

# Subjective Age and the Pandemic: The Years Pass. What About Us?

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## What is subjective age?

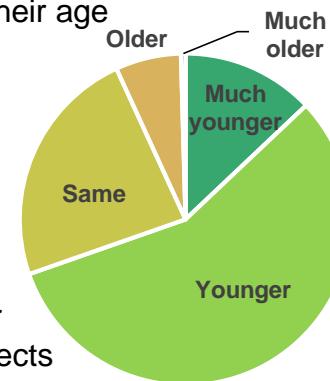
- An indicator of how old a person feels, looks and behaves, what age group they most identify with, and how old they wish to be, regardless of their chronological age.
- Many individuals consider themselves younger or older than they actually are.



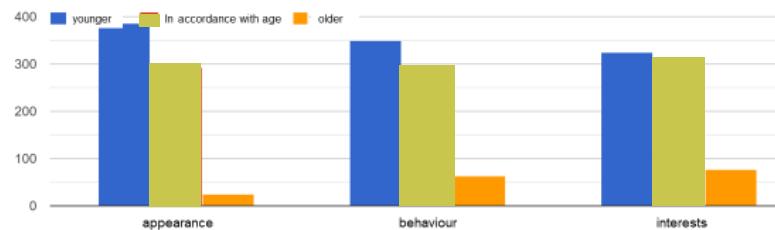
## We asked the citizens...

How old do they feel in relation to their chronological age?

- 70% participants feel younger or much younger in relation to their actual age
- 20% feel in accordance to their age
- Only 10% participants feel older or much older



- Participants feel younger or equal to their age in all aspects of subjective age: appearance, behaviour, and interests



## Subjective age and...

### Physical and mental health

Individuals that are in good physical and mental condition, that engage in various activities and hobbies feel younger.

### Life satisfaction

### Longevity

### External influence

Individuals that feel younger than they are express greater general life satisfaction and have longer life spans.

Maintaining social contact with friends and family helps in keeping a younger feeling of subjective age. Loneliness and lack of social interaction with the environment are connected to a feeling of older subjective age and smaller life satisfaction.

## Are we as old as we feel?

Research shows that youth often feels in accordance to their age or older than they truly are, while adults and elder adults feel significantly younger than their chronological age.

- The difference between chronological and subjective age increases over time, stagnating at around 40 years of age when most participants feel 15% younger than their actual age.

## How does one test subjective age?

**Identifying age** (Participants place themselves into groups of „very young, young, middle age, old, very old“)

**Comparative age** (Participants compare themselves with others in their age range)

**Feeling of age** („How old do you feel?“)

**Cognitive age** (Assesment based on appearance, behaviour, interests, feeling...)

**Stereotypical age** (Assesment of age in relation to different age groups)

**Ideal age** („How old do you most want to be?“)

## Why study subjective age?

- Research following changes in the feeling of subjective age through the years gives important information for the wellbeing of individuals.

- Links have been found between younger subjective age and better outcomes in old age, including a slower decline in functioning, and better general health outcomes.



## Subjective age and the pandemic

The pandemic affects various factors connected to the feeling of subjective age.

- Health, social relations, and physical activity are most threatened by the pandemic.
- Successfully adapting to the current epidemiological situation and finding good alternatives to activities and behaviours affected by the pandemic are factors related to a younger feeling of subjective age.

