

**National Coordinator Report
Romania**

**Findings from the Data Gathering on
Ageing Research Programmes**

**Ministry of Health (MoH) and
Ministry of Education and Research-Executive Agency for
Higher Education and Research Funding(UEFISCSU)**

Section 1

Ministry of Health-MoH is one of the providers for the research funds in Romania and it currently runs different national programs including the program on ageing-“The National Program on Geriatrics”. The funds concerning ageing issues aim mainly to support the activities of the National Institute of Gerontology and Geriatrics “Ana Aslan”- INGG Ana Aslan, the world's first Gerontology Institute, located in Bucharest since 1956 (The Institute was created by the Professor Aslan and it has been made a huge impact in Geriatrics with the discovery and use of her creation, **Gerovital-H3®**, which is widely accredited as the first modern anti-ageing drug). The INGG Ana Aslan research topics are mainly in molecular biology, pharmacology and clinical research-mainly linked with Gerovital-Aslavital, and social gerontology.

There are also components ageing research related, that can be identified in other national programs funded by MoH.

The Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding-UEFISCSU, represents the most significant professional body in field of higher education and research funding management. It is organized and operates autonomously, under the Ministry of Education and Research-MEdC ultimate authority. It supports the activities related core financing for the higher education institutions and also funding of basic research in universities and research institutes. UEFISCSU supports the administrative activities of the National University Research Council (CNCSIS, www.cncsis.ro) and of the Higher Education Funding Council (CNFIS, www.cnfis.ro), consultative Councils of the Minister of Education and Research. The access at the research funds is only competitive based being funded large research projects, doctoral and post-doctoral studies, consortia on selected topics of interest.

The public research funders in Romania are:

1. Ministry of Education and Research – MEdC- as program owner for two main funding streams:

- a) **Research grants** system which is managed by the CNCSIS¹, together with UEFISCSU². *CNCSIS-UEFISCSU-CNFIS were the institutions implementing the Higher Education and Research Reform Program co-funded by World Bank and Romanian Government (1997-2003).*
- b) **PNCDI-National Plan for Research, Development and Innovation**, www.mct.ro, which started in 1999 and has been developed to the actual structure, consisting of 14 programs from which at list two are giving funding support also for ageing research projects:
 - **VIASAN** – life and health which is managed/administrated by the Academy of Medical Sciences;
 - **CERES** – Research of Socio-Economic Interest, managed by IFIN – Institute for Nuclear Physics;

¹ CNCSIS is the Romania representative in European Science Foundation since 2003.

² CNCSIS was established bylaw in 1995 in the process of Higher Education and Research Reform in Romania having as a model Research Councils in UK; UEFISCSU was established bylaw in 2000 aiming to implement the managerial and administrative activities of the CNCSIS and also of the CNFIS-National Council for Higher Education

2. **Ministry of Health (MoH)- The Department of Medical Assistance, Specialty Committees** (with consultative role), through the Public Health Programs one of which being “The National Program on Geriatrics”.
3. **Romanian Academy (AR)** as program owner for a significant number of different programs/projects, including a research grants system. The AR funds are accounted for 10%-15% of the whole national research budget. The beneficiaries are mainly researchers from the research institutes under the AR coordination (e.g. Research Institute on Quality of Life, The Institute of Cell Biology).
4. **Academy of Medical Sciences.** It also acts as implementing agency for VIASAN Program.
5. **Other Ministries.**

The National Coordinator Report covers the following ageing research programmes :

1. **VIASAN, one of the programs of National Plan for Research and Development, of the MEdC, implemented by Academy of Medical Sciences)**
2. **Research grant system of the MEdC³, managed by CNCISIS⁴-UEFISCSU**
3. **Research grant system of Romanian Academy**
4. **The National Program on Geriatrics - funding scheme managed by Ministry of Health.**

³ Ministry of Education and Research
⁴ National University Research Council

Section 2

2.1 About the Programmes

What is meant by the term research programme in Romania?

