Interviewer Project Manual

Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe

Main Test 2004
This manual was prepared by staff of the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research, drawing upon the Center’s experience across many similar studies since its establishment in 1948. Certain sections of the manual draw heavily from materials developed by Great Britain’s National Centre for Social Research and Mannheim Research Institute for the Economics of Ageing during earlier stages of the SHARE project.
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Section I
Introduction to the Study
Background

The Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) is a new study that will explore the social, economic, and health experiences of people throughout Europe as they grow older.

Investigating the relationships between health, economic position, and social participation and support as people age is one of the most important international research questions facing the policy community. More needs to be known about individual experiences as people plan for, move into, and live during retirement. Equally important, is the fact that the population as a whole is aging and life expectancies are increasing. Addressing the policy issues that arise when providing support (whether medical, social or economic) for an aging population is of increasing urgency to governments, policy makers, and researchers. Moreover, this study also seeks to understand how greater life expectancy is associated with good health, adequate economic resources and, ultimately, a good quality of life for people living in Europe.

Importance of the Study

Although aging is a subject that is increasingly being investigated, there are currently no comparative survey data in Europe that cover and connect the full range of topics necessary to understand the economic, social, psychological, and health elements of the aging process. SHARE is designed to fill this gap. It is intended to be complimentary to similar studies currently underway in Britain (the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing) and the US (the Health and Retirement Study). The international scope will mean that we can examine the impact of national policies and context, through comparative, cross-national analysis.

Funding Sponsors

The European Commission’s Research Directorate has provided most of the research budget required to fund the study. It is the largest single social science research project the European Commission has ever funded, illustrating the importance of this study for policy makers and researchers alike. Additional funding is provided by the US National Institute on Aging (NIA). The NIA is also funding comparable surveys, e.g. the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) and the US Health and Retirement Study (HRS).

Future Plans

Funding currently supports only one wave of data collection, although the study is designed as the first wave of a panel study and it intends to re-interview respondents every two years.
Project Coordination

The project coordinator for SHARE is Professor Axel Boersch-Supan, Director of the Mannheim Research Institute for the Economics of Ageing in Mannheim, Germany. The scientific team includes some 120 researchers in epidemiology, economics, psychology, and sociology from over 10 European countries. A survey research firm in each of the participating countries coordinates the fieldwork for this study.

The SHARE questionnaire was designed entirely in English and was then translated into the languages of the participating countries.

You can find out more about the study at: http://www.share-project.org/

Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide standardized project information to each of the participating countries. The manual covers all aspects of SHARE administration, which includes general interviewing techniques, study-specific protocol and procedures, detailed information on content and use of the SHARE questionnaire, and SHARE field procedures.

Additional project materials for use by interviewers are referenced in this manual but will be distributed separately at training.
Section II
General Interviewing Techniques
Standardized Interviewing

The goal of interviewing is to collect accurate information using the survey questionnaire. In order to fulfill this goal, some basic techniques must be understood about questionnaires and how they are used. Standardized interviewing is used in research in which measurements are taken on a sample of individuals in order to describe the characteristics of a population. The questions are asked of all respondents in precisely the same way. These methods are implemented through interviewer training and formatting conventions used throughout the questionnaire. The purpose of this survey is to collect accurate data that are comparable across all participants and to use these data to describe the populations of participating countries. It is therefore critical that all questions be asked of respondents in exactly the same way. In this section, we will describe some of the fundamental requirements necessary to ensure that the data from all the participating countries are comparable.

The Role of the Interviewer

The role of the interviewer is primarily to be responsible for asking questions and recording data accurately. Furthermore, you must be able to determine whether the respondent is producing information that meets the objectives of the questions; this is achieved through active listening and a thorough understanding of the intent of the questions. Respondents sometimes respond to what they think you are about to ask, imagining a question that includes a key word that caught their attention. Listening carefully to their answers will help detect this type of misunderstanding. Interviewers must remember that an answer is obtained only when the respondent understands the intent of the question and has responded appropriately. Finally, you must keep the respondent on track by using neutral probing and clarification techniques and giving appropriate feedback. In essence, the primary role of interviewers is to ask questions in such a manner as to train the respondent to answer honestly and completely. Under no circumstances should you take on the role of counselor or advisor, even if you have formal training to do so. To ensure the integrity of the data, the respondent MUST perceive you as an impartial but interested observer.

The Role of the Respondent

The role of the respondent includes listening to the entire question and giving complete answers. Ideally, the respondent should also ask for clarification when necessary and try to avoid digression, focusing comments only on the information requested in the interview questions.
Introduction to the Interview

Training the respondent to provide accurate responses includes both communicating the goals of the interview to the respondent as well as setting the tone of the interaction. You begin to set the tone for the interaction during the introduction to the interview. Several things must be communicated to the respondent in the introduction:

- You are a professional interviewer.
- You represent a legitimate and reputable organization.
- The questionnaire is for gathering information for important, worthwhile research.
- The respondent’s participation is vital to the success of the research.

These can be accomplished by being well-informed about the goals of the research and being able to comfortably talk about the content of the questionnaire. It is also important that your conduct communicate credibility. The following are general rules about interviewer conduct:

- Your approach should be serious, pleasant, and self-confident. Nervousness on the part of the interviewer can make the respondent feel uneasy.
- You should speak slowly and clearly to set the tone for the interview.
- You should approach all respondents assuming that they are friendly and interested in the research.
- You should be aware that different respondents require different amounts of information about the study; interviewers must be able to adjust their introductions accordingly.
- Every introduction should include the following:
  - Your name
  - The name of the organization you represent
  - A brief description of the research
  - The name of the study sponsor
  - Any additional information about the study needed to enlist the participation of the respondent

A standard practice in data collection is to inform the respondent explicitly about the nature of his or her participation. A confidentiality statement like the following is typically read to the respondent at the beginning of the interview:

“This interview is voluntary and confidential. If we should come to any question you don’t want to answer, just let me know and I will go on to the next question. The answers that you give will be kept confidential and will be used only for research purposes.”

In some countries, the respondent is also given an informed consent form, which includes a detailed explanation about the respondent's participation and assurance of the confidentiality of the data collected.
Components of Standardized Interviewing

There are four basic components of standardized interviewing: asking questions, clarification and probing, feedback, and recording of data.

**Asking Questions**

The principles of asking questions in the standardized interview are essential to maintaining the integrity of the survey data. Questions must be read in their entirety and in the order they appear to ensure comparability across respondents. Interviewers should under no circumstances attempt to “optimize,” “shorten,” or otherwise rephrase any questions. Even slight deviations from wording and the ordering of questions have been shown to affect responses.

- **Initial Question Reading.** Questions should be read to the respondents exactly as they appear on the computer screen. They should be read at a slightly slower than conversational pace.

- **Use a Pleasant Tone of Voice.** You should use a clear, pleasant tone of voice which conveys assurance, interest, and a professional manner.

- **Read the Entire Question.** Before accepting the respondent's answer, you must be sure that the respondent has heard the entire question. This is important for ensuring that all concepts in the question are being considered by the respondent. If the respondent interrupts you before hearing the whole question, you should repeat the question making sure the respondent hears it through to the end. You should not assume a premature response applies to the question as written.

- **Verify Information Volunteered by the Respondent.** There are instances in which the respondent volunteers a response before the question has been asked. If you read the later question without acknowledging what was said earlier, you might find that the respondent is annoyed because she or he feels that you are not listening, or the respondent may assume that you were listening and are now asking for other instances or examples that the respondent has not already talked about. There are two options available to you with rules which must be followed. The options are:

  - Confirming the Response— Rather than reading the question as it is worded, you may reword the question in a manner which confirms the information that the respondent already gave.

    “You told me before that....Is this correct?”

  - Asking Questions with a Preface - In order to be responsive to the fact that the respondent has already provided information relevant to the question, you may read the question with a preface which acknowledges that fact.

    “You told me before that..., but I still need to ask you this question as it is written.”
In any type of verification, it is important that all aspects of the question are answered with certainty. Skipping the question is not allowed even if you think you know the answer.

It is also essential that you do not make assumptions about the respondent’s answers. Interviewers often develop a strong sense of the lifestyle or stability of a respondent early in the interview. It is tempting to skip those questions or to introduce them with a phrase like “I know this probably doesn’t apply to you, but...” It is important not to make such assumptions and to avoid the potential bias created by interjecting such comments.

**Questionnaire Conventions**

- Anything written in mixed case is meant to be read to the respondent.
- Anything written in upper case is an interviewer instruction.

**EXAMPLE:**

Here, you should read the full text of the first line. In the event that the respondent asks who to include, then you have an on-screen guide which will enable you to answer the respondent appropriately. For example, you could respond, “Please include all persons who live here.” If the respondent is still unclear about who to include, you should refer to the on-screen definitions.

- Words presented in **bold** within a question are to be emphasized when reading the question.
- Phrases or words presented in parentheses can be read to the respondent at the interviewer’s discretion (see examples below).
EXAMPLE:

The optional text should be repeated as needed - generally for every third or fourth item. It may be omitted after the first reading for respondents who clearly remember the question. The optional text for questions such as the one in this example will usually be presented in parentheses on the screen to indicate that reading it to the respondent is optional based on your discretion.

- Use the Showcard Booklet. Whenever there is a “Please look at card X” on the screen (as shown in the example below), you should be sure the respondent turns to the appropriate page in the Showcard Booklet. The booklet is used to aid the respondent when response options are lengthy and difficult to recall, or to encourage candid responses to potentially embarrassing questions. Note that if the respondent has difficulty seeing or reading the booklet, you may have to read the options to the respondent. (Please see Section VII for more details about Showcards.)
Clarification and Probing

Clarification is required when the respondent is unable to answer a question because she or he does not understand all or some part of the question. Probing is required when the respondent appears to understand the question, yet still offers a response which does not meet the objective of the question. When this occurs, interviewers should use non-directive probing and question repetition.

Rules for Clarification and for Probing

- If there is any doubt that the respondent has heard the entire question, the question should be repeated. For example, if a respondent answers irrelevantly or does not appear to understand all aspects of the question, the whole question or the portion that is not understood should be read again.
- When the respondent asks about a specific part of the question, it is acceptable to repeat only that part.
- When asked to repeat one response option, you should repeat all response options. You may omit a response option only if the respondent has clearly eliminated the option.
• You should only use question text or neutral probes so that you do not introduce bias into the question.

• Neutral Introductions: In repeating the question, it is sometimes helpful to use a neutral introduction to the question in order to make a smoother transition. Examples include:
  
  Overall...
  Let me repeat the question...
  Well, in general....
  Generally speaking...

• You must listen carefully and make sure that you understand the respondent's reply to determine whether clarification or probing is necessary.

EXAMPLE:

Interviewer: Do you have pain on most days?

Respondent: Sometimes

Interviewer: In general, do you have pain on most days?

