

# Beginning of a better understanding of ageing

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The EU-funded ATHLOS Project aims to achieve a better understanding of ageing by identifying patterns of healthy ageing trajectories, the determinants of those patterns, the critical points in time when changes in trajectories are produced, and to propose timely clinical and public health interventions to optimise healthy ageing.

The ATHLOS (Ageing Trajectories of Health: Longitudinal Opportunities and Synergies) project officially began on the 1 May 2015. The ATHLOS kick-off meeting was held on 11 and 12 of May 2015 in Barcelona, organised by the coordinator (Parc Sanitari Sant Joan de Déu -PSSJD) and with the participation of all the partners involved in ATHLOS. After welcoming the participants to the meeting, Dr Josep Maria Haro provided a general outline of ATHLOS, and each partner made a presentation of their group and institution. The different work packages were presented by their Principal Investigators, and participants were given an overview of all longitudinal data sets to be considered in ATHLOS. The event was also attended by the officer of the European Commission in charge of supervising the project.

Experts from the areas of demography, sociology, clinical medicine, epidemiology and public [health](#), health statistics, economics, data management, and policy will be involved in this research. The consortium includes the AGE Platform Europe, a European network of approximately 150 organisations of and for people aged 50 or over.

ATHLOS will merge large sets of variables from longitudinal databases

(at least 20 [longitudinal studies](#)) derived from several European and international studies. The consortium will create and analyse a harmonised data set that includes the longitudinal studies identified, comprising more than 341 000 subjects.

ATHLOS is a research and innovation action aimed at identifying the trajectories and determinants of healthy and active ageing, from early stages of development onwards. ATHLOS will ascertain risk and protective factors, their interactions, the stages in the lifespan in which they most greatly impact health, and how the modification of these factors – through promotion, prevention and treatment interventions – can change individual and population health. This deeper understanding of ageing will also result in a more realistic definition of 'old age' than the standard chronological approach.

Provided by CORDIS

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