- *What is your role as scientific director of the programme?*
- *How are the key aims and objectives of the programme achieved. For example, if a key aim is to involve research users or to foster interdisciplinary collaboration what does the programme/s do to facilitate this?*
- *What is the role of the steering committee and who are its members?*
- *What funding opportunities in the programme have been beneficial? For example, funding for young researchers, network grants, small grants, Phd funding etc.*

Coordination between the projects in the programme/s

- *How are the projects monitored and supported by the programme/s during the funded period? (The processes in place). For example, do project directors produce annual progress reports?*
- *Are there additional programme resources they can call upon for specific activities, i.e. cross project meetings on sub-themes such as ethnicity?*
- *Is collaboration between the projects obligatory?*
- *Have any problems been encountered?*

Evidence based practice

- *Is the programme developing evidence-based practice?*
- *How is this organised and what has worked well? For example, clinical practitioners, clinical research fellows (connection between basic and clinical application).*
- *Have any problems been encountered?*

Experiences of collaboration with other funders of your programme

(only relevant if the programme is funded by multiple agencies)

- *How has this been facilitated?*
- *Have you encountered any problems?*
- *What lessons have you reaped from this process?*

What is meant by the term research programme in Romania?

The “Research program” term is related to a multi-thematic approach and to the capacity for encompassing different projects within the programme. The users involvement in the interdisciplinary context (ex, basic research is complementary of clinic research, clinical research is complementary of social research) is a strong point regarding the elaboration of the program. Actually, the research program is seen like a plan designed to accomplish different research objectives with appropriate funds and human resources. Interdisciplinary collaboration is vital for gerontological research and other areas.

VIASAN

The role of the Director was to elaborate the scientific programme, coordinate unitary the projects included in the programme, harmonize the different parts of the programme, attract funding, design the budget and promote national and international collaboration, in order to achieve the goal of the programme.

The director of the program coordinates both, the scientific and the economic activity.

During the funding period, the projects are monitored by the funder using progress reports but the funder doesn't use the findings to orient the research further.

A research programme would be a plan to achieve a specific aim of research, with proper funding, and including specific personnel responsible for different activities. Moreover, interdisciplinary cooperation would be involved, e.g. basic and clinical research, or medical and social research, in order to achieve results. Different research projects are included in the research programme.

-

The program steering committee is involved in all research activities coordination. The steering committee is formed by experts, some with significant experience in the field, some less experienced.

-

Funding of mobility for young researchers was almost always beneficial. We generally have a great human potential but unfortunately we also lose researchers after they have been funded to go abroad for some time. We need PhD-student funding but in a way that after PhD people are stimulated to come back and start their own projects.

The projects in the programme are coordinated by regulations that require project directors to produce scientific and budget reports at least once every six months.

But collaboration between the projects is not obligatory.

-

Coordination between different projects could be a problem, we do not have a global synergistic strategy.

- *How is this organised and what has worked well? For example, clinical practitioners, clinical research fellows (connection between basic and clinical application).*

Students are involved in the research projects which connect clinical work with basic projects (for instance mixed dementia: from neuropsychological scales to biomarkers).

It is very difficult to motivate people for research except the mandatory research activities (e.g. diploma). For the same research activity, they gain more in developed countries.

Research grant system of the MEdC, managed by CNCSIS-UEFISCSU

The scientific director's role is that of coordinating the implementation of the project and that of representing the implementing team. He or she is actually a warranty for fulfilling the requirements of the project. The task to attract other financing sources and integrate the project within the programme also falls to the scientific director's responsibility.

The research programmes are set up depending on the financing opportunities; the criteria used are not well defined. Neither are they part of a general strategy.

The objectives of the project achieved presuppose both the concentration of research resources in the academic environment and their accessibility. For the implementation of the programme we had to fulfill the minimal requirements regarding interdisciplinary collaboration, imposed by the funder. There is no strategy within our organisation to support this aspect.

The members of the steering committee are mainly represented by participants and the project users, who have the role of performing audits only for the project implementation period.

The funding opportunities in the programmes have been beneficial; funding for young researchers seems to be the least applicable in our country, due to the eligibility conditions, which are very little applicable in Romania (autonomy for persons under 35) and to the Romanian academic system which does not encourage interdisciplinary collaboration.

The projects in progress are assessed both annually and upon request by means of audit reports (self- assessment sheets). There is no collaboration imposed between the projects of the same programme.