In this example, the response required probing because it was not clear whether or not the respondent heard the word “most” in the question.

• Interviewers may only use definitions as they are provided on the screen or written in the Question-by-Question Objectives (QxQ’s). No other definition of terms is permitted.

• If the respondent requests a definition for a term that is not in the Question-by-Question Objectives, you must instruct the respondent to answer the question using his or her own definition of the word or phrase in question. This can be done using phrases like:

  "Whatever __ means to you."
  "Whatever you think of as __."

Types of Probes

Interviewers can use neutral probes to help the respondent arrive at a codeable response. Examples include:

  Can you tell me what you mean by that?
  Can you tell me more about that?
  What do you think?
  Which would be closer?
  Can you think of any others?
  What is your best estimate?
  Can you be more specific?
  Can you give me your best guess?
Common Probing Situations

The following are common situations which require probing:

“Don’t Know”

SHARE requires that each “don’t know” response be probed once, unless otherwise indicated. Thus, before entering a response of “don’t know,” the interviewer must use a neutral probe to attempt to obtain a codeable response. As mentioned above, examples of neutral probes include:

“What do you think?”
“What is your best estimate?”
“Can you give me your best guess?”

Discrepancies

If a respondent appears to contradict what she or he said earlier, you should express neither dissatisfaction nor disbelief, but should ask for clarification of the discrepancy and revise the coding of the previous or current response as necessary. One way to approach a discrepancy is to say to the respondent, “I want to be sure I entered your responses correctly into the computer. On a previous question, I recorded that you have not seen a doctor in the past twelve months. On this question, your response was that you saw your doctor this past February.” The respondent will most likely acknowledge the discrepancy and adjust his or her response(s). If the respondent insists on the responses already provided, make a remark about the discrepancy on the current question and move on to the next question.

“All That Apply” Questions

Finally, SHARE requires that all “All That Apply” questions be probed until the respondent indicates that there are no further responses or categories that apply. This is because respondents will otherwise often provide incomplete answers. Thus, before moving on to the next question, the interviewer should ask the respondent:

“Anything else?”
“Any other?”

This should be asked until the respondent says “no” or otherwise indicates that there are no further categories or responses.

Feedback

Feedback is provided by using neutral phrases in reaction to the respondent’s behavior throughout the interview. It is a way of maintaining control over the interview. Although feedback can be useful in maintaining respondent motivation
and task focus, there is a danger of biasing respondent answers by using feedback too much or by using feedback that is inappropriate.

**Rules for Giving Feedback**

Feedback can be used to reinforce focused, attentive respondent behavior and to discourage digression, distraction, and inappropriate inquiries from the respondent.

- Suggested phrases for interviewers to use when respondents have inappropriate inquiries like asking for advice, information, or your personal experiences:

  “In this research, we are really interested in learning about your experiences.”

  “When we finish, let’s talk about that.”

- Suggested phrases when respondents digress from the questions by giving lengthy responses or providing more information than is necessary:

  “I have a lot more questions to ask, so we should move on to those now.”

  “If you would like to talk more about that, we can do that at the end of the interview.”

- Silence can be an effective tool for discouraging inappropriate responses or conversation.

- Short feedback can be used throughout the interview to acknowledge respondents’ answers to closed questions. Long feedback can be used to reinforce respondent motivation and attention on long series of questions, open-ended questions, or questions that are difficult for the respondent. Task-related phrases provide feedback while you capture a response. Suggested feedback phrases include:

  **Long Feedback**

  *That’s useful/helpful information.*
  *It’s useful to get your ideas on this.*
  *I see, that’s helpful to know.*
  *That can be difficult to remember/answer.*

  **Short Feedback**

  *Thank you/thanks.*
  *I see.*

  **Task-Related Phrases**

  *Let me get that down/Let me type that in.*
  *I want to make sure I have that.*
  *Let me review what you just told me.*
Recording Data

Most questions require that a precoded response be selected. You must enter a valid numeric code or the computer will display a consistency error.

Making Corrections: If an incorrect answer is selected because the respondent changes his or her mind or because of interviewer error, use the ↑ and ↓ keys to go back to the question in order to change the response.

An important part of recording data is making appropriate notes:

- Qualified Responses to Closed Questions. A qualified response is one in which the respondent gives a codeable response, but tempers his or her answer with conditional descriptions such as “if,” “except,” or “but”. Such answers should be coded and these qualifications should be recorded in the notes for the question (press <Ctrl> + <M> to open the notes) because they may provide information which is important to the analysts. The computer program will continue to follow skips as indicated for the coded response. Sometimes respondents will simply explain their responses rather than qualify them. Explanations are often signaled by words such as “because,” “when,” or sometimes a synonym for the response is used. These respondent comments do not need to be recorded in the notes.

- Uncertainty about Respondent’s Answer. If you are uncertain about how a response has been coded, you should record enough information in the notes to allow the analysts to make a decision about the data.
Section III
The SHARE Sample
Sample Eligibility

The SHARE Main Study Sample

The main (2004) data collection for this study will obtain interviews with people in approximately 1,500 households in each of the member countries, producing approximately 22,000 completed interviews in total. The study sample will provide representative data on the population aged 50 or older in each of these countries. While the focus of the study is on residential households, some countries may include institutions as nursing homes in their samples.

For the main data collection, two major approaches will be utilized in deriving representative samples across member countries: (1) persons will be randomly selected from a registry, or (2) households will be randomly selected based on lists of addresses.

Eligibility

Eligible participants are those who are born before January 1st, 1955 and their partners. Partners do not need to have been born before January 1st, 1955 but must be living at the exact same address as the selected age-eligible respondent.

A complete enumeration of everyone living within each household at the sampled address will be completed by the interviewer. This initial activity is referred to as taking the Household Listing (HHL) in the Coverscreen (CV). Any adult person residing in the selected household may provide the complete HHL and is called the “household informant”.

Once the complete HHL has been done, a determination is made as to exactly who is eligible. Share wants all persons age 50 and above to be eligible and accounted for. Based on information collected about “relationship,” couples are also identified. Each eligible couple (i.e. each couple in which one of the partners is 50 years or older), and each eligible single person form the eligible household sample.

As eligible persons are identified within a household, each eligible person produces (“spawns”) a unique sample record or sample line in the sample management system. The interviewers must work each of those lines and document every contact and contact attempt made on a given line. Every line will be accounted for with a final result code, which will indicate either a completed interview, a non-sample (e.g. a vacant house), or a non-interview (e.g. a refusal) (see Result Codes in Section IX).

After the selection of eligible respondents in the household, interviews should be conducted with every eligible person who agrees to do it. This means, that even if the “primary” respondent (for example a person identified on a registry) refuses, the interviewer must still attempt to conduct interviews with all other eligible household members.

Every eligible household member will be asked to complete his or her own interview, although not all sections may apply to him/her. All interviews in the household are linked to the household by the household sample identification number.
The most common household types that fulfill our criteria are:

- Single 50+ year-olds with or without younger, co-resident non-spouses (e.g. children). Here, you will need to do only one interview.

- Couples with at least one 50+ year-old partner, with or without younger co-residents. Here you will need to do two interviews (one with each partner of the couple).

- Couples with at least one 50+ year-old partner and one or more co-residents 50+ years-old. Here you will need to interview three or more members of the household.

You will not need to remember the exact criteria, because the questionnaire application is programmed to make the determination automatically.

**Telephone Contact**

In some countries telephone numbers are readily available for all or most of the sample. It is at the discretion of the survey agency to permit interviewers to make initial contact by telephone. Please refer to the SHARE-approved Telephone Script (in box below).

The initial telephone contact is permitted to screen for general eligibility only and to set appointments for an in-person follow-up visit. General eligibility is all that may be established when the initial contact is by telephone. The interviewer may not obtain specific information regarding members of the household, including asking about specific date of birth¹. Therefore, in order not to wrongly exclude anyone who may be “about 50”, we cast our “general eligibility net” wide and ask if anyone is 45 years old or older when making the initial contact by telephone.

Whether or not a first contact is made by telephone or in-person, it must be preceded by the mailing of an advance letter if at all possible (refer to Section VIII: Precontact Mailing / Advance Letter). When calling the household, the interviewer should be sure to refer to the letter.

At the end of the screening call, the interviewer will attempt to make an appointment for a visit to the household to take a complete household listing (HHL). **A HHL must never be taken on the telephone.**

¹ This protocol is in place for several reasons. First, there is a body of literature indicating that household listing by telephone produces different results from household listing in person. Second, there is evidence that in-person visits generally produce greater willingness by the respondent to participate, and response rates are critical to this study. Finally, there are technical issues associated both with transferring a completed household listing to another interviewer – if these are completed by two different interviewers – and with deleting existing sample lines “spawned” from an incomplete telephone listing and restarting the coverscreen application.
Example Script for Initial Telephone Screening of Households

Good afternoon, I am [Interviewer Name] calling from [Survey Agency]. You / Your household should have received a letter from us letting you know that we would be calling.

We are conducting a survey about health and ageing in Europe and I’m calling to find out whether or not someone in your household might be eligible to participate. Are any of the residents of your household age 45 or older?

If yes:
Thank you. I would like to schedule a time for an interviewer to come to your home and ask a few more questions to find out which of your household residents would be eligible for this important study. Would you or someone else in your household be available anytime next [suggested day of the week]?

If no:
Thank you. Since you have no household residents age 45 or older there is no one in your household eligible to participate in the study we are conducting. I really appreciate your help.

Respondent Type Designation

SHARE seeks information on individual, couple and household levels. In single respondent households, the respondent is asked all sections of the questionnaire. In multi-person households, however, each respondent receives a different set of questions. Questions referring to couple-level information (such as income and family structure) need only be asked of one person per couple and questions referring to household-level information (such as housing expenses) need only be asked of one person per household. The burden of what otherwise might be a lengthy interview is consequently shared (although not necessarily evenly) between the people living together within couples and households. As a rule, the person who does the interview first in each couple will be asked the family questions.

It is often the case that within a couple-household, one person is more knowledgeable about certain aspects of daily life. Thus, one person takes charge of most of the finances and another does most of the family arrangements. In order to get the most accurate information in each of these areas, we work with the couple to decide which of them should answer the question series pertaining to these areas. One member of the couple may be the most knowledgeable in one or more of the areas.

Similarly, in households, it is often the case that one person is more familiar with the details of household expenses. By asking the informant to identify this person, we ensure that the household level data collected are as accurate as possible.
The following “respondent types” are designated in SHARE (see Table 1 in Section VII for a summary of which questionnaire sections each receives):

- **The financial respondent**: The financial respondent should be the person in each couple who feels most able to answer questions about the couple’s financial situation, specifically assets (investment, pensions, etc.) and financial transfers (both the giving and the receiving of financial contributions/gifts). The financial respondent will be asked the questions in these sections of the questionnaire: Financial Transfers and Assets.

