



FUTURAGE

A ROAD MAP *for* AGEING RESEARCH

Environments of Ageing

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Environments of Ageing: The Area of Environmental Gerontology

- **Understanding of interactions between ageing persons and their physical-technical-social surroundings (home environments; out-of-home environments, technology and products)**
- **How person-environment (p-e) relationships shape ageing outcomes over time (functioning, well-being, falls, health, etc.)**
- **Environmental gerontology engages many disciplines, all contributing to the understanding of p-e relationships (e.g., architecture, psychology, occupational therapy)**
- **Societal: Person-environment research as an important element of an emerging European culture of ageing**

Aims of First Workshop (Heidelberg, Germany)

- To identify, analyse and integrate burning issues of the research area of ageing and environments
- To link these issues with the ageing of our societies and with current and future societal challenges of Europe
- To begin a discussion on user involvement and implementation issues
- To involve young scholars
- To stay rather general, to generate a first direction for the roadmap

Issues of theory, methodology and implementation research during Workshop 2, June 16-18, 2010 in Lund (Sweden)

Methodology of Workshop

- **35 scholars from Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, U.S.**
- **A wide range of disciplines (architecture, engineering, epidemiology, geriatric medicine, health sciences, occupational therapy, psychology, sociology, transport research)**
- **Representatives of user organisations, including one Member of Parliament**
- **Invited “focused statements”, break-out groups, and integrative discussions**
- **Concentration on existing evidence and research gaps as well as on the need to translate existing findings to intervention, and to practice implementation**

Outcomes: Towards an Emerging Roadmap for Environments of Ageing

(1) 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)
- Need for more efficient
 - synthesis of state-of-the art on different issues
 - utilisation existing data, for cross-national research
- 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)

Outcomes: Towards an Emerging Roadmap for Ageing and Environments

(2) General priorities:

- Focus on the bigger picture, in a European perspective (e.g., housing as a critical societal issue; cross-national issues; climate change; globalisation)
- Invest into conceptual issues (e.g., the linkage between environments and health)
- Always keep a life course perspective (e.g., understanding of the life course in terms of p-e transitions)
- Educate, communicate, translate, intervene and implement (e.g., translation and implementation as a serious methodological challenges) – calls for changed strategies not only among researchers, but also among funding bodies!

Outcomes: Towards an Emerging Roadmap for Ageing and Environments

(3) Examples of important research areas:

- 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 quality of life in later life?
- Research on the potential of work environments for older individuals must gain high priority

Outcomes: Towards an Emerging Roadmap for Ageing and Environments

(4) Important cutting-across areas:

- Invest into the issue of interdisciplinary – build new alliances
- Consider forthcoming cohorts – need for longitudinal studies
- Consider the heterogeneity of old age – from a p-e perspective
- Invest into more progressive theory building for the 21st century
- Invest into methodology development – including mixed-methods and methodology for implementation research
- Invest into meta-syntheses of existing research – to communicate the evidence base to the scientific as well as the public community
- Invest into young scholars – encourage and support them to be active agents in the process of producing the Road Map

Next Steps

- **Second Workshop on Ageing and Environments, June 16-18, 2010, at Lund University, Sweden**
- **Continuous interchange with other FUTURAGE work streams**
- **Forming of an internal, executive group to work on the material from the two workshops (6-7 persons, including young scholar, user representative)**
- **Preliminary Road Map on Environments of Ageing at the end of 2010**