There is not stipulated, like a funding condition, the collaboration between the projects but, in the same time, the collaboration between projects is encouraged and it guarantees the achievement of valuable research results.

The programme is developing evidence-based practice to the extent to which each project must be based on solid and justified premises, in both national and international contexts.

The project is available both for fundamental research and for clinical research. Therefore, the project offers premises to the connections between the two without imposing them.

The National Programme on Geriatrics - funding scheme managed by Ministry of Health.

The Scientific Director's role is to coordinate the research projects involved in the programme; (each partner's role and responsibility in achieving the project: objectives, results, deadlines etc...) They also;

-attract the funds necessary to achieve the project/programme

-promotes national and international collaboration to support the objectives of the programme and the project.

The research programme comprises several sub-themes which, in their turn, comprise several projects.

Upon elaborating research programmes, one must consider the involvement of the research users within the context of an interdisciplinary collaboration. (gerontological research is anyway done by means of interdisciplinary collaboration).

The steering committee coordinates the NIGG activity.

The projects are monitored during each phase. This is achieved not only through annual reports. However there are no resources.

Yes, it is obligatory (several projects focus on the same objective within the research sub-theme or theme).

Oh, yes, many problems, especially after you receive the money –problems such as those related to the purchase phase.

Evidence-based practice

During the elaboration of research projects, researcher clinicians collaborate very well with researchers of other specialties (chemists, biochemists, biologists) working in research laboratories. Researcher clinicians get information regarding the fundamental aspects of the subject approached (e.g. in the case of pathology related to age...), while researchers of other specialties than clinical get information, in their turn, regarding certain physiopathological aspects of the subject approached.

2.2 Planning, reviewing and selecting projects

The below process is shared by the other research funding programmes.

Research grant system of the MEdC, managed by CNCSIS-UEFISCSU

The funds allotted to scientific research by way of grants are won through national competition among the university teaching staff, researchers with research teams part of:

- accredited higher education institutions;
- public or private research units and structures;

the funds are granted in accordance to the law.

The stages of the evaluation and the funding process for the research grants

June	Call for proposals
September	Deadline for proposals submission
October -November	The evaluation at expert level.

November - December The final evaluation of the projects at the level of specialty committees, after which the committees present their proposals to the Council.

The proposals of the special committees are discussed and voted by the Council. The list of the approved grants is later signed by the Minister of Education and Research.

January	Negotiation and contracting
----------------	-----------------------------

UEFISCSU is in charge with management and administrative tasks related to CNCSIS activities.

- *Setting* selection criteria for projects: the specialty committees of the CNCSIS certifies the fulfill the eligibility criteria for acceptance.
- *Evaluation by experts*: Three independent experts from each institution assess all applications where the applicants work, in some cases there are 5 experts from each institution to avoid a potential conflict of interests.
- *Evaluation by specialty committees*:

- the specialist committees analyses the experts' evaluations and give a final mark;
- the evaluation of the specialty committees includes quantitative and qualitative assessments of the project proposals, a budget evaluation and the fulfillment of professional ethics;
- the specialty committees make a preliminary hierarchy of the project proposals on various types of programmes.
- *Evaluation at the Council level:*
 - the president of each speciality committee presents the ranking of the speciality committee and the way in which the committee has handled the possible conflict of interests;
 - CNCSIS analyses and validates professional ethics;
 - CNCSIS validates the procedures and the preliminary hierarchies.
- *Objections:*
 - the lists with the preliminary results are made public on the CNCSIS web page (www.cncsis.ro);
 - the objections are submitted to the CNCSIS, in writing within 5 days since the
 - objections are solved by the CNCSIS, based on the methodology approved
 - the results of the objections are communicated to those involved in writing by the CNCSIS, this is according to the law.
- *The final approval:*
 - once objections are dealt with, the final ranking is drawn. The lists including the projects submitted for approval are established by the specialty committees of the CNCSIS after receiving the budget allotted by the Ministry of Education and Research for the current year;
 - the committees' presidents submit final standings and recommendations of the specialty committees to CNCSIS, as well as the way in which the conflicts of interests, if any, were solved;
 - CNCSIS analyses and approves recommendations referring to the level and structure of each grant's budget;
 - CNCSIS makes a final decision (approves or rejects the project) through open votes (the validation requires 2/3 of the votes of a total number of presentees);
 - CNCSIS may make additional suggestions to the projects applying for funding.
- *Approval by the central bodies:* The lists with the projects proposed for financing by the CNCSIS are forwarded to the Ministry and the Minister of Education and Research for approval.
- *The communication of the results:*
 - the final list (after being approved by the Ministry of Education and Research) is publicly available on the web page of the CNCSIS (www.cncsis.ro);
 - CNCSIS communicates in writing the results of the competition to each applicant;
 - CNCSIS send the applicants' institutions the lists with the approved grants and information about the next steps to be taken