- **The family respondent**: The family respondent will be the person in each couple who does the first interview. This person will answer questions about the couple’s children and grandchildren, as well as about non-monetary help or support given to the family unit or received by the family unit. The family respondent will be asked the questions in these sections of the questionnaire: Children and Social Support.

- **The housing respondent**: The housing respondent should be the person in the household who feels most able to answer questions about the household members’ housing situation, including the size and quality of the accommodation, the type of payment (mortgage or rent), the value of the accommodation (if owned), as well as household and family consumption or expenditures for things like food, fuel, electricity, and telephone, and household income. The housing respondent, therefore, will be asked the questions in these sections of the questionnaire: Housing, Household Income, and Consumption.

Finally, of course, when the only eligible respondent is single, he or she will be asked all applicable financial and family questions in the instrument. If this single person is living within a household where there are other eligible persons, however, he or she will be asked the housing questions only if he/she has been selected as the housing respondent.

**Language Switching and Language Protocols**

The base language for SHARE is the English version. Thus, the early versions of the English language instrument was pretested extensively in Britain through the National Centre for Social Research, the organization that already manages the British version of SHARE, the ELSA survey. English is the language that all of the investigators initially used when presenting the modules or questions that they wanted to include in the survey. Once all of the contributions were made and the instrument fine-tuned, the English model instrument was translated into the primary language of each European nation in the SHARE project. Following a formal Pilot and Pretest in each country, subsequent adjustments to the instrument were made both to the English version and to each of the country versions.

The following languages are represented in the SHARE project:

- Danish
- Dutch
- French
- German
- Greek
Within each country, only the primary language will be utilized. Thus, for example, while it is highly likely that someone for whom French is the native language, but who has been living in Germany for at least one year, would be more comfortable being interviewed in French, we cannot oblige that person. That is, we cannot simply switch to the French application of the questionnaire. Why is that? It is because, while we have put a lot of effort into making sure that the same questions are asked in each country, the social and cultural factors that prevail in a given country may not be applicable in another country. Limited modifications have been made in each version of the questionnaire to accommodate these important factors. Thus, some questions may not apply to a given social or cultural situation and are skipped. Other questions refer to the names of specific government programs; and each participating country’s questionnaire is customized with the names appropriate to that country. Finally, interviewers are hired to interview in a certain language. A separate certification would be required for them to conduct interviews in another language.

Interviewers in each country will only be given the appropriate primary language version of the questionnaire application. It is hoped that most people who live in a given country will be able to do the interview in that country’s primary language. But, of course, there will be some people who are unable to do this. In such cases, interviewers will assign a special “language barrier” result code to the sample address. SHARE has predefined the language barrier code as non-sample. In situations where some eligible household members speak the country’s primary language while others do not, the latter individuals will be coded out separately as non-sample.

Exceptions to the “one language” rule include Switzerland, where a Swiss questionnaire will be made available in German, French and Italian, and Belgium, where there will be a Dutch and a French version of the questionnaire.
Section IV
Proxy Interviews
Introduction

SHARE permits the use of a proxy under appropriate conditions. ‘Proxy’ implies that someone ‘fills in’ for a selected respondent when it comes to providing answers to the questions in the questionnaire. The conditions under which this other person is permitted to help in this manner, as well as the degree of help deemed acceptable, are described in this section. At the end of each module, the interviewer is asked to indicate whether that module was done by the ‘respondent only’, by the ‘respondent and proxy’ together, or by ‘proxy only’.

A ‘respondent and proxy’ interview is referred to as a ‘partly proxy’ interview. This form of proxy help may simply be due to (a) the older respondent getting more quickly tired of being faced with so many questions; (b) the older person wants to have someone near him or her for comfort and to turn to for help; or (c) the respondent suffers from mild to moderate level of dementia.

A ‘proxy only’ interview is referred to as a “fully proxy” interview or an interview requiring a proxy reporter. This form of interview is one in which a knowledgeable informant completes, or almost completes, the interview for the sample respondent. The most common reason for a proxy interview to be conducted is that the sample respondent is physically or mentally impaired to such a degree that he or she cannot complete an interview. In most such cases the respondent will still be able to provide permission for the proxy reporter to complete the interview on his or her behalf. If the interviewer encounters a respondent who is so severely impaired that she does not believe the respondent is capable of granting permission, she should discuss the situation with her supervisor, who will obtain further instruction from the survey agency on how to proceed. The interviewer should never conduct a proxy interview for a respondent who refused this option.

For a Proxy interview, if the selected respondent is severely cognitively impaired or otherwise incapable of understanding or responding to human interaction, the established procedures for who may give consent on behalf of the respondent remains in effect. However, SHARE will permit the Proxy interview to be conducted without the respondent necessarily being present. Still, the interview must be done face-to-face.

Proxy (Fully or Partly) Interview Guidelines

As people grow older, it is not uncommon that they experience some physical and/or mental changes such as occasional difficulty recalling a name or number, reliance on calendars or notes to oneself as a reminder of appointments, and trouble concentrating when there is a lot of background noise (such as other conversations or TV). Physical limitations such as hearing loss, having less physical endurance than in earlier years, and some disease conditions like arthritis are also symptoms of normal aging. While these experiences may be frustrating, they do not dramatically affect day-to-day functioning.

Legal and ethical stipulations in some countries may not permit a proxy interview for someone who is incapable of consenting to such an arrangement.
Other more pronounced cognitive and physical impairments do affect people’s ability to function. We expect that some of our older respondents will require assistance in completing the interview or will not be able to do the interview at all, thus requiring a proxy reporter.

It is **always preferable** to do an interview with the respondent him/herself. Unless there are clear indications that the respondent has a **permanent** impairment that would prevent him or her from completing an interview or granting permission for the interviewer to contact a proxy reporter, the interviewer should always attempt to contact the respondent first. Also, ethical research norms require that individuals always be aware when data are being collected about them from another individual. However, sometimes impairment will not be immediately obvious. When speaking to respondents, the interviewer should be alert to clues suggesting impairments, making it burdensome or impossible to complete an interview, and be ready to introduce the option of a proxy to assist fully or partly at the interview when appropriate.

Assessing a respondent’s physical or cognitive ability to complete an interview is not necessarily a simple task. Through careful listening and attention to behaviors that could be associated with an impairment, the interviewer should be able to make a judgment about the respondent’s ability to do the interview. The interviewer may also encounter situations where she obtains information from an informant, which helps her to make an assessment.

Some respondents can carry on social conversations quite well, yet cannot perform a task which is somewhat more structured, such as one requiring memory skills or the ability to think about complex matters (like doing an interview). So it is possible that the interviewer will not realize that a respondent is cognitively impaired and incapable of providing accurate responses to the questions until she has already started an interview.

It is difficult to provide a checklist of the signs of cognitive impairment. Interviewers tell us that these situations come to light slowly and the signs can be subtle. Some behaviors that could indicate impairment are:

- Respondent continually provides contradictory responses.

- Respondent refuses to answer many of the questions, particularly the ones requiring use of memory. While respondents are always allowed to refuse questions, and it is difficult to say how many refused questions might signal a problem, you should try to be aware of this behavior.

- Respondent does not know the answers to many questions, particularly routine questions such as year of birth or how many children he or she has. Again, it is reasonable that we sometimes forget a few things, so stay in tune with the respondent and his or her particular circumstances.

- Respondent becomes progressively agitated, upset, or confused as the interview progresses. These behaviors may be a sign that the respondent is simply tired and can finish the interview another day. Such behaviors could, however, indicate that the respondent is unable to perform the task of answering the questions.
Physical and Cognitive Impairment

Physical and cognitive impairments need to be handled differently depending on the degree and kind of disability. The interviewer will not encounter impairment situations very often, particularly among younger respondents. For those situations in which the interviewer does encounter impairment, the explanations below will help her decide whether to use a proxy to assist fully or partly with the interview.

Physical Impairment

Moderate physical disabilities include the very hard of hearing, paralysis due to stroke which affects the speech, frailty associated with arthritis, osteoporosis or other physical illness, and recovery from illness or surgery. Sometimes these types of situations can be handled by rescheduling an appointment for later in the study period. Or by simply asking when in the day the Respondent is most fit (less tired) for an interview. The interviewer may, however, wish to find a proxy who can help with the interview.

Severe physical disabilities include deafness, inability to speak (muteness), severe and permanent illness, and long-term hospitalization. These situations should be handled by seeking out a knowledgeable person who is willing to do the interview for the respondent as a proxy reporter. This person is often a spouse, but can be an adult child or other caregiver.

Cognitive Impairment

Moderate degrees of cognitive impairment can be symptoms of the early stages of cognitive decline found in Alzheimer’s disease or other forms of senility. This is sometimes evidenced by repetition of the same story or asking the same question over and over. Frustration or anxiety over not being able to answer questions, difficulty concentrating for extended periods of time (inability to focus on the questions), or frequent digression or rambling may also be signs.

Severe cases of mental impairment such as those associated with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease are relatively easy to identify. A sample member with severe mental impairment likely will require a proxy reporter. The behaviors and symptoms may be extreme degrees of the symptoms listed above. In addition, the interviewer may observe (or be informed of) behaviors such as neglect of appearance and hygiene, rapid mood changes including fear, anger, or anxiety, inability to recognize family members or friends, difficulty in walking, standing, or rising from a chair, and/or hallucinations or delusions.

If the degree of impairment is moderate to severe, the interviewer will need to conduct a fully or partly proxy interview. If the impairment does not become apparent until after the interview has begun, the interviewer will need to tactfully inquire about someone to assist the respondent to serve as a proxy reporter.
If the respondent’s spouse or other knowledgeable adult is present and available, the interviewer may continue the interview as a ‘respondent and proxy’ interview or as a ‘proxy only’ interview, depending on the severity of the impairment and the country-specific legal and ethical stipulation. If no one is available to serve as proxy, the interviewer may need to suspend the interview until arrangements can be made to identify someone to perform that role.

Choosing A Proxy Reporter

Typically, in situations requiring a ‘proxy only’, the respondent will be able to suggest someone who might be able to help out. If the respondent is not sure who would be an appropriate proxy reporter, try to identify a family member such as a spouse or other adult who is willing to assist the sample member in completing the interview. Keep in mind that the individual should be well informed of the respondent’s circumstances and knowledgeable about the respondent’s health and finances.

In some cases, particularly when the impairment is severe, a proxy reporter is needed, and the interviewer will have to search for an appropriate individual using information from the respondent or other informant. In most circumstances, if a sample respondent is severely physically or cognitively incapacitated, yet not residing in a nursing or convalescent home, he or she is probably being supervised or provided with continual care by someone. This person is usually a close relative, but can be a professional, such as a nurse.

