

SHARE Compliance Profiles – Wave 6

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Executive Summary

- All countries participating in SHARE wave 6 submitted the required input documentation and deliverables in full, with only two exceptions: Back check files from Greece and National Training Session slides from Sweden were not submitted.
- Data collection of wave 6 was achieved with a largely synchronous schedule across participating countries. Exceptions were Estonia, Greece and Croatia all of which started much later than all other SHARE countries (see Figure 1 below).
- Attendance of survey agency trainers at the TTTs was satisfactory.
- During fieldwork, timeliness of data uploads was sufficient.
- Ten (out of eleven) countries reached the minimum household response rate of 30% in their refreshment sample (91 %).
- Eight (out of 19) countries (42%) reached or exceeded the minimum individual-level target retention rate of 83% in subsample A-B.
- All survey agencies (except Kapa in Greece) submitted documentation about some kind of back-checks to validate the properness of conducted interviews.
- Seven out of 20 countries (35%) performed six or more contacts or contact attempts with panel households that remained un-interviewed. Four out of 11 countries (36%) performed six or more contacts or contact attempts with refreshment households that remained un-interviewed.

1. Introduction

The Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) is an ex-ante harmonized, longitudinal and multi-disciplinary survey infrastructure aimed at filling the gap of much-needed comparative data on population ageing across Europe. Ex-ante harmonization means that not only the questionnaire design (electronically realized as CAPI instrument) but also fieldwork procedures (most of them realized electronically in form of the SMS) are standardized across countries. This approach fundamentally differs from the Eurostat approach (e.g., in EU-SILC) where survey execution is a national matter. The ex-ante harmonization approach has been chosen by SHARE for scientific reasons as it minimizes those artifacts in cross-national comparisons that are created by country-specific survey design.

While national operations in all participating countries are coordinated by university-based groups of researchers, the actual interviewing is - in most countries - subcontracted to for-profit survey organizations which have the expertise, staff and logistics available to conduct large-scale operations like SHARE with high quantities of face-to-face interviews. It is a major challenge to ensure proper implementation of ex-ante harmonization within such a decentralized environment. To this effect, SHARE employs three instruments: the SHARE Model Contract provides the legal framework for standards and quality control; the SHARE Survey Specifications (“Appendix 1” of the Model Contract) define the quality standards of the survey; and the SHARE Compliance Profiles report adherence to those standards ex post. This legal and scientific framework is to be adopted by all participating countries without modifications: all for-profit contractors are mandated to comply with the SHARE-specific quality standards laid out in Appendix 1 which are legally framed as an annex to the SHARE Model Contract (survey specifications can be obtained per email request to info@share-project.org).

The SHARE Compliance Profiles consist of a set of quality control indicators based on Appendix 1. All participating countries are evaluated on these indicators uniformly, although the environments for conducting the survey differ among European countries. The combination of ex-ante specifications and ex-post Compliance Profiles levels the playing field for all participating countries and allows for a fair comparison of national survey quality. An ex-ante harmonized endeavor like SHARE cannot afford to set country-specific standards on what qualifies as good performance.

This document reports how SHARE quality standards were adhered to in wave 6. Section 2 describes the data input for this evaluation. Section 3 lists the survey agencies involved from wave 1 to wave 6. Section 4 reports the results in form of the various indicators. Like wave 5, it is important to note that wave 6 of SHARE was conducted under a decentralized funding scheme. As opposed to the first three waves of SHARE, survey costs in each country were covered by national funders and not centrally (i.e. the EU Commission). This puts the ex-ante harmonization approach under pressure, not the least due to the difficulties of some countries to provide the necessary funds in time (or at all). The compliance profiles in this report therefore do not only reflect differences in survey agency performance but also the time pressure and shortage of money in the some participating countries.

2. Input

To assess indicators and compare them to standards, various sources of input were required. Most indicators presented here were computed with data received directly through the SHARE IT infrastructure (SMS data, CAPI data & keystroke files). For indicators related to interviewer training and interviewer retention and interviewer quality control, we requested documentation in (partly) standardized forms and templates from contracting survey organizations and /or scientific country teams, such as interviewer rosters, sampling design forms, training slides, and interviewer quality back-checks. We applied an “Intent-To-Treat” approach to missing documentation: if a country failed at delivering requested input material, this was equated with failing on the indicator assessed through that missing documentation. The table below shows that SHARE received almost all deliverables from all countries.