Due to the yearly funding decision, the mandatory deliverables for monitoring and evaluating the implementation process are the yearly research and financial reports. Because the funding of the projects is made separately/independently for each year, the project team must draw up a yearly financing report and a research report necessary for the assessment and monitoring of the projects.

2.3 The National Context of the Programmes

The situation is similar for all the other programmes interviewed so only two are presented below.

VIASAN

Aging is not stated as a priority in research, but there is a political awareness.

The competition for funding is high and the medical research funds are not very large. There was no global ageing-research forum in Romania until the implementation of ERA-AGE.

Research grant system of the MEdC, managed by CNCSIS-UEFISCSU

In the actual national context, unfortunately, the research issue has a policy dimension more than a research issue on its own. The research on ageing is not stated yet as a priority. As a conclusion, in Romania, the ageing research is not carried out in a planned manner because it does not receive a high priority. Therefore, research on ageing suffers from a lack of continuity, without any final goal at the research program level related to the difficulty of implementing the findings in the health, economic and social fields. The success of the program might be to improve the quality of life of older people with less costs.

2.4 Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research

(Defined as 'research projects that involve more than one disciplinary perspective and seek to integrate these perspectives in the research i.e. the integration of several disciplines within single projects or consortia).

VIASAN

Very few interdisciplinary research projects emerge in Romania.

The majority of project managers are both clinicians and basic scientists and they try to use the opportunity to have access both to patients and to a research lab.

Good practice: Medical students in the last years completing their diploma research work – being able to take part in basic research aspects of patients.

Research grant system of the MEdC, managed by CNCSIS-UEFISCSU

One of the requirements that had to be fulfilled in order to receive funding was to create an interdisciplinary team, or a network between the education/research institutions. There have not been any adjustments to our programmes. The disciplines have been chosen by the funders, depending on the objectives of the project.

We included an inter-academic pattern in the projects. But its putting into practice is made difficult because of the Romanian legislation on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it is not encouraged because of the projects are underfunded. Due to these reasons, each organisation tries to use as much as it can from the funding of a project for its own use.

Funds management. The underfunding of a project automatically triggers the use of the funds mainly by the project manager; the transfer of the research facilities acquired within the team

is achieved with difficulty, while there is no actual control over their use. It hasn't created new research, but only a framework insufficiently used at present.

The National Program on Geriatrics - funding scheme managed by Ministry of Health.

The gerontological perspective obviously involves – through content and sphere – the interdisciplinary approach. Gerontology is a domain where several disciplines meet: the bio-medical, medical social and socio-human disciplines.

The following research projects have been achieved: fundamental research programmes and medical social assistance ageing research programmes: adults, elderly and older persons. Examples:

- 1) Gerontoprophylaxy of early ageing – in the case of professionally active persons;
- 2) Medical social dispensarisation of the elderly;
- 3) Healthy Ageing – fundamental and applicative research.

Medical disciplines involved: geriatrics and epidemiology, as well as medical sociology and social psychology.

Criterion: global approach and the elderly person's comprehensive evaluation.

The interdisciplinary research was facilitated by diversifying the objectives and improving the investigation and methodology techniques. For example, within the "Healthy Ageing" projects, the subjects lots were expanded to include persons "of great age" and longevous ones.

No problems occurred within the interdisciplinary research. Each specialist and project coordinator received clear and precise information as to their responsibilities. The data are processed using state of the art programmes: SPSS.