The key to choosing a proxy reporter is to find a person who is in regular contact with the sample respondent. He or she should be someone who would be knowledgeable about the sample respondent’s situation regarding the areas covered in our questionnaire – day-to-day health, use of health care services, family structure, income and assets, and health insurance. People who make good proxy reporters are the respondent’s spouse, an adult child, child-in-law or step-child, siblings, and other family members or friends who provide help.

Proxy Status Check

Each of the modules in the questionnaire may or may not require either the assistance of a proxy for some questions or completion of the entire module by proxy. Because it is important to be able to analyze the data later with the knowledge of whether it was the respondent him or herself who provided the answers or someone else who assisted the respondent, either partly or wholly, SHARE has an interviewer check at the end of the module:

1. Respondent only
2. Respondent and Proxy
3. Proxy only

Non-Proxy Modules

Some modules of the questionnaire are so-called “self” modules. That is, no one other than the respondent would either know this information or could know this information about another person. In many instances, the information is based on “personal judgment”, or in the case of cognitive and physical measures, on “personal
ability.” Thus, the modules in the SHARE questionnaire that cannot be completed by anyone other than the selected persons are:

- **Cognitive Function (CF)**
- **Mental Health (MH)**
- **Grip Strength (GS)**
- **Walking Speed (WS)**
- **Activities (AC)**
- **Expectations (EX)**

Cognitively impaired subjects should be given the opportunity to try to answer these modules. “Get what you can” is the message here. The result of the CF module in particular, can be used by the research investigators later on to classify cases with various levels of cognitive function based on the questions asked in this module. Even the GS module is worthwhile to try to carry out, because a zero or very low value for grip strength is predictive of future health status.

Since these modules cannot be asked of a proxy reporter, the proxy status check does not appear at the end of those modules. Instead, the questionnaire has an interviewer instruction at the beginning of each of the six modules which reminds the interviewer that NO PROXY is permitted.

**Example Screen of Non-Proxy Introduction**

![Example Screen](image)

**Note:** The Drop-Off (self administered) questionnaire, which is usually handed to respondents after they complete the interview, will NOT be completed for proxy interviews.
Section V
Cognitive and Physical Measurements
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Introduction

SHARE collects self-reports of people’s health, current economic situation and plans for future economic well-being, family and social support and demands, and so on. In addition, it collects data on cognitive and physical ability through direct measurement.

Specifically, direct measurements will be performed on:

- cognitive ability, including memory and everyday math skills
- hand grip strength, and
- walking speed

You will be trained to administer each of these tests or measurements, and will be prompted to do so in the questionnaire application. It is of utmost importance that these measurements be conducted in exactly the same fashion in each country. Emphasis has also been placed on procuring identical or comparable tools to be used in the physical tests.

Interviewer Recording Booklet

The Interviewer Recording Booklet is used for initial recording of cognitive and physical measurements. This booklet MUST be returned to the survey agency and logged in as being received. The supervisor must make certain that the proper respondent and interviewer identifications are completed on the cover. The survey agency will store the completed booklets for the duration of the study.

Cognitive Measurements - Overview

The cognitive functions measured here are quite simple. In addition to asking a few self-report questions on reading, writing and mathematical ability, we test memory and concentration, as well as everyday math skills by asking the respondent to complete a few exercises of varying degrees of difficulty.

Memory and Concentration—A series of brief tests are administered. These include:

- correct date (today)
- recall of words on a list
- naming of animals

Calculations (Numeracy)—This test aims to establish the respondents’ ability to do simple mathematical tasks, by asking them to carry out calculations based on real life situations. The test begins with easy items and gets progressively more difficult.

ALL eligible respondents are expected to participate in these tests. It is important that you do not make any evaluative comments about the respondent’s performance on these tests. Respondents should be given only mild encouragement during the testing, and you are prohibited from giving assistance or help to solve the problems.
Cognitive Tests Protocol

These tests are conducted in the Cognitive Functions (CF) module of the questionnaire.

Equipment needed:

- Pencil
- Interviewer Recording Booklet

Considerations Prior to Cognitive Testing

Good cognitive testing assumes that the optimal performance of the respondent has been obtained. At a minimum, this means that if a respondent normally uses reading glasses or hearing aids, these must be used during testing. It also means that the tests are performed in private, i.e. only you and respondent should be in the room at the time, and the setting should be as free as possible from interruption or disturbance. At the end of the cognitive module you will be asked to record whether or not these conditions were obtained. If there are any circumstances which you feel interfered with test performance, please record this information.

Considerations During Testing

The respondents should be given encouragement during testing, but you should not give any specific feedback or assistance beyond what is specified in the instructions.

Please be sure to administer each test exactly as specified. This includes delivering each test instruction precisely as written. Even subtle departures from the written instructions and procedure can influence the respondent’s performance. It is crucial that these tests are performed in a standardized way by all interviewers in order that we can compare the performance of different respondents in this study and compare our findings with those of other studies.

Please note that for timed tasks, precise timing is of crucial importance. For SHARE the computer controls timing for the cognitive tests.

Debriefing Respondents

Following testing, some respondents may request feedback about their performance. Specific feedback should not be given. You can say “Everybody finds it difficult, you have done fine,” but do not say exactly how well they have performed, and never provide the correct answers. Indeed respondents should not be encouraged to dwell on their performance in terms of good, average or poor. For example, it is not unusual for people to be concerned about poor memory performance when in fact their scores are quite good. For respondents who need reassurance, it may be helpful to reiterate that the tests are designed to be difficult. In rare cases where the respondents feel genuinely concerned about their performance, they may be advised to discuss their concerns with their doctor or other healthcare provider.
Scoring Cognitive Tests

Note that for cognitive tests, a refusal to answer or “don’t know” response is coded as incorrect and the regular “don’t know” and “refuse” keystroke combinations are disabled during this section of the questionnaire. This is because experience shows that such responses are usually associated with inability or difficulty in doing the task. Try to encourage respondents by saying “Just have a try” or “Everyone finds these difficult,” but do not probe. Do not give the correct answer even if asked. You can say “I’m sorry, we are not allowed to give the answer.” You will be asked to code whether they got the answer correct or incorrect.

Description of Specific Cognitive Tests

After a series of self-rated questions on reading and writing skills and on needing help reading or writing, the cognitive tests are administered.

**Orientation in time**

Knowing the day and date is a simple but effective test of memory. The respondent will be asked the date and day, and you will need to code whether he/she got the day of the month, month, year and day of the week correct. If the respondent does not mention any element of the day and date then you may prompt.

**Word list learning #1**

This is a test of verbal learning and recall, where the respondent is required to learn a list of 10 common words.

The respondent will be asked to recall the words immediately and again later on in this section of the interview (delayed word list recall).

The computer will provide automatic timing for the speed of the words. That is, it will show each word when you should read it out loud.

The respondent should only hear the list once.

Please write down, on the appropriate page of the Interviewer Recording Booklet, each word that the respondent recalls. The respondent can recall the words in any order. Do not interrupt the respondent. Take care not to count any words the respondent says which are not on the list (even if the respondent misheard the word). You will be asked to enter the number of words the respondent recalled correctly into the computer. If the respondent mishears a word you should not count it as correct.

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1 Please refer to the special interviewer instruction supplement for details about how to administer and code the cognitive tests.
Verbal fluency – animal naming

This is a test of how quickly respondents can think of words from a particular category, in this case naming as many different animals as possible within one minute. Only if the respondent asks for clarification, explain that animals include birds, insects, fish etc. If the respondent gets stuck, encourage him or her with “Can you think of any more?”

The timing of this test will be controlled by the computer. You will need to press ‘1’ and enter when prompted to start the test. Write the responses on the appropriate page of the Interviewer Recording Booklet. It is very important that the flow of the respondent is not limited in any way. If the respondent is saying words more rapidly than can be written down in full, switch to a suitable abbreviation such as first letters or a tally. If this is necessary, however, be certain to monitor for repetitions, which do not count towards the total. After one minute has passed, the computer will show ‘Stop’.

You will be asked to enter the total number of different animal names given by the respondent. Do not count repetitions and do not count redundancies (e.g. white cow, brown cow). Do not count name animals (e.g. Spot, Bambi, or – as was queried in briefings - Yogi Bear!). However, different breeds (e.g. dog, terrier, poodle) and different gender or generation-specific names (e.g. bull, cow, steer, heifer, calf) each count as correct. If the respondent gives the name of an animal which you have not heard of (e.g. kudu, echidna) give them the benefit of the doubt and count them as correct.

Numeracy questions

This test aims to establish the respondent’s level of mathematical or numeracy skills by asking him/her to carry out some calculations based on real life situations. The test begins with relatively easy items and gets progressively more difficult. Be sure to give encouragement by saying “Just have a try” or “Everyone finds these difficult”. Do not give the correct answer even if asked. You can say “I’m sorry, I am not allowed to give the answer”. You will be asked to code the answer the respondent gave. The first answer in the list is always the correct answer. Remember, “don’t know” should be coded in the explicit category provided; but if possible, gently encourage the respondent to try to answer.

Word list learning #2

This is also referred to as the “delayed word list recall.” In this test, the respondent is asked to recall the ten words that were mentioned in word list learning #1. Again, please write down on the appropriate page of the Interviewer Recording Booklet, each word that the respondent recalls. If there is not time to write the words in full, you can abbreviate them. Take care not to count any words the respondent says that are not on the list. You will be asked to enter the number of words the respondent recalled correctly.
Physical Measurements Protocol

Direct measurement will be performed for grip strength of the hands and for walking speed or “timed walk.” As with the cognitive measurements, the interviewer is prohibited from providing specific feedback about the individual’s performance.

Hand-Grip Strength

Grip strength or isometric hand-grip strength is an important factor to measure as people age. Hand-grip strength affects every day functions such as raising the body weight or holding heavy objects, and it usually declines with age.

Grip strength will be measured with a hand-grip dynamometer which consists of a gripping handle with a strain-gauge and an analog reading scale. Two measurements will be taken on each hand, alternating between the hands. The results are first recorded in the Interviewer Recording Booklet and then entered into the computer.

ALL respondents are eligible for these measurements and are expected to participate, unless they specifically decline for personal or medical reasons.

Medical exclusion criteria include the following: Those with swelling or inflammation, severe pain or recent injury, or those with surgery to the hand in the last 6 months. If there is a problem with one hand, measurements should only be taken on the other hand and results entered appropriately.

There may be occasions when the hand of the respondent is too large to comfortably grip the dynamometer, but the respondent is otherwise willing to conduct the test. In these cases, the interviewer should adjust the dynamometer lever to its maximum grip setting and conduct the test as described in the Interviewer Recording Booklet. However, it is important that the interviewer enters a remark in the remarks field to inform researchers that the respondent’s hand was too large for standard administration.

Hand Grip Strength Protocol

This test is conducted in the Grip Strength (GS) module of the questionnaire.

