

SHARE Findings Newsletter No. 04 - September 2017

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## SHARE Findings Newsletter

This newsletter informs about **selected new research findings** based on data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) by providing summaries of selected studies.

**All texts in these articles can be used for press reports.**

If you have any more detailed questions about the research presented here, please view the whole scientific study (links under the articles) or get in touch directly with the authors of the study.

Please enjoy reading our SHARE Findings Newsletter.

### Does having children make people happier in old age?

The benefits of having children for one's quality of life highly depend on financial circumstances



This study analyses whether children increase quality of life for elderly parents – and demonstrates that the effect of parenthood on quality of life in old age depends on individual as well as contextual resources. For elderly people with financial difficulties, the researchers find a significant positive effect of parenthood on quality of life. Respondents without having difficulties in making ends meet, however, do not benefit from having children in old age. The researchers mention two contradicting concepts regarding possible relations between parenthood and quality of life that might be at work here: the supportive-benefit assumption and the emotional-benefit assumption.

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## Retirement changes health behaviour

New study analyses the diverse effects of retirement on individuals' lifestyles



This study from the University of Padua investigates the effects of retirement on individuals' health behaviours. To do so it took into consideration individual heterogeneous effects related to gender, education, net wealth, early-life conditions and job characteristics. The study finds that transiting into retirement is related with changes in health behaviours: it influences the probability of quitting smoking, regular alcohol drinking, or the probability of being inactive.

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## Women in gender-equal countries perform better in cognitive tests

Cognitive abilities of women after midlife may be affected by the gender-role attitudes in their countries of residence



This interdisciplinary study investigates the impact of gender-inequalities on females' cognitive functions in later life. Its findings suggest that women in countries with less traditional attitudes were likely to have better cognitive performance relative to women in more traditional countries. The researchers hypothesised the factors behind these outcomes: women who live in a society with more traditional attitudes about gender roles would likely have less access to opportunities for education and employment and would therefore, show lower cognitive performance.

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## The motives for caring for dependent parents

SHARE-based study finds that long-term care in Europe is driven by altruism or family norms, depending on the region.



This study analyses what motivates adult children to provide care for elderly parents. Therefore, the researchers consider three alternative models of motives for long-term care: altruism, family norm and exchange. The results show that altruism is the main driver of providing informal help – at least in most of the European regions. In Eastern European countries and in single-parent households in Southern Europe, family norm seems to be the leading motive for providing long-term care. Furthermore, contrary to previous studies, the researchers reject the model of exchange as caregiving motive as they don't find evidence for it.

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**About SHARE:**

SHARE, the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe is a multidisciplinary and cross-national panel database of micro data on health, socio-economic status and social and family networks of more than 123,000 individuals (approximately 293,000 interviews) from 20 European countries and Israel aged 50 or older. Beginning with the next data collection in 2017, SHARE will cover 28 countries. The data are available to the entire research community free of charge.

SHARE responds to a Communication by the European Commission calling to "examine the possibility of establishing, in co-operation with Member States, a European Longitudinal Ageing Survey". SHARE has become a major pillar of the European Research Area, selected as one of the projects to be implemented in the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) in 2006 and given a new legal status as the first ever European Research Infrastructure Consortium (SHARE-ERIC) in March 2011.

SHARE is centrally coordinated by Prof. Axel Börsch-Supan, Ph.D. at the Munich Center for the Economics of Aging (MEA), Max Planck Institute for Social Law and Social Policy.

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