The programme creates new interdisciplinary research between projects such as similarities and differences in the performance regarding physical and cognitive functionality acc. to chronological ages and age groups.

2.5 Ethical Issues

The situation is similar for all the other programmes interviewed.

Research grant system of the MEdC, managed by CNCSIS-UEFISCSU

The programme presupposes from the very beginning the following of ethical principles and some projects may be achieved only with the approval from the ethics committee within the respective organisation. The project includes stipulations related to the research conditions regarding lab animals and human subjects. In practice, the approval issued by the ethics committee is a compulsory phase as regards the research projects which receive funding; the projects based on their own funding are not always evaluated from the ethical point of view.

The National Programme on Geriatrics - funding scheme managed by Ministry of Health.

The research teams are divided into microteams (smaller teams) and each member's responsibilities are established through research protocols. Therefore, there were no ethical issues signalled, the attitude towards the subjects being fair and professional. There is no gender discrimination. It was possible to avoid such issues by organising workshops which contributed to the improvement of the relevant activity when the circumstances required it.

2.6 Involvement of Users

Only two programmes are discussed here because the situation is the same across all the programmes interviewed.

Research grant system of the Romanian Academy

The projects require user involvement at least in the applicative research. If the research is ordered and funded by the government or a ministry, the user is the government or ministry; the end-user is older people. (*older people, patient groups, service providers, professionals, the representatives of older people such as lobby or interest groups and charities, industry, policy makers and the media.*) All of the following are users involved in research.

In many cases, the users are involved in research as recipients of the program's outputs.

The users like the government, ministries, media, the National Institute of Statistics, etc are interested in the research findings for shaping their institutional policy. For this reason, such institutes order the research and they are able to pay for it. For example, the RIQL has a project called "Social Politics". The themes approached by the project are: Social Politics Dynamic in Romania, Social Politics Comparison between countries in transition, Social Assurance System, Social Assistance System, Anti-poverty Politics, Social Politics Funding, Gender Politics, Social Politics in Education.

An other project belonging to the RIQL is called "Diagnosis of the Quality of Life, Poverty and Social Development" and the themes highlighted are: Special Program for Poverty Analyze, The Quality of Life Diagnosis, A Dictionary with Terms of Poverty, Consumption, Pattern, Level, Structure; Rural Area Development. Village in Transition; Life Style; Social Values; Social and Economic Life Conditions of the Roma Population.

Both projects are funded by government.

On the other hand, the population is interested in research findings as well because a global health evaluation, for example, attracts special interventions as: help, therapy, socio medical innovations, all aiming to improve the health and the quality of life of people.

The National Programme on Geriatrics - funding scheme managed by Ministry of Health.

The research users feel motivated and agree that a global evaluation of their health condition be followed by specific interventions: assistance, therapy and other medical social interventions aiming to improve their health and life quality condition.

The research users were also involved in the early aging gerontoprofilaxy programme. Among the selection criteria there was also the presence of risk factors susceptible to accelerate the aging process (individual and environment factors).

Categories of research users:

- presenescent persons, elderly persons, longevous persons
- retired persons associations
- decision makers (ministries which were presented the results and proposals for measures)

Benefits:

to fundamental research through acknowledging the role of the interdisciplinary factors interaction;

for the research users: specialised geriatric assistance and periodic evaluation.

The research user involvement can be improved by elaborating specific strategies, function of the requirement and needs found.

2.7 Dissemination and Implementation of the Programme and Project's Findings

VIASAN

Very few if any projects had a strategy for implementation of findings.

The strategies in place are:- publishing results, giving lectures. Dissemination is not Funded.

Policy makers are not very sensitive to scientific projects.

I am not aware of such a situation where the Findings have been translated into policy of practice.

Project findings:

Projects are not required to produce an implementation plan. When applying, they are asked only for practical significance of the aim of the study.

Research grant system of the MEdC, managed by CNCSIS-UEFISCSU

The implementation of the programme findings was stipulated as an objective. However, it was not clearly defined and it did not involve clear phases or evaluations. The dissemination of the programme results was one of the funding conditions and it constitutes one of the objectives within the periodic evaluation of the results. Still, it does not involve clear evaluation criteria. The initial funding allowed, to a certain extent, dissemination expenses, as well. The key lists to policy come through the programme had an important role in the strategy of the education reform in Romania. It represented an essential element in the

governing strategy and, at the end of the programme, the political factors marked it as being an important step within the development of the Romanian academic research.