Equipment needed:
- Dynamometer
- Interviewer Recording Booklet

Demonstrating the Test

Demonstrate the grip-strength test for the respondent. It is very important that you demonstrate the measurement correctly. Experience has shown that respondents follow more closely what the interviewer does than what s/he says. If the respondent indicates that s/he does not understand how to handle the dynamometer, demonstrate it again rather than relying on repeating verbal instructions. Repeat the demonstration only once. If the respondent still does not understand, skip the test and continue the interview. Do not ‘coach’ the respondent.
To some respondents the detailed verbal instructions may seem unnecessary. It may help to say that you are going to explain each test to the respondent in detail, since this is the best way to make sure that everyone does the test in the same manner.

Accuracy

The accuracy of the test depends on the effort exerted by the respondent and the conscientiousness of the interviewer. Consequently it is crucial that the protocol be observed painstakingly. Insufficient effort on the part of the respondent will cause the test results to be inadequate for analysis.

Procedure

- Explain and demonstrate the test procedure
- The respondent should preferably stand up – but if not possible then sitting in an upright chair is fine
- Encourage the respondent to remove jewelry (rings) from his or her fingers (do NOT force this, only suggest it). This is because it may actually hurt the respondent to squeeze if he or she wears a ring
- Remember to adjust the lever of the dynamometer to suit the hand. It should rest on the middle piece of the index and ring fingers
- Lock the lever
- The respondent must keep the upper arm tight against the trunk
- The lower arm should be in a right angle to the upper arm
- Before each measurement, make sure that the arrow is reset at zero
- Ask the respondent to squeeze as hard as he or she can for a couple of seconds
- Read and record the value (in kilo) to the nearest integer. Do NOT round (e.g., to multiples of five)
- Record two values with each hand alternating between left and right hand (four values all together)
- Do not include measurements carried out incorrectly
- Record any deviations from the protocol using CTRL+M

Record all values in the Interviewer Recording Booklet. After completing all measurements, you should enter them into the computer.

Studies measuring handgrip strength have found that when people squeeze the dynamometer they tend to raise the arm. The interviewer needs to pay close attention to this and repeat the measurement as needed.

The instructions for the position of the respondent doing the hand grip strength test are to do it standing up with the arm at a 90 degree angle. However, based on other studies with older persons, we know that sometimes the respondent is not able to stand up. Thus, we permit a respondent who is otherwise eligible and willing to do this test to do it while sitting or lying down. The interviewer should record in the Remarks Field the position of the respondent if it is anything other than standing up.
Other studies have found that sometimes the older persons cannot hold the dynamometer at the 90 degree angle, due to lack of strength in the arm or hand. We permit the respondent in these cases to rest the arm on a table or armrest of a chair. *The interviewer should record in the Remarks Field if the respondent needs support of hand and arm to do the test.*

NOTE: Dominant hand is defined as “the hand the respondent would use to cut with a pair of scissors, or cut the bread with a bread knife.”
Pictorial Review of Grip Strength Test

Figure GS-1: Positioning of the Dynamometer Lever Relative to Hand Size

♦ To accurately estimate the setting of the grip, align the base of the dynamometer on the pads of the palm and adjust the grip or lever to rest on the second phalanx of the index and ring fingers.
♦ The dynamometer lever (or “grip”) must be aligned under the second phalanx of the fingers when gripped.

Figure GS-2: Aligning the Dynamometer with the Hand

Figure GS-3: Dynamometer Lever on Second Phalanx in Gripping Action
Ideally, the respondent should be standing when completing the grip strength test. However, where necessary, the respondent may also sit or lie down.

If the respondent either sits or lies down, this MUST be noted in the remarks field.

The elbow should always be held tightly against the body for consistent grip strength measures.

For consistent grip strength measure, the arm of the respondent should always be at a 90° angle when conducting the grip strength test.
Figures GS-6 and GS-7: Arm Angle Too Low or Too High

- If the respondent’s arm is either below or above the 90° angle when holding the dynamometer, adjust their arms to a 90° angle.

Figure GS-8: Elbow Not Sufficiently Tightly Against the Body

- If the respondent’s elbow is not against the body, ask him her to hold the elbow against his or her body.
Walking Speed

Walking speed is an important factor in predicting overall health, level of disability, future use of health care and mortality among older persons. Walking speed and steadiness declines with age. This decline increases the probability that persons fall down and become injured.

Walking speed will be assessed by using a stop watch to measure the time (in seconds) it takes for a person to walk a distance of two and one-half meters (or 250 cm). Two measurements will be taken per person. The results are recorded in the Interviewer Recording Booklet and then entered into the computer. NOTE: Only respondents who are 75 years old or older will be asked to complete this test. (It has been found that there is generally not enough variance in walking speed measurements for people younger than that). However, people younger than 75 will also be administered this test, depending on their responses to a series of questions collected throughout the questionnaire prior to arriving at the WS module.

Respondents who are eligible for these measurements are expected to participate, unless they specifically decline for personal or medical reasons, or there is no place with sufficient space where a clear and safe path can be found.

Medical exclusion criteria include the following: the person is unable to walk at all with or without some mechanical support device, the person suffers from dizziness, the person has swelling or pain in knee or hip. A determination of desirability and safety needs to be made between the interviewer and the respondent before proceeding with this test. Again, results are first recorded in the Interviewer Recording Booklet and then entered into the computer.

Walking Speed Protocol

This test is conducted in the Walking Speed (WS) module of the questionnaire.

This test is sometimes referred to as the “timed walk test.” The purpose of the test is to objectively measure the overall health and level of disability of a large population of people aged 75 years and above. Walking speeds in older people have been shown to be very predictive of level of disability, future use of health care and mortality. This test will allow us to gather very important information about the respondents.

The Walking Speed test involves timing how long it takes to walk a distance of two and one-half meter or 250 cm. Our target is to measure everyone we interview who is aged 75 or older, as this is a key part of the survey. As mentioned above, people younger than 75 may also be asked to do this test, based on responses to prior questions. Of course, the test should only be performed if it is safe to do so.
Equipment Needed:

- A tape ruler (with lock)
- Cardboard strips (or masking tape) to be used as starting and ending markers for the walking course
- A stopwatch
- Interviewer Recording Booklet

The tape ruler is easy to operate and has a lock on it to keep it open while it is being used. Please release this lock very carefully as it can easily hurt you or someone else. Please also ensure that the tape does not become an obstacle that could trip someone.

You will use the instructions and script provided in the Interviewer Recording Booklet to remind you of the key points to keep in mind when performing the test; and you will also record the test results in that booklet as you go along.

Stopwatch Instructions

Before you begin interviewing please ensure that you are familiar with using the stopwatch.

When you record the timed walk it is very important that you do so accurately. The last four digits of the stopwatch will display the time in hundredths of a second e.g. 02.34. Please transcribe this carefully into the Interviewer Recording Booklet and from there into the computer.

Introducing the Test

As closely as possible, follow the instructions in the questionnaire and the protocol outlined here to describe the test and how to perform it correctly. Do not provide any additional encouragement beyond the script provided in the questionnaire and this protocol.

The detailed instructions and demonstration may seem unnecessary to some respondents. Say that you are going to explain the test to the respondent in detail since this is the best way to make sure that everyone does the test in the same manner.

Performing the Test Safely

Your safety and that of the respondents is paramount in this study. The Walking Speed test is a very safe test to perform and has been administered to over ten thousand respondents in different countries without incident.

Before the respondent performs the test, you will have the chance to assess the safety and the respondent’s willingness to perform the test. If you do not believe the respondent is safe, then do not conduct the test.
Once the respondent has consented to perform the test, make sure that there are no barriers to safety such as poor lighting, loose rugs, furniture or pets in the way. If possible, and with the respondent’s permission, remove any barriers to safety as appropriate. Do not risk harming yourself by moving heavy furniture.

The test may be performed in a hallway or sheltered corridor if there is no suitable space elsewhere as long as the surface and lighting are good and the location is safe and reasonably private. In rare instances where these criteria are met, it could be conducted outside. However it is vital that you avoid dark spaces or uneven floor surfaces. It is strongly preferable to conduct the timed walk on a floor that is level, not carpeted and not slippery (e.g. highly polished). If all the available space is carpeted, choose a floor with the thinnest and hardest carpet.

If the respondent is wearing slippers or high-heeled shoes or is not wearing shoes, ask them if they can change into a pair of low-heeled shoes or trainers.

Walking aids (such as a stick or zimmer frame) may be used on this test, but the respondent should not rely on the support of another person. Continue to record the time the test takes by watching the respondent’s feet. That is to say, do not start or stop counting from the time the walking aid crosses the line. Instead, focus on when the first foot touches the floor, fully across the line.

Demonstrating the Test

Demonstrate the walk for the respondent. Remind the respondent not to begin to do the walk until after you have demonstrated it. It is very important that you demonstrate each step correctly. Experience has shown that respondents follow more closely what the interviewer does rather than what he or she says. If the respondent indicates that he or she does not understand how to do the test, demonstrate it again, rather than relying on repeating verbal instructions. Repeat the demonstration only once. If the respondent still does not understand, skip the test. Do not ‘coach’ the respondent.

Criteria for an Acceptable Test

Please note that the following criteria must be met for a measurement to be considered acceptable. If they are not met, the walk should be repeated:

i) Respondent begins with both feet together at the beginning of the course.

ii) You start timing when either foot is placed down on the floor across the start line. The whole foot must be across the line before the test is started. If the respondent is shuffling, or puts his/her foot down so that it straddles the line, start the stopwatch when the whole foot has crossed the line.

iii) The respondent walks and does not race.

iv) The respondent walks all the way past the end of the tape ruler.

v) You stop timing when either foot is placed down on the floor across the finish line. The whole foot must be across the line before the test is
complete. If the respondent is shuffling, or puts his/her foot down so that it straddles the line, stop the stopwatch when the whole foot has crossed the line.

Safety During the Test

You should not do the test if the respondent appears to be in danger of falling.

If space allows, you should stand close enough to the respondent to offer support if he or she loses balance or trips. Ideally, position yourself standing at the respondent’s side, slightly behind him or her. If there is not enough room to walk alongside the respondent, for example if you are in a narrow corridor, double-check your assessment that the respondent is safe to conduct the test and stand at the end of the course facing him/her. You will then be close to the respondent as he/she turns to start the second test. This is the time when an individual is most likely to need to check his or her balance. Standing at the end of the course will also enable you to see the respondent complete the test clearly.

If you are walking at the respondent’s side, slightly behind him or her, one hand should be positioned close to the respondent (at the hip or waist level) but you should not be touching him/her. If you find yourself in a situation where the respondent appears to lose balance, you may want to help him/her to recover balance by placing both hands on his/her trunk. If the respondent begins to fall, it is not safe to try to catch him or her. It is more appropriate to attempt to steady the respondent, or, if necessary, to slowly ease him or her to the floor. Do not hold the respondent’s arm; hold around the body. This will prevent the respondent and you from becoming injured.

