



## **Guidelines for SHARE advance letter for the SHARE Wave 9 (face-to-face interview, CAPI)**

There is no standardized advance letter that can be used in all participating countries as the exact content and form of advance letters might vary across countries depending on legal regulations, survey climate, cultural norms, survey agencies' strategy of increasing participation and different incentives strategies. However, we recommend you to cover the following points in the advance letter:

- Invitation to participate
- Introduction of the study
- Thanking for previous participation (panel sample)
- Mentioning random selection procedure and if applicable the source that provided the sample information, e.g. municipality register (refreshment sample)
- Name of the scientific organization responsible for the implementation of the study in your country
- Name of the survey agency that will carry out the interviews
- Informing participants that they will be contacted by the survey agency
- Emphasizing scientific importance of participation and why it is especially important to conduct a study among the 50+ population
- Mentioning that participation is voluntary
- Reference to attached Data Protection Statement
- Clear and explicit mentioning of the incentive payment (either after the interview or sent with the advance letter) if applicable
- Providing contact details for queries
- Reference to source(s) where more information about the study can be found in national language/s (if available)
- Thanking for cooperation

The letter should in general not exceed one page. The backside can contain a short list of FAQ or examples of survey findings.

We recommend using two slightly different versions of the advance letter – one for the panel sample and another one for the refreshment/baseline sample.

The letter should be personalized if possible (addressing participants by their names).

On the next pages there is an example of the advance letter that you can use to produce your own country-specific version as well as an example of FAQ for respondents.

**Example advance letter  
for the SHARE Wave 9 (face-to-face interview, CAPI)**

Dear [NAME/sir or madam]

We would like to invite you to participate in the study [PROJECT NAME IN COUNTRY]. This study is part of the project "Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE)" that has been conducted in up to 28 countries every two years since 2004. The aim of the survey is to collect information about different aspects of life of persons aged 50 and older such as health, living conditions, economic situation, as well as social and family networks in order to better understand how their health and well-being evolve as they get older.

[SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION IN COUNTRY] is currently conducting the study [PROJECT NAME IN COUNTRY] in [COUNTRY] in cooperation with the European Research Infrastructure Consortium "SHARE-ERIC". The interviews will be carried out by [NAME OF SURVEY AGENCY], which we commissioned with the implementation of the survey in [COUNTRY], and your household will be contacted by them in the next few weeks.

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*Panel version only*

We are extremely grateful for your previous participation in this study. Ongoing participation is crucial for the success of the project and we hope that you will participate again.

*Refresher version only*

You have been randomly selected to participate in this survey from the [REGISTER].

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By participating in this study you will contribute to research addressing challenges of ageing population in Europe. Your participation is voluntary and we will keep your personal information confidential. For details on how we ensure confidentiality of your data please see the attached Data Protection Statement

Inside of this invitation letter you will also find [AMMOUNT OF INCENTIVE]. You may keep this as a small token of our appreciation in any case, irrespective of whether you decide to participate or not to participate in the study./ You will receive [AMMOUNT OF INCENTIVE] as a small token of our appreciation for your participation.

If you have any queries, you can contact us by email or via telephone: [NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS].

More information about this study is available [NEXT PAGE/LEAFLET/NATIONAL WEBSITE].

Thank you for your cooperation!

## **Example of FAQ for respondents (for the backside) for the SHARE Wave 9 (face-to-face interview, CAPI)**

### **What is the goal of this study?**

The international research project SHARE investigates the demographic change in Europe. The survey data enable scientists to study changes of economic, health and social situation of persons aged 50 and above in Europe over time. The insights from this research are of a high relevance in relation to current socio-political issues as the insights are based on the analyses of actual experience of individuals taking into consideration current social development.

### **What does participation in the survey involve?**

Professional interviewers from [SURVEY AGENCY] will conduct personal interviews with participants. Your household will be contacted by a staff member of the [SUREVY AGENCY] either on the phone or in person to arrange an appointment for the interview. The interview can either be conducted at your home or you can choose another neutral quite place (e.g. a café). The interviewer will ask you questions about different topics using a prepared questionnaire and will type your answers in the computer. If you wish not to reply to a particular question, you have always an option to skip this question.

### **What are the topics of the survey?**

You will be asked questions about your family, friends, leisure time, financial situation and health. In addition, there will be a few small physical and cognitive tests. For example, we measure the grip strength of your hands or test your memory ability with different language games. These tests are also voluntary and can be skipped.

### **I feel too ill or too weak to participate in the survey. Why am I still asked to take part?**

The survey intends to represent the entire 50+ population in [COUNTRY]. If we only interviewed persons in good health condition, the results of the survey would reflect a skewed picture where the health of the population is better than it actually is. In order to also represent the living conditions of persons with health limitations, it is therefore highly important that you share your experience with us. We will of course take into account your specific individual needs during the interview as your well-being is important for us. You are welcome to invite someone from your personal social circle to be present during the interview and assist you with answering the questions if needed.