Table 1a. Input of wave 6 compliance profiles

	Refreshment sample sign-off forms [SA05]	Gross sample file of pretest [SA07a]	Gross sample file of main data collection [SA07b]	NTS slides [SA08]	Agency feedback form [SA09]	NTS observation protocol [SA10]
Austria (AT)	na	na	na	●	●	●
Belgium (BE-FR)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Belgium (BE-NL)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Switzerland (CH)	na	na	na	●	●	●
Czech Republic (CZ)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Germany (DE)	na	na	na	●	●	●
Denmark (DK)	na	na	na	●	●	●
Estonia (EE)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Spain (ES)	na	na	na	●	●	●
France (FR)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Greece (GR)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Croatia (HR)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Israel (IL)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Italy (IT)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Luxembourg (LU)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Polen (PL)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Portugal (PT)	na	na	na	●	●	●
Sweden (SE)	na	na	na	●	●	●
Slovenia (SI)	●	●	●	●	●	●

Table 2b. Input of wave 6 compliance profiles (continued)

	Interviewer roster [SA11]	Drop-off data [SA13]	Drop-off paper version [SA13]	Advance letters [SA14]	Back checks [SA15]
Austria (AT)	●	●	●	●	●
Belgium (BE-FR)	●	na	na	●	●
Belgium (BE-NL)	●	na	na	●	●
Switzerland (CH)	●	●	●	●	●
Czech Republic (CZ)	●	●	●	●	●
Germany (DE)	●	na	na	●	●
Denmark (DK)	●	na	na	●	●
Estonia (EE)	●	●	●	●	●
Spain (ES)	●	na	na	●	●
France (FR)	●	na	na	●	●
Greece (GR)	●	●	●	●	●
Croatia (HR)	●	na	na	●	●
Israel (IL)	●	●	●	●	●
Italy (IT)	●	na	na	●	●
Luxembourg (LU)	●	na	na	●	●
Polen (PL)	●	●	●	●	●
Portugal (PT)	●	na	na	●	●
Sweden (SE)	●	na	na	●	●
Slovenia (SI)	●	●	●	●	●

3. SHARE Survey Agencies

The organizations in Table 2 below conducted the fieldwork in each wave. There has been high stability of contracted survey agencies over time in most countries.

Table 3. Survey agencies from wave 1 to 6 of countries participating in wave 6

	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6
AT	IMAS	IMAS	IFES	IFES	IFES	IFES
BE-FR	PSBH, Liège Univ.	PSBH, Liège Univ.	PSBH, Liège Univ.	PSBH, Liège Univ.	CELLO - Antwerp Univ.	CELLO - Antwerp Univ.
BE-NL	PSBH Antwerp Univ.	PSBH Antwerp Univ.	CELLO - Antwerp Univ.	CELLO - Antwerp Univ.	CELLO - Antwerp Univ.	CELLO - Antwerp Univ.
CH	MIS Trend	LINK	LINK	LINK	LINK	LINK
CZ	-	SC&C	SC&C	SC&C	SC&C	SC&C
DE	infas GmbH	infas GmbH	infas GmbH	infas GmbH	TNS Infratest	TNS Infratest
DK	SFI-Survey	SFI-Survey	SFI-Survey	SFI-Survey	SFI-Survey	SFI-Survey
EE	-	-	-	Statistics Estonia	GfK	GfK
ES	TNS Demoscopia	TNS Demoscopia	TNS Demoscopia	TNS Demoscopia	TNS Demoscopia	TNS Demoscopia
FR	INSEE	INSEE	INSEE	INSEE (panel)/ GfK-ISL (refresh.)	GfK-ISL	GfK-ISL
GR	Kapa Research	Kapa Research	Kapa Research	-	-	Kapa Research
HR	-	-	-	-	-	GfK
IL	Cohen Institute, Tel Aviv Univ.	Cohen Institute, Tel Aviv Univ.	-	-	Cohen Institute, Tel Aviv Univ.	Cohen Institute, Tel Aviv Univ.
IT	DOXA S.p.A.	DOXA S.p.A.	DOXA S.p.A.	DOXA S.p.A.	IPSOS	IPSOS
LU	-	-	-	-	CEPS	CEPS/INSTEAD
PL		TNS-OBOP	TNS-OBOP	TNS-OBOP	TNS Polska	TNS Polska
PT				GfK Metris	Communication and Society Research Centre (CECS), University of Minho	CECS, University of Minho
SE	Intervjubolaget IMRI	Intervjubolaget IMRI	Intervjubolaget IMRI	Intervjubolaget IMRI	Intervjubolaget IMRI	IPSOS Observer Sweden
SI	-	-	-	CJMMK	CJMMK	IPSOS

4.2 Timely data uploads

Proper fieldwork monitoring is premised on synchronous availability of fieldwork data from all countries. SHARE specified upload dates for the entire fieldwork period up-front. The table below shows the rate of timely uploads of the countries' Sample Distributor with Centerdata servers. Overall, we had specified 19 export dates. We rated "on time" any upload received within a three-day period of the specified day (e.g., if an upload was scheduled for the 20th, we rated the receipt of data "on time" if it arrived anywhere between the 17th and 23rd of the month). A rate of less than 80 percent was considered insufficient.