If the respondent does fall, call for help if appropriate; but if he or she is not injured, help him/her by first having him/her get on his/her knees or on all fours. Place a chair next to the respondent and have him or her support herself onto the chair. If assistance is needed, lift under the shoulders; do not hold the arm; hold around the body. Do not try to lift the respondent from the floor alone or put yourself at risk. Remember to seek help if it is needed and to complete a report for any incident of this kind.

If the respondent loses his or her balance or falls, do not attempt to complete the walking test.

Interviewer Script

The following pages provide a detailed description of the procedures for administering the Walking Speed test as well as an appropriate script for administering it. Please try to use the same wording every time you administer the test so that all tests are administered consistently between interviewers, over time, and between studies. A “cue card” is provided in the Interviewer Recording Booklet to remind you about key steps and required wording when you are carrying out the test.
(A) The computer will only route you through this test if the respondent is 75 years old or older. Exceptions will be made for routing additional respondents through this test based on responses to key questions in the questionnaire.

(B) Follow the questionnaire screens which will help you exclude individuals for whom it would not be appropriate to carry out the WS test for health and safety reasons.

(C) If appropriate, begin to set up the path and introduce the WS test

IWER: “OK, we’ll proceed then. I’d like to find a space we can use to do the walk. We’ll ideally need two and one-half meters of space.”

If you cannot find a suitable space or do not feel the space is safe, tell the respondent:

IWER: “It would be safest to skip this test and move on to the next set of questions.”

Ensure that the respondent is wearing appropriate footwear at this point. If not, ask respondent to change the shoes or to put shoes on.

IWER: “I’m going to place the measuring tape alongside the space where the walk will take place. This is our walking course. I want you to walk to the other end of the course at your usual speed, just as if you were walking down the street to go to the shops. Walk all the way past the other end of the tape before you stop.”

IWER: “Do you feel this would be safe?”

If the respondent answers “No”, say:

IWER: “It would be safest to skip this test and move on to the next set of questions.”

IWER: “Now I’d like to demonstrate how to do the test. Please don’t get up until after I demonstrate the test.

“You will start by lining your feet up at the starting point.”

If there is space, say:

IWER: “I’ll walk along side you the whole time during the test.”

“For the test I’ll say, ‘Ready? Begin.’ Are you ready to go now?”

You get the timer ready and place the Interviewer Recording Booklet, opened to the “Walking Speed” section, at the end of the walking course.

“So, I am going to time you as you walk the course. I will be asking you to walk the course two times. I’d like you to stand here with your feet lined up. Start walking when I say “Begin.” “Ready, begin.”
Record the results of the first trial in hundredths of a second, exactly as it is shown on the timer. If the respondent was unable to complete the test or you stopped him/her because of safety reasons, do not attempt to complete the test. Say: (IWER) “It would be safest to skip this test and move on to the next set of questions.” Otherwise, continue.

IWER: “Now I want you to repeat the walk. Remember to walk at your usual pace and go all the way past the other end of the course. I’d like you to stand here with your feet lined up. Start walking when I say “Begin.” “Ready, begin.”

For the second trial ensure that the respondent walks back along the course he/she has already covered. Record the results of the second trial in hundredths of a second.

(D) Return to the computer and enter the data from the Interviewer Recording Booklet.

In instances where the respondent did not complete the test, the questionnaire will prompt you to briefly describe why.

In all instances, follow the protocol.
Pictorial Review of Walking Speed Test

Figure WS-1: Getting the Respondent Ready for the Walking Speed Test

- Use masking tape or a cardboard strip to mark the starting point
- Make sure the Respondent's toes are touching the starting point

Figure WS-2: Walking Speed Timing Start

- Start the stop watch when:
- The first foot COMPLETELY crosses the start line, and
- The first foot TOUCHES the floor
Figure WS-3: Interviewer Position During the Walking Speed Test

- Your position is critical
- View foot crossing line
- Stay to side and behind

Figure WS-4: Walking Speed Test Timing End

- Stop the stop watch when:
  - The first foot COMPLETELY crosses the end line, and
  - The first foot TOUCHES the floor
Do NOT stop the stop watch UNLESS:
♦ One foot is COMPLETELY across the end line, and
♦ The foot completely across the end line TOUCHES the floor
Section VI
Interview Application
Overview

The SHARE interview consists of two separate components: the Coverscreen Application and the Interview Application. These are conducted using a Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) system. The CAPI system will guide you through the interview questions, display helpful instructions, collect the recorded data, and alert you when a response is incorrect or invalid. The CAPI software package used for SHARE is called Blaise. Blaise is an extremely powerful application. It is also user friendly and can be learned very quickly. These instructions highlight the basic features of the Blaise CAPI system and should help you use it most effectively. Please read these instructions carefully. A thorough understanding of how this system works is essential to completing a successful interview.

Layout of the Blaise Screen – Useful Terms

When working in Blaise, it is important to understand the meaning of certain key terms and features of the system. The examples (“screen shots”) presented in this section are drawn from current and previous versions of the application for illustrative purposes.

Figure 1: Blaise Screen Layout
• **Header Bar** – The header bar displays basic information about which instrument you are in (Coverscreen or Interview) and which version you are working with. This is important information that may be necessary as you work with your technical team to resolve computer problems, specifically if new versions are released during the field period.

• **Menu Bar** – The menu bar contains several options including save, close, and help. To access the menu bar, you can either point and click on the item (Forms, Answer, Help), or you can hold down the <Alt> key and press the underlined letter (Forms, Answer, Help). Once you have selected the menu item, you can use the arrows to move the cursor. Press <Enter> when the appropriate item is selected.

• **Info Pane** – The info pane contains all the information for the current question, including the question text and interviewer instructions.

• **Answer List Pane** – This area of the screen displays all possible answers to the current question.

• **Restrictions Pane** – This pane lists constraints on your answers. This includes ranges that may be entered and number of responses possible.

• **Form Pane** – The form pane displays previous and upcoming question names and numbers. The current question is also highlighted in blue in the form pane.

• **Question Number** – For SHARE, all questions will be assigned a number and a name. These allow for easier navigation through the questionnaire. All question numbers will begin with two letters indicating questionnaire module and a number. In the example above, the question number is PH005.

• **Entry Field** – The entry field is where you enter the respondent’s answer to a question. Once a response is recorded, press <Enter> to move to the next entry field.

• **Question Name** – This window displays the name of the question. In this case, it is “DocCond1.”
The Info Pane

In addition to listing the question that you need to read to the respondent, the Info Pane often lists important instructions for you. In particular, you should be on the lookout for two specific sets of instructions: the showcard reference and the interviewer instructions.

Figure 2: The Info Pane

Showcard Reference

SHARE uses showcards throughout the instrument to guide the respondent in their response options. These are standardized as the first line in the info pane, as appropriate, to ease the translation burden between countries. The text for the showcard reference on the screen is always “Please look at card X.” (See Section VII for fuller description of Showcards).

Interviewer Instructions

Interviewer instructions are always written in ALL CAPS. These are not read to the respondent, but are provided to assist you in conducting the interview. There are typically four kinds of interviewer instructions:

- **Question-Specific Probes** – you should always use your general interviewing techniques when probing a respondent. However, in some cases, the nature of the question requires specific probing instructions. These could include the exact language of the probe (in the example above, the probe is “Any others?”) or the
number of times you should probe.

- **Reading Instructions** – one of the more common on-screen instructions you will encounter is “READ OUT …”. When you see this instruction, you should read the response options to the respondent, as they appear on the screen.

- **Coding Instructions** – some questions will let you enter only one response, some will let you enter multiple responses. The coding instructions let you know if you should code all that apply.

- **Question Instructions** – for select questions, there are specific instructions, including definitions for technical terms and descriptions of items to include in the response.

In addition to the specific interviewer instructions, the formatting of the question will also guide you in administering the questions. In particular, you should look for **bold words**. These are instructions for you to emphasize that word.

**Navigating in Blaise**

The four arrow keys, typically located on the lower right side of the keyboard, are useful for navigating within a form pane. These keys move the cursor in the direction that they point (up, down, left, right). For example, the arrow that points down and the arrow that points right will both function to move you to the next question. If you press either the arrow that points up or the arrow that points left, you will move back one question in the instrument. However, in a long and complex questionnaire like that used for SHARE, you may wish to move backwards or forwards more than one question at a time. The keys described below are useful for that purpose. They can usually be found on the far-right hand side of the keyboard.

- **Home**: Moves back to the beginning of the questionnaire.
- **Page Up**: Moves ten questions backwards.
- **Page Down**: Moves ten questions forward.
- **End**: Moves to the next unanswered question to be asked.

**Special Keys**

Sometimes a respondent does not know the answer to a question, or else refuses to respond. Blaise provides special keys to help with these types of situations within an interview. These special keys are actually two keys pressed simultaneously. One of these keys is always the Control key, labeled <Ctrl>. It is normally located in the lower left corner of the keyboard. The other key is either <K> or <R>, depending on the respondent’s answer.

- **<Ctrl> + <K>**:
  This is used to record a “Don’t Know” response. When <Ctrl> + <K> is pressed a question mark (?) appears in the answer field. After pressing <Ctrl> + <K> it is still necessary to press <Enter> to move onto the next screen.
<Ctrl> + <R>: This is used to record a situation in which the respondent refuses to provide a response to the question. When <Ctrl> + <R> is pressed, an exclamation point (!) appears in the answer field. After pressing <Ctrl> + <R> it is still necessary to press <Enter> to move onto the next screen.

Recording Comments

Sometimes it is necessary to comment on a response given – or not given – by the respondent. Comments also should be included when Blaise won’t accept an answer a respondent provides, when a response is difficult to code, or when a response needs to be clarified. To record a comment, press the <Ctrl> + <M> keys. This will open a remark window, where you can enter the comment. When you are finished, press <Alt> + <S> and <Enter>.

Figure 3: Layout of the Comments Box

![Figure 3: Layout of the Comments Box](image)

After you have entered the comment and the comment window has closed (which is automatically done after you have saved the comment), a paper clip icon will appear next to the answer box. To review a comment, reopen the comment box by pressing the <Ctrl> + <M> keys again while the question is highlighted in the info pane.

Figure 4: Screen Appearance once a Comment has been Entered

![Figure 4: Screen Appearance once a Comment has been Entered](image)
Entering Responses

The SHARE questionnaire contains a variety of different question types. Some questions will only need a number to be entered, while other questions will require you to type in words or a few lines of text. There are three categories of questions: Numeric, All That Apply, and Open-Ended. Understanding how to code for each of these three categories is very important and it will make the interviewing process much smoother.

