The Berlin Aging Study (BASE): Overview and Recent Findings
Julia A. M. Delius, Shu-Chen Li, Martin Lövdén, & Ulman Lindenberger

Overview
The Berlin Aging Study (BASE) is a multidisciplinary investigation of old people aged 70 to over 100 years who live in former West Berlin. In 1990–1993, a core sample of 516 individuals stratified by age and sex was examined in 14 sessions covering mental and physical health, psychological functioning as well as social and economic conditions. The study has been continued as a longitudinal study, and surviving participants have been reexamined up to seven times. Mortality information is updated at regular intervals. As of March 2007, 85% (n = 439) of the longitudinal sample were no longer alive. A further measurement occasion will take place in 2008–2009.

Recent Longitudinal Analyses: Examples

Within-person trial-to-trial variability precedes and predicts cognitive decline in old and very old age: Longitudinal data from the Berlin Aging Study (Lövdén et al., 2007)

Decline in life satisfaction in old age: Longitudinal evidence for links to distance-to-death (Gerstorf et al., in press)

Selected Publications

BASE Research Team
Ulman Lindenberger (Speaker), MPI for Human Development, Berlin
Jacquith Smith (Co-Speaker), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA
Julia Delius, MPI for Human Development, Berlin
Alexandra M. Freund, University of Zurich, Switzerland
Denis Gerstorf, Penn State University, State College, USA
Paolo Ghisletta, University of Geneva, Switzerland
Shu-Chen Li, MPI for Human Development, Berlin
Martin Lövdén, MPI for Human Development, Berlin
Nilam Ram, Penn State University, State College, USA
Ursula M. Staudinger, Jacobs University Bremen

Founding Steering Committee (until 2006)
Pau B. Bates, MPI for Human Development, Berlin
Harfried Helmchen, Benjamin Franklin School of Medicine, Berlin
Karl Ulrich Mayer, MPI for Human Development, Berlin
Elisabeth Steinhagen-Thiessen, Evangelisches Geriatriezentrum Berlin

The scientific investigators of the BASE project at the Center for Lifespan Psychology are Ulman Lindenberger, Julia Delius, Shu-Chen Li, and Martin Lövdén. BASE was initiated as a collaboration among several Berlin research institutions. It was initially supported by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences’ interdisciplinary research group “Aging and Societal Development,” and the participating institutions as well as the Center of Lifespan Psychology at the Max Planck Institute (MPI) for Human Development. See www.base-berlin.mpg.de for further information.