also a European networking in this area. Another key priority for both scientists and end users is the support of the next generation of researchers on ageing, hence the title, 'Future Leaders of Ageing Research in Europe' (FLARE).

The first pilot project was launched in February 2007 when the joint programme provided eighteen 3 year post-doctoral fellowships for recently qualified scientists culminating in a summer school in Sweden.

A second round of funding and a new programme of summer schools will be launched in 2010 and the team have already received a number of expressions of interest.



FLARE Summer School 2008

ERA AGE database:

Using the existing ERA-AGE databases as a starting point new research programmes and centres, bio-banks and researchers in the ageing field will be collated and added.

The three new ERA-AGE partners, Bulgaria, Latvia and Spain, will liaise between national programmes, research managers and funders in the ageing field (electronically and bi-annual meetings) to:

1. Collect information about the commissioning, funding and evaluation of ageing research;
2. Identify examples of good practice in all dimensions of research programmes;
3. Prepare a database of ageing programmes and activities, funding priorities, disciplinary and interdisciplinary distribution of research, management approaches and extent of involvement of research users;
4. Develop a database of bio-banks and researchers;
5. Establish a national forum of ageing research programmes and research funders.

This information will provide a national profile of ageing research programmes.

In addition, the consortium will further develop the existing ERA-AGE database of scientific reviewers.

Forums:

The basis for a new phase of networking and community building activities has been laid by the creation of the European Forum on Population Ageing Research. Now, under ERA-AGE 2 this body will take on a new form as a broad Forum for all key stakeholders: political and societal as well as scientific. Thus as well as research managers and decision makers the forum will be enlarged to include policy makers, NGO's and leading scientists. The Forum agenda will also be widened to include the whole European ageing challenge and how research might respond to it. Each Forum meeting will build cumulatively towards a strategic statement on the future of ageing research in Europe, prioritising the key actions at national and European level.

Publicity will be via the ERA-AGE website and newsletters as well as via other appropriate partners such as AGE, the European Older People's Platform.

Stakeholder workshop will be held in Romania specifically targeted at New Member States. Aimed at the key scientific, political and societal stakeholders in these countries this meeting will engage them in existing ERA-AGE and other European research activities and facilitate their participation in the European Forum.



Introducing the partners:

Full members

Austria: Austrian Academy of Sciences

Bulgaria: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Finland: Academy of Finland

France: Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Vieillesse

Israel: Israeli Ministry of Health

Italy: Istituto Superiore Di Sanita

Latvia: Latvian Council of Science

Luxembourg: Fonds National de la Recherche

Romania: Ministry of Health and Family

Romania: Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding

Spain: Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation

Sweden: The Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research

United Kingdom: The University of Sheffield

Associate members

Germany: Saxon State Ministry for Social Affairs

Canada: Canadian Institutes of Health Research: Institute of Aging

Canada: Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec

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Funded by the European Commission's
Seventh Framework Programme

FP7-ERA-NET-2008-RTD/No 235356