Numeric Responses

Many questions have a predefined set of answers. For example, “YES” and “NO” are typical responses to questions. “YES” and “NO” each have an associated value; “1” for YES and “5” for NO. To enter a response simply select the number that corresponds to the response. The number that you entered will appear in the entry field. Then press <Enter> to advance to the next question.

Code All That Apply

Other questions offer a set of answers where it is possible to code more than one response. These types of questions are common throughout the SHARE questionnaire. To indicate that a particular question is Code All That Apply, there will be a note in the interviewer instructions. To enter all responses, type the first number, press <Spacebar>, then the next number, and so on, until all responses have been entered. For example, if the responses are 3, 6, 8, 16, you would type 3 <Spacebar> 6 <Spacebar> 8 <Spacebar> and then 16, after which you would press <Enter> to move to the next question. Once an item has been coded in the answer field, the box next to the response category on the answer list will be checked.
Open-Ended questions require you to type a full response into the questionnaire rather than select one of the predetermined response options. To enter responses simply start typing. The questionnaire lets you type directly into the field. Hit the <Enter> key, and your response will be saved, moving you on to the next question.
Errors

If, during the process of an interview, a response is entered that is not valid, an error message will appear. This is called a “Range Error” or a “Hard Range Check.” The figure below gives an example of what this kind of error message will look like. These types of errors usually are caused if an answer falls outside the selected range for the question or if you enter a response option that is not valid. For example, if the respondent reports that he/she is 145 years old, that falls outside of the range of numbers for age.

To correct your entry, click on the “OK” button. This will return you to the question. Ask for clarification from the respondent and enter the correct response.

Figure 8: Example of a Range Error
Suspending an Interview

There may be occasions when you have to suspend an interview, for example if the respondent indicates that he or she is unable to complete the interview at this point. To suspend an interview, you need to close the application by pressing the <Alt> + <F4> keys. This will return you either to the sample management system or to the respondent selection screen.

Continuing a Suspended Interview

To continue a suspended interview, simply restart the interview. This will bring you to the first question. To get to the last question asked during the previous session, press the <End> key, typically found near the upper right hand corner of your keyboard. If your country requires, re-read the confidentiality guarantees to the respondent and gain their consent to complete the interview. Then continue the interview.

Summary of the Function Keys

The most frequently used keys and their functions are listed in the table below. Some of these functions are trivial; most of the functions can also be completed by pointing and clicking with the mouse.

Table 1: Summary of Function Keys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrow keys (←, →, etc)</td>
<td>Navigation through the questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1&gt;,&lt;2&gt;,&lt;3&gt;, ..., &lt;0&gt;</td>
<td>Can be used to answer a question with different categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spacebar</td>
<td>Selecting buttons and entering multiple responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Ctrl&gt; + &lt;Tab&gt;</td>
<td>Switch between the answer list pane and the form pane. This can be useful if the question has many options and not all are displayed on one screen. &lt;Ctrl&gt; + &lt;Tab&gt; will let you browse through the entire answer list with arrow keys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;enter&gt;</td>
<td>Confirm selection / Go to the next question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Pg Up&gt;and &lt;Pg Dn&gt;</td>
<td>Navigate through questionnaire forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;home&gt;</td>
<td>Jump directly to the first answered question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;end&gt;</td>
<td>Jump directly to the last answered question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Ctrl&gt; + &lt;K&gt;</td>
<td>Answer “Don’t Know”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Ctrl&gt; + &lt;R&gt;</td>
<td>Answer “Refuse”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Ctrl&gt; + &lt;M&gt;</td>
<td>Insert a remark on a specific question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Alt&gt; + &lt;F4&gt;</td>
<td>Close the program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Select Blaise Interview Questions

We will finish off this section by reviewing some of the SHARE question screens. We are making no attempt at an exhaustive review of every section, as most questions are remarkably easy to navigate through. Rather, the pages that follow are designed to highlight a few of the more complex screens.

Coverscreen

The coverscreen application is used to provide a complete household listing, determine who, if anyone, is eligible, and to select the eligible persons. For the pilot, all eligible persons will be selected for the study.

The coverscreen goes through a series of questions to determine the age and relationship of each of the household members living with the respondent. At the end of household listing, the computer lists all the persons who are eligible to conduct the interview as well as their ages.

Figure 9: Selected Respondents Screen

If more than one eligible person is selected for the study, then the coverscreen application will prompt you to determine who will be asked the questions about the household.
Once the household respondent(s) has/have been selected, you will return to your country-specific sample management system. Here you will select the person to be interviewed.

**Financial Respondent Screen, Interview Application**

In the Coverscreen, the informant was asked to identify the financial respondent. As indicated in the Coverscreen application, the main interview application would permit you to change this, if necessary. Financial questions will be asked of one person per couple only, unless the couple keeps their finances separate.

On the Financial Respondent screen, you are given the opportunity to change the designation. First you will be asked if the respondent and his or her partner keep their finances separate.
If the respondent replies that they do not keep their finances separate, then the interview application will prompt you to determine who is the best respondent for the finances. Depending on who you select, the other will be skipped through the financial questions.
Cognitive Functions

The Cognitive Functions section has two non-standard questionnaire applications designed to ease your task in conducting the interview. The first involves a timed reading of words to measure the recall ability of the respondent. The second involves a timed listing of animals. By including the timing in the application, you are absolved from having to use a stop watch and the inter-respondent comparability of responses is more standardized, hence having greater scientific validity.

Word Recall

The word recall questions ask respondents to listen to words that you read to them in a timed, slow manner. This is introduced with the following screen:
When you see this screen, you should make absolutely sure that the respondent understands the instructions before proceeding. Once this is clear, you enter “1” and continue.

The following screen will “splash” words to the right that you read to the respondent. Read each word when it appears.
After you have read all the words to the respondent, give him/her as much time as he or she needs to recall and then record each word that he or she recalls entering a number in the response field with a <space> between each. These should be entered in the order that the respondent lists them to you.

Timed Listing of Animals

The timed listing of animals is very similar in appearance to the word recall, but you do not have to read anything to the respondent. Instead, your task is to keep track of the number of animals that the respondent lists. Do not count duplicates. This is introduced with the following screen:
When you see this screen, you should not enter “1” to continue until you say “Go.” Once you enter “1” and hit the <Enter> key, the computer will start counting the seconds for you.

**Figure 16: Start of Animal Count Screen**

![Start of Animal Count Screen](image1)

**Figure 17: Midpoint of Animal Count Screen**

![Midpoint of Animal Count Screen](image2)
Once the minute is finished, let the respondent know that the time is up, thank him/her, and record the number of specific animals – including male and female species, but excluding duplicates – in the field provided.
Grip Strength

During the interview, you will be asked to collect physical measurements from the respondent. These include a grip strength (all respondents) and a walking speed (respondents aged 75 and over). These are prefaced in the instrument.

Figure 19: Grip Strength Preface

For each of these, simply follow the directions on the screen.

Currency Questions

SHARE country specific interview applications present questions that ask about ‘amount’ according to whether the country is now a ‘EURO’ country or it is not. For countries that have switched to the Euro currency, this currency is now the local currency. Also, for Euro countries, the application makes provisions for the respondent to report ‘amount’ in pre-Euro currency, that is, in what was the currency in use prior to the switch to the Euro currency. The interview application for countries that have not switched to the Euro currency only accepts ‘amount’ in what is still the local currency. Thus, this is the simple situation.

In countries whose local currency is now the Euro, interviewers need to be attentive to whether the respondent reports in Euro or in pre-Euro currency.

For example (Question AS003):

IWER: About how much did you or your wife/husband have in bank accounts, transaction accounts or saving accounts at the end of 2003?
R: 1000 Euro
The respondent would probably say ‘Euro’ out loud here. If the respondent only says ‘1000’, we might assume that the R is giving the amount in Euro. However, if there is any doubt, the interviewer should make certain by saying: ‘This is Euro -- correct?’ This is particularly important in the early ‘amount’ questions. By confirming in this way, the respondent will likely learn what is expected and offer this information automatically as the interview progresses.

If, when the interviewer confirms the response, the respondent says that he or she actually means ‘Guilder,’ or ‘Lire…’ (that is, the pre-euro currency), the interviewer might say something like: “The introduction of the Euro is indeed confusing for those of us who learned to live with the [Guilder, Lire] for such a long time. The computer can accept both [Guilder, Lire] and Euro, so it is important that you tell me which currency you are thinking of when you answer these types of questions.”

For a Euro country, the first field in the ‘amount’ questions is the Euro field, as this is the local currency now. If the respondent immediately provides the answer in pre-euro currency, the interviewer will press ENTER to move to the next field, which accepts the pre-euro currency.

Unfolding Bracket (Follow-up) Questions

Many of the questions that ask about financial matters will have the follow-up or unfolding bracket questions open up when the respondent says ‘don’t know’ or when the respondent initially refuses. These options are made available completely at random across sections in one questionnaire and across all questionnaires. The unfolding brackets consist of a series of up to three questions that allow the respondent to give a range rather than the exact amount. Let us consider an example:

Question AS003 asks:

"About how much did you or your wife/husband have in bank accounts, transaction accounts or saving accounts at the end of 2003?"

If the respondent does not know the amount even after you prompted him or her and you press CTRL+K, the follow-up question is:

(About how much did you have in bank accounts, transaction accounts or savings accounts at the end of 2003?) Was it less than 7100 Euro or more than 7100 Euro?

1. less than 7100 Euro
3. about 7100 Euro
5. more than 7100 Euro

If the respondent still does not know or refuses to answer, the sequence will be stopped and you go on to the next question. However, if the respondent says "more than 7100 Euro", the sequence continues and you will get the same question again, but with a higher amount:
(About how much did you have in bank accounts, transaction accounts or savings accounts at the end of 2003?) Was it less than 14000 Euro or more than 14000 Euro?

1. less than 14000 Euro
3. about 14000 Euro
5. more than 14000 Euro

After this question, the sequence will stop. Had the respondent answered "less than 7100 Euro" at the first question, the second question would have mentioned a lower amount.

You will have noticed that, in this example, the unfolding bracket sequence has only two steps. Depending on the start value (i.e. the amount that is chosen in the first follow-up question) and the respondent's answers, the sequence has between one and three steps.

In Euro countries, if the respondent is reporting in pre-Euro currency, the unfolding bracket sequence will show both currencies (see example below).

Figure 20: Pre-Euro Unfolding Brackets

Soft Check: Consumption (CO) Module

One particularity in module CO is a so-called soft check or “plausibility” check. After you have typed in the amount spent on all goods and services (Question CO005), the CAPI application checks whether this amount is smaller than 2.5 times or larger than 10 times the amount spent on food. Research has shown that this situation is highly unlikely. If this simple "plausibility" check is not passed, you will be prompted to ask the respondent for confirmation. If needed, you can then go back to either the questions on money spent on food inside or outside the home or total expenditures and change the amounts. However, if the respondent confirms all amounts you can suppress the check by typing ALT+S and go on to the next question.