Table 4. Timely data uploads

	Percent
AT	100
BE-FR	95
BE-NL	100
CH	100
CZ	100
DE	100
DK	100
EE	100
ES	100
FR	95
HR	100
GR	100
IL	89
IT	100
LU	95
PL	89
PT	89
SE	95
SI	100

4.3 Interviewer Training & Quality Control

4.3.1 Attendance at the Train-The-Trainer sessions

SHARE uses a multiplier approach to conduct study-specific training. A centralized train-the-trainer (TTT) event is held before every pilot phase, the pretest and the main survey with the goal of teaching head trainers of each country who then multiply this knowledge in their home country by training the actual field interviewers. Attendance of (at least) two representatives of the contracted survey organization is crucial to ensure proper relaying of training content at the national level. While it is understood that funding restrictions on the national level may restrict travel budgets to one person attending, two or more persons are preferable because this permits specialization according to survey domains and subsequent professionalization. The table below shows the number of survey agency staff attending each TTT. We consider attendance of two agency representative as sufficient, one person attendance as necessary and absence of agency staff from the TTT as posing a serious problem.

Table 5. Survey agency attendance at wave 6 TTTs

	Pilot TTT	Pretest TTT	Main TTT
AT	2	2	2
BE-FR	3	2	2
BE-NL	1	2	2
CH	2	1	1
CZ	3	2	2
DE	6	4	4
DK	0	2	2
EE	2	1	1
ES	1	1	1
FR	1	2	5
HL	2	2	2
HR	4	5	3
IL	1	1	1
IT	5	3	4
LU	5	2	3
PL	0	2	2
PT	3	3	2
SE	3	2	2
SI	2	2	2

4.3.2 Back-Checking Conducted Interviews

SHARE mandates that at least 20 percent of all interviewed households are being followed up on to verify that an interview has taken place and that it was done properly. The goal is to make interviewers before the start of fieldwork aware that there will be a good chance their work will be inspected for falsifications and professional standards. Survey agencies were free to apply their own organization's procedure to verify conducted interviews (i.e. if responding households were contacted by mail or telephone, etc.). Unfortunately, the lack of standardized back-check procedures prohibited a consistent quantitative assessment for this evaluation report. Results of the simple availability of back checks can be seen in Table 1 above. In wave 7, there will be a more standardized approach for interview back-checks.

4.4 Response & retention rates

A good fieldwork outcome is characterized by high contact rates and high cooperation rates. Together, this results in high response rates for baseline/refreshment samples and high retention rates for panel samples. Due to partner eligibility and recovery of respondents who weren't interviewed in one or more previous waves, the panel samples of SHARE can be split into four sub-samples¹.

The SHARE Model Contract stipulates that in the combined panel sub-samples A and B, a minimum of 83% of respondents will be re-interviewed. For baseline samples or refreshment samples, the document stipulates a minimum of 30 percent of eligible households to be interviewed. Table 6 below shows if countries passed or failed these contractual standards. It can be seen that less than a half of all countries with panel samples surpassed the limit, whereas almost all countries reached their goal in their refreshment samples. It has to be kept in mind, however, that subsample A has itself two components: respondents of the previous wave who also participated in other previous waves (“multiple-repeat responders” or “A1 respondents”) and respondents who entered SHARE in wave 5 and had their first re-interview during wave 6 (“first-time repeat responders” or “A2 responders”). Depending on the composition of their subsample A, countries may perform better or worse which is not taken into account in Table 5.

Table 6. Response & retention rates in wave 6

	Minimum individual retention rate in panel A&B ²	Minimum individual response rate refreshment sample (30%)
AT	●	na
BE-FR	●	●
BE-NL	●	●
CH	●	Na
CZ	●	Na
DE	●	Na
DK	●	●
EE	●	●
ES	●	Na
FR	●	●
GR	●	●
HR	Na	●
IL	●	Na
IT	●	●
LU	●	●
PL	●	●
PT	●	Na
SE	●	Na
SI	●	●

¹ Subsample A: all respondents who participated in the last SHARE wave (wave 5).

Subsample B: all respondents who participated in any previous SHARE wave, but not in the last SHARE wave (wave 5), and live in a household where at least one household member participated in the last wave (wave 5).

Subsample C: all respondents who participated in any previous SHARE wave, but not in the last SHARE wave (wave 5), and do *not* live in a household where at least one household member participated in the last SHARE wave (wave 5).

Subsample D: all nonresponding spouses/partners and new spouses/partners who have not participated in any previous SHARE wave so far.

² green: >=83%, yellow: between 80 and 83, red: below 80

4.5 Average Number of Contact Attempts in Households without Interview

The SHARE Model Contract stipulates six contact attempts before a household can be assumed a final non-interview household not to be followed any further. The table below shows the median number of contact attempts in eligible households where there was no interview at the end of fieldwork. This includes households where a refusal happened. We considered values of six or more contact attempts as acceptable.

We have to assume that SMS data reflect the true state of affairs, i.e. we cannot account for contact codes recorded outside of the SMS (e.g. paper-pencil lists).

Table 7. Average number of contact attempts in households without interview

	Median in panel sample	Median in refreshment sample
AT	4	na
BE-FR	8	8
BE-NL	5	6
CH	7	na
CZ	3	na
DE	5	na
DK	4	5
EE	6	6
ES	3	na
FR	6	6
GR	3	4
HR	na	1
IL	1	na
IT	8	4
LU	2	3
PL	2	2
PT	5	na
SE	7	na
SI	8	1