- The dissemination was achieved by means of newsletters, web pages and a national conference at the end of the programme. It is compulsory that the results of each project be disseminated, but this activity varies according to the function of the project.

Projects are required to produce an implementation plan. It would involve the organisation of the specific activities within the context of the activities of host organisations. The implementation plan was not required especially.

The results dissemination was partly funded by the programme. There is a central organisation which should disseminate such results, but it depends on the information received from each project, which causes big variations.

The programme plays a relative role in the implementation of the findings. At a certain moment, the necessity to evaluate the results imposed the implementation of the projects results. However, the control subsequent to the programme ending is superfluous; anyway, the programme did not stipulate such strict control.

Actually, the process of implementation was initiated through the projects funding. It should continue by means of self-funding.

Research grant system of Romanian Academy

The research results are used in books, dictionary with terms of poverty, studies in Academic Reviews, scientific sessions, mass media, NGO's, the institute of Government, other ministries and institutes which demand our studies, analyses, strategies etc.

For example:

- "Social Politics in Romania" a strategy coordinate by Prof. Ph. Cătălin Zamfir in The Commission Anti-poverty social inclusion/exclusion from the Romanian Government or the books:
- "The Quality of Life in Romania" coordinate by Prof. Ph. Ioan Mărginean and Ph. Ana Bălaşa, senior researcher from RIQL and
- "The minimum living standard and social costs operative concepts in analyses life quality" by Ph. Adina Mihăilescu, senior researcher from RIQL, Political Barometers which disseminated in mass media: press, radio and TV, and so on.

The 4th program is similar with the programme presented above.

2.8 Evaluation of the Programme

This section is about evaluation after the project and programme is complete not the reviewing of proposals.

Talking about research projects, research institutes have already a decision forum that validates or not the proposals. To access governmental funds, the proposals for Ministry of Education and Research for example, are evaluated by the CNCSIS with their own experts, evaluating and validating the research results by using international standards. Research magazines, publishing materials are evaluated by the CNCSIS using the index system ISI. Concerning programmes, it is the Ministry of Education and research funders that makes the evaluation. The evaluation is based on the assessment criteria regarding projects, such as:

applications number, the success rate of the projects, evaluation process by the experts, contestations number for all evaluation process.

For projects evaluation there are both external and national experts. No international experts for the validation process.

Regarding programmes, the self-evaluation is planned by the CNCSIS.

Example of good practice: the CNCSIS proposed a new but tested evaluation procedure for the programmes, used in the World Bank programmes- the funding agencies are going to invite experts from the similar international organizations for impartiality or a better objectivity .

For the projects, the most important criteria are; The achievement of the proposed scientific aims and dissemination by publication.

The internal evaluation of the research projects concludes about how the scientific plan was accomplished. The external evaluation are those who preliminary decide the external funding. The expertise is consisting in a self-evaluation under control or a peer-review.

As the only alternative to the internal evaluation for a research project or programme, mostly there are just scientometric and bibliometric criteria.

The evaluation is basically done by experts and There is a budget allocated to cover the experts' fees.

The evaluation establishes whether a specific project reached its aims and not more than this.

The social impact of a research program is not yet a methodology tool or a scientific request for the programme as a goal, although the evaluation form encompasses the socio-economic benefits criteria as well.

The projects as well the programmes are too small to have the power in developing ageing research policy.

Only the self-evaluation post implementation reports are available for the public.

2.9 The Future Funding of the Programme

All programmes:

The predictions concerning the future research programmes show a positive balance.

For the future, the programme/s funding will take into account two main aspects:

1. Fundamental research involves huge costs without early positive and economic results. This should be internationally funded, with scientific support and evaluation.
2. Integrative research can be nationally or internationally funded and the implementation of programme findings is obligatory. Economic benefits should be shared by all economic operators who funded the programme.

The global approach and the comprehensive assessment of older people should be considered as basic criteria of the programme.

