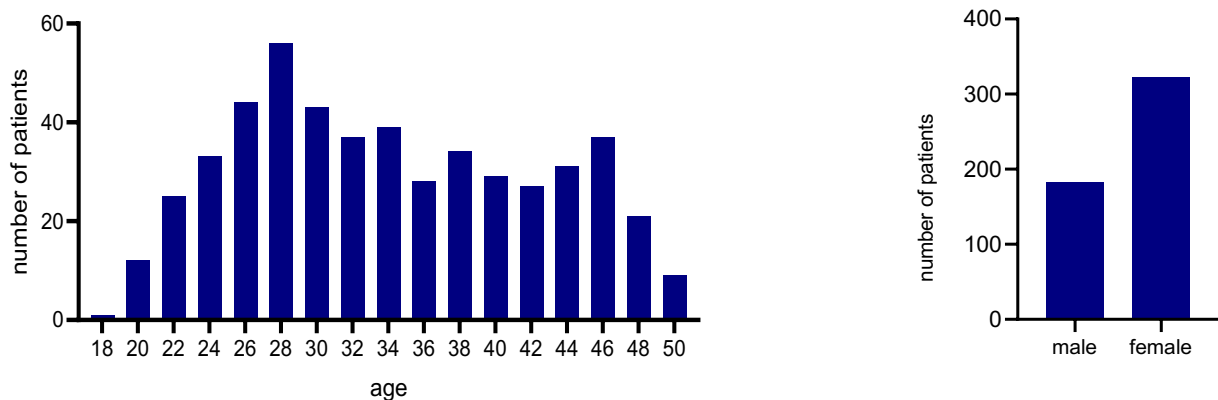


## A different year of research for *MultipleMS*

In line with the rest of the world, *MultipleMS* has experienced a very different year. The global virus outbreak presented the consortium's researchers with unforeseen challenges. We have learned to adapt to new methods of collaborating locally and across the world in order to achieve the aims of *MultipleMS*.

## Prospective study of newly diagnosed patients

Whilst shutdowns of clinical sites and a redirection of healthcare towards emergency care of critical patients has inevitably resulted in delays, one of the central activities of the consortium has passed an important milestone. Our prospective study, which was initiated in 2017, has now included 506 patients. These have been carefully characterized at their first visit, and at regular intervals we will collect important biological samples, magnetic resonance imaging of the brain and clinical data. It is important to note that at all the clinical sites, the local guidelines for protection of visiting patients are followed. This prospective study will proceed as planned and we hereby express our gratitude to all patients that have agreed to participate. Figure 1 shows the age and gender distribution of the included patients.



**Figure 1.** *MultipleMS* prospective study (506 patients) characteristics for age and gender.

## Stakeholder workshop II completed online

Whilst a stakeholder workshop was planned in conjunction with our second PhD and postdoc challenge in Oslo, the restrictions on travel forced us to cancel these events. In order to consult our stakeholders, we organized a separate stakeholder workshop which was attended by patients' organizations and research foundations. This workshop resulted in important insights with respect to how we, as a consortium, should aim to proceed beyond our current funding period and where new funds potentially could be secured.

## Retrospective study results around the corner

In parallel with the prospective study, we have collected genetic, clinical and magnetic resonance imaging data on more than 50 000 persons who have been diagnosed with MS or are included as a healthy control. These extensive data are currently being utilized to perform analysis of a scale previously not possible. Among the main goals of the retrospective study is the identification of markers that can stratify patients according to their disease course and response to the available therapies.

***MultipleMS* proceeds towards completing our important aims, also in these challenging times. We are grateful for the continued contributions by MS patients and their confidence in our efforts.**