

# Second AGEING DEAL JOINT EVENT

## PRESS RELEASE

### *The Ageing Deal synergy reinforces European collaboration to advance healthy and inclusive ageing*

The second **Ageing Deal Joint Event**, held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026 in Rome, Italy, brought together European projects, experts and policymakers to address one of the most pressing societal challenges: how to support healthier, more equitable, inclusive and sustainable ageing across Europe.

Building on the research and innovation insights from three EU-funded projects, [COMFORTage](#), [STAGE](#) and [SmILE](#), and the [First Conference celebrate in Barcelona on 8th May 2025](#), the Joint Event created a space for knowledge exchange between different international, national and regional stakeholders. The aim was to share the latest research and innovation activities in ageing, health and care systems and demonstrate ways to transform the current landscape.

#### **A strategic focus on prevention and system transformation**

Throughout the conference, speakers emphasised the need for a fundamental shift in how ageing is approached at policy, societal, and system level.

**Dr. Yongjie Yon (WHO Europe)** highlighted that ageing should be seen as an opportunity rather than a challenge, calling for stronger prevention strategies and a transformation of health and long-term care systems.

**Dr. Paolo Parente (ASL Roma)** stressed the importance of designing care systems based on population needs, supported by communities, to build more responsive models for ageing societies.

**Dr. Teresa Di Fiandra (Italian National Institute of Health)** underlined the relevance of international frameworks such as those from WHO, as well as initiatives like the Global Dementia Observatory, to promote age-friendly and dementia-friendly environments where people remain active participants in society. She also pointed to Italy's role as a pilot country in Europe for these approaches.

**Andrea Silenzi (Representative Italian Ministry of Health)** emphasised that the gap between lifespan and health span represents a key challenge for public policy, highlighting the need to strengthen prevention and primary care. As noted during the session, "the challenge is not only increasing demand, but also about transforming the system".

## **From policy vision to implementation**

Panel discussions explored how to translate strategic vision into concrete action. A life-course approach to prevention emerged as a key priority, alongside the development of community-based solutions such as co-housing and age-friendly environments.

Participants highlighted the importance of tackling loneliness and social isolation through integrated responses that go beyond healthcare alone, requiring coordinated action across social services and communities.

The discussions also underlined that behavioural change, such as increasing physical activity, is a long-term process that requires evidence-based strategies, local knowledge and sustained policy commitment.

## **Innovation, trust and real-world adoption**

A central theme of the conference was the role of innovation, particularly digital and AI-based solutions, in transforming ageing care.

Speakers and panellists highlighted key challenges, including the gap between technical and clinical communities, the need for shared terminology, and the importance of developing tools that are practical, trustworthy and aligned with clinical workflows.

The discussions emphasised that technology must be adapted to real-world settings and embedded in society to be effective. Combining human interaction with technological solutions was identified as essential to delivering meaningful impact.

## **Ethics, data protection and governance**

Trust, transparency and ethics were identified as critical enablers for the adoption of digital solutions.

Participants stressed that individuals must retain control over their personal data, with clear consent mechanisms and transparent systems. Regulatory frameworks such as the European AI Act were highlighted as key to ensuring the development of reliable and trustworthy AI-based solutions.

## **Workshops: Co-creation and user-centred approaches**

Interactive workshops played a central role in the conference, enabling participants to move from theory to practice through co-creation.

These sessions focused on identifying system gaps, testing innovative approaches such as patient digital twins and Training Educational Toolkit (TET), and understanding the digital barriers faced by older adults.

By bringing together researchers, policymakers, healthcare professionals, industry and other stakeholders, the workshops enabled the collection of diverse perspectives and valuable feedback to refine solutions.

## Strengthening European collaboration

The conference concluded with a strong call to continue collaboration beyond the event. Initiatives such as **COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology)** were identified as key mechanisms to create pan-European networks, align research and innovation efforts, and foster long-term cooperation.

## Towards a shared European vision

Overall, the Ageing Deal Conference reinforced a shared commitment across Europe to promote prevention, develop inclusive environments, and transform health and care systems to better respond to the needs of ageing populations.

The event highlighted that achieving meaningful impact will require not only technological progress, but also trust, collaboration and active engagement across society.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ④ <https://ageingdeal.eu/>
- ④ First Joint Event in Barcelona : <https://ageingdeal.eu/conference-8th-may-ageing-together/>
- ④ <https://comfortage.eu/ageing-deal/>
- ④ <https://www.horizon-smile.eu/news/smile-at-the-ii-ageing-deal-conference-in-rome>
- ④ <https://stage-healthyageing.eu/ageing-deal>