In early preparation of a programme incorporating international cooperation is absolutely necessary to focus efforts and to avoid overlaps.

What kind of structures are in place to retain young researchers in the field of ageing?

It was already mentioned the lack of financial motivation for young researchers to be kept inside of the country. This is leading to a chronic process of losing young researchers in Romania. We from a 'brain drain' process trying to transform it in a brain gain one. It is already possible that ERA-AGE may be a positive factor to overcome this issue.

It is important for research funding to have an institutional component covering the infrastructure, staff costs and other components allocated to the competition for the research projects.

Also for the success of the research programmes, the funding should be sufficient. The budget should be related to the objective and rigorous scientific requests of the programmes evaluation made by the national and international experts.

The funding opportunities for international researchers are not still open.

Yes, we experienced cooperation with foreign funders in bilateral programmes belonging to international agencies. It was possible only by bilateral agreements, with any competition.

The lesson learned – the international collaboration creates the framework for other international projects/programmes and the opportunity to benefit from foreign scientific experience, eventually, to become part of an ageing research network.

2.10 International Collaboration – including international funding cooperation

Data is currently not available on this issue.

2.11 Any other issues not covered above

Section 3

1. PREPARATION

Different stages of preparation include at least following: initiating the programme, cooperation of funders, planning of the programme (and programme memorandum), decision making on the programme (aims, budget, time span of the programme, coordination), participation of end-users.

Good practices	<i>Cooperation of funders</i> - The collaboration with other funders was possible due to the common interest concerning how the quality of life of older people can be improved.
Arguments	<p>We can mention an example of good practice the ongoing project “The National Report on Ageing Population” belonging of RIQL (Research Institute for Quality of Life)-Research grants system of the Romanian Academy). The research project has three institutional participants interested in research findings, RIQL, the University of Bucharest- Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance, and the National Council for Older People. The project is funded by three bodies working complementary, rather than multiple funding: the Romanian Academy- the most important funder (RIQL belonging to the Romanian Academy), Ministry of Education and Research with a small contribution (through the University of Bucharest in covering part of the staff costs) and the National Council for Older People itself- a governmental body interested in research findings as users, intending to shape a strategy aiming to improve the quality of life of older people.</p> <p>The collaboration with other funders was possible due to the common interest concerning how the quality of life of older people can be improved. A very good understanding of the role each partner has to play has made possible the collaboration between: RIQL which central theme is quality of life, working with researchers focused on this subject, the University of Bucharest providing the human resource for collecting data, and the National Council for Older People as funding contributor, being interested, in research findings to develop a strategy aiming to improve the quality of life of older people in a particular society in transition.</p>
Pitfalls and problems	none
Issues to be discussed	none

2. COMMISSIONING

Stages include at least the following: call for applications, review of applications and decision making (rating and ranking), guidelines for applicants and reviewers (review forms), structure of funding (how funding can be used at project level)

Good practices	Funding agencies intend to impose a decreased successfully rate under 30% meaning that less than 30% from the projects submitted receive funding.
Arguments	Protection of scientific production with the improvement of quality of the funded projects.
Pitfalls and problems	none

Issues to be discussed	none
-------------------------------	------

3. OPERATION

Stages include at least.: coordination, management, steering group, follow up, mid-term evaluation, communication, enhancing multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity

Good Practices	Beginning June 1 st 2005, CNCSIS launched the national programme of research in excellence having a module designated for Romanian young researchers and for those working outside of the country.
Arguments	To stop the exit of young researchers and the loss of their skills
Pitfalls and problems	The lack of preoccupation for young researchers to be involved in national research area.

Issues to be discussed	The way for increasing attractiveness of scientific research in Romania for the professional career of young people.
-------------------------------	--

4. PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Stages include at least: objectives, planning and budgeting of evaluation, use of evaluation results. Research programmes are evaluated in relation to the starting points, their objectives and funding volume.

Good Practices	The CNCSIS proposed a new but experienced evaluation procedure for the programmes, used in the World Bank programmes- the funding agencies will ask experts from the similar international organizations.
Arguments	Transparency and impartiality of evaluation.
Pitfalls and problems	

Issues to be discussed	
-------------------------------	--