AGEING TRAJECTORIES OF HEALTH:
LONGITUDINAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SYNERGIES
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THE PROBLEM
People age differently. Many demographic, lifestyle, genetic and socioeconomic factors determine the diversity in the ageing pathways. At the moment, evidence of the factors that determine healthy ageing pathways is fragmented. However, the overwhelming evidence of a rapidly increasing proportion of older people in the population in Europe and around the globe, and its enormous economic impact fundamentally altering health and social policies, calls for action. It is important to recognise similarities and differences in ageing patterns within and across populations.

OBJECTIVES OF ATHLOS
The objective of the ATHLOS project is to achieve a better understanding of ageing by identifying patterns and determinants of healthy ageing pathways, detecting individuals at risk, and proposing targeted interventions to promote healthy ageing.

• Will produce a harmonised dataset from 20 recent longitudinal studies of ageing, comprising more than 341,000 subjects.

• Will identify patterns of healthy ageing trajectories and their determinants.

• Will determine and operationalise a more valid definition of old age.

• Will translate findings, by means of knowledge translation methodologies and microsimulation exercises, into evidence-informed policy recommendations.

• Will disseminate and make available the resources created, the pooled datasets, the findings, and policy recommendations arising from the project to facilitate the use of those resources and the scalability of ATHLOS products.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?
The ATHLOS consortium is currently involved in the harmonisation of variables across data sets and waves, identifying the core set of variables in each of the relevant domains considered in ATHLOS. A metric of health which can be compared across data sets and waves is being developed, together with the statistical models which will be employed in the subsequent stages of the project.