Let us consider an example: A respondent reports to spend an amount of 200 Euro for food consumed inside home, 50 Euro for food outside home, and a total expenditures of 500 Euro. Since 500 Euro is less than 2.5 x (200 + 50) = 625, a window opens that asks the respondent to confirm the amount:
If you now press **ENTER** or **ALT+G** you go back to the question highlighted in the lower part of the check window and you can change the amount if needed. In the example it is CO003 (expenditures for food outside home). You can highlight any question by using arrow up and arrow down keys.

If you press **ESCAPE** or **ALT+C**, you go to the last question you answered before the check window opened, that is CO005 (total expenditure).

If the respondent confirms the amount, you can suppress the check by pressing **ALT+S** and go on to the next question.

**Interviewer Assessments**

Once the interview is complete, you should thank the respondent for his or her participation, letting him or her know how valuable this information is. Complete any paperwork required by your country and exit gracefully.

Once you are away from the respondent, you should continue the interview, completing the interviewer section of the interview. This will let you submit your observations about the quality of the interview. The section starts with the following screen:
Figure 21: Interviewer Observations

Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. These are critical data for assessing the quality of the interview.
Section VII
Questionnaire Module Overviews
Overview of Questionnaire

The SHARE questionnaire has been programmed into a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) application. CentERData in the Netherlands was responsible for the Blaise software programming. There are a total of 19 modules in the questionnaire plus a module for interviewer observations. The interview runs an average of 80 minutes for single respondents and an average of 120 minutes for couples.

Different modules are asked of each type of respondent in the household. Table 1 below shows which sections are asked of the informant, all respondents, the financial respondent, the housing respondent, and the family respondent.

Table 1: Who Answers the Module?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Module Name</th>
<th>Inf</th>
<th>All R</th>
<th>Fin R</th>
<th>Hou R</th>
<th>Fam R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CV Coverscreen</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DN Demographics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PH Physical Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>BR Behavioral Risk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CF Cognitive Function</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MH Mental Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>HC Health Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>EP Employment &amp; Pensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>GS Grip Strength</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>WS Walking Speed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>HO Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>HH Household Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>CO Consumption</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>AS Assets</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
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<td>AC Activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>IV Interviewer Observations b)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) some questions on help received are asked only of the Fam R  
b) to be filled out by the interviewer after each interview

Each module of the questionnaire is described below, in the order in which it appears in the questionnaire:

**CV Coverscreen:** The interview starts with a “coverscreen” that provides an introduction to the study and contains the statement of confidentiality. The coverscreen collects basic demographic information about everyone who currently lives in the household (name, gender, birth year and month, relationship to informant, and whether married or living with someone as married).

The coverscreen establishes whether household members are eligible for a SHARE interview. The criteria for eligibility are those who are 50 years of age and their partners. More precisely, the criteria that we use to consider someone eligible for
participation in the SHARE study is that he or she must have a birth date that falls before January 1, 1955. Thus, eligible respondents must have been born in or before 1954. Spouses/partners of eligible persons become eligible regardless of age.

The coverscreen also identifies who is going to be the housing and financial respondent (the family respondent is always the first person in a couple to be interviewed). This module is only completed by one person in each household.

**DN Demographics:** This module collects details about each respondent’s marital status, country of birth, education, and occupation. It also collects details about parents such as last occupation, health status, and frequency of contact.

**PH Physical Health:** This module covers many different aspects of people’s health; self-reported general health, longstanding illness or disability, eyesight and hearing, specific diagnoses and symptoms, pain, and difficulties with a range of activities of daily living. Note: Respondents are randomly assigned to being asked questions PH002, PH003, PH052, and PH053, which differ slightly in response choices.

**BR Behavioral Risks:** This module collects information on health behaviors such as smoking, alcohol use, and physical activities.

**CF Cognitive function:** This module contains subjective and objective measures of four aspects of the respondent’s cognitive functioning: memory and concentration, numeracy, and verbal fluency. (Instructions for how to administer this module are found in Section V and in a special interviewer instruction supplement).

**MH Mental Health:** This module asks how the respondent views his or her life and collects information about emotional problems. Note: Some questions, for example MH005, require “non-standard” data entry. On these questions, you are asked to listen to the respondent’s reply and then code his or her response according to your own judgment. (Refer to the special interviewer instruction supplement on how to administer the MH module).

**HC Health Care:** This module asks about recent doctor visits and hospital stays. It also contains questions about the respondent's level of health insurance.

**EP Employment & Pensions:** This module collects information about respondents’ current work activities, their income from work and other sources, and any current or past pensions that they may be entitled to. For respondents who have retired and are receiving a pension, we ask about the number and kind of pensions and how much they receive.

**NOTE:** Please remember that the economic information we collect in the questionnaire is extremely important for the SHARE project. We know it is likely the most difficult information for the respondent to deal with. The interviewer should encourage the respondent by remembering to say “thank you” and “that is helpful for our study” periodically after receiving these responses. Similarly, it is extremely important that the encouragement (motivation) remains neutral to avoid influencing the responses.
**GS Grip Strength:** This type of physical measurement involves recording the respondent's maximum handgrip strength with the aid of a dynamometer. Although the grip strength test is easy to administer, care must be taken to carry it out systematically and to adhere to proper protocol.

**WS Walking Speed:** This type of physical measurement involves asking the respondent to walk a certain distance and measuring the time it takes for the respondent to complete this activity. As with grip strength, although this test is easy to administer, care must be taken to carry it out systematically and to adhere to proper protocol.

**CH Children:** This module collects information about the respondents’ children. The Children module (and a couple of questions within the Social Support module described below) will be completed by one person in each couple (the "family respondent"). In most households, the people who are eligible for the interview will either be a single person or a couple, so you will only complete this section once. As mentioned, the family respondent is the first respondent in a couple to be interviewed.

The names of children that are recorded in the Children's module will become important in the Social Support and Financial Transfers modules. The list of relations will be created dynamically, which means that the instrument fills in the names of up to nine different children. The list of names will also be transferred to the second respondent in a couple.

In the Children’s module, the number of children for whom detailed questions are asked is limited to a maximum of four. When there are more than four children, the computer program first selects adult children who live close to the parents. In case of ties (children are of equal age and live equally close), children are randomly selected.

**SP Social Support:** This module collects information about any help the respondents might receive from family and other people not living in the household and how household members help others. Questions on most kinds of help received by members of a couple are asked of the family respondent.

The list of relations from which to code potential helpers and beneficiaries contains the list of children as named by the family respondent in module CH. Although we allow for up to nine names in this list, there are rare cases in which a child that gives or receives help is not listed. This happens for example when the family respondent forgets to mention a child or when there are more than nine children. In this case you should code “19. (Other) Child” and enter the name of the child in a memo field.

**FT Financial Transfers:** This module asks the "financial respondent" about any regular financial transfers and payments the respondent(s) may have given or received from non-household members. It also asks about inheritances.
As was the case for the SP module, the list of relations from which to code potential helpers and beneficiaries contains the list of children as named by the family respondent in module CH. Although we allow for up to nine names in this list, there are rare cases in which a child that gives or receives help is not listed. This happens for example when the family respondent forgets to mention a child or when there are more than nine children. In this case you should code "19. (Other) Child" and enter the name of the child in a memo field.

IMPORTANT: In a very few cases, children's names might not show up at all in the list of relations. This can happen only in the second interview in a couple and only if the interview with the first respondent in a couple was interrupted before the children's names have been recorded. In this case you should record the child's name in a Memo-field.

HO Housing: This module collects information about the respondents’ current housing situation, including the size and quality of the accommodation. Owners are asked about the value of their property and, depending on the individuals’ tenure, questions are asked about mortgages and rent payments. The section on housing is asked of one person per household, regardless of how many people are eligible for the interview. In households where there is more than one person eligible for interview, you will be asked to code in the household grid which person should answer the section on housing.

HH Household Income: This brief module collects summary measures of the household income from various sources. More precisely, it collects summary measures of income ONLY about household members who are not part of the interview, for example adult children. It also asks about transfer payments to the household.

CO Consumption: This module asks about various types of household expenditures, e.g. on food, fuel, electricity, and telephone. The questions in this section are asked of the “housing” respondent.

AS Assets: This module asks about the amount of financial and non-financial assets held in various forms and income from these assets. This section will be completed by one person in each financial unit (the "financial respondent"). A financial unit is defined as either a single person or a couple, so in most couples only one of them will complete the sections on assets on behalf of both of them. A question in the demographics section establishes whether or not a couple has joint finances. Those who share finances (which will be most couples) will have to nominate one of them to answer the questions about their joint finances.

AC Activities: This is a short module, basically asking the questions that were formerly included in module EP. This brief series of questions ask about a range of activities in the last month and how the respondent feels about these activities.

EX Expectations: This module explores people’s expectations, the level of certainty they feel about the future, and how they make financial decisions within their household.
IV Interviewer Observations: After the respondent has completed his or her interview, there is a series of questions for you to answer regarding the interviewing experience. These questions are important in understanding the circumstances surrounding the interview and can sometimes help researchers clarify any confusing or conflicting information. While these questions should not be completed in the presence of the respondent, they should be completed as soon as possible after the interview and certainly within the same day. When answering the interviewer observation questions, you should keep your remarks impersonal and directed to the interview itself. No identifying information, including names or addresses, should ever appear in the interviewer observations.

Timeframe for Recall Across Modules

The timeframe or reference period that we ask the respondent to cover when providing responses to our questions vary quite a lot throughout the questionnaire. While ideally, the timeframe would be very short to make the task easier for the respondent and to increase our confidence that the recall is accurate, there are many reasons for extending the timeframes. The primary reason is so that they match exactly timeframes utilized on other studies that are or were asking these same questions.

Thus, we sometimes ask the respondent to tell us about occurrences in the last month, over the last 6 months, the last 12 months, etc. In the primarily financial modules, the timeframe is often ‘last year’, which refers to the year 2003, that is, the previous calendar year. This is because a lot of financial statements and accounts are defined within a taxation year, which is commonly equal to the previous, completed calendar year. Similarly, some financial questions use timeframes that make sense in the various member countries, like the most common paycheck period, rent period, etc.

The timeframes vary not only across modules but also within modules for question groups. It is important that the interviewer is keenly aware of it and helps the respondent to pick up on the nuances by reading out the time reference very clearly for the appropriate questions.
The time reference periods that are used in each module are summarized in Table 2 below:

### Table 2: Time References Across Modules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Last Month</th>
<th>Last 6 Months</th>
<th>Last 12 Months</th>
<th>Last Year (2003)</th>
<th>Last Payment Period</th>
<th>Next 5 or 10 Years</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>DN</td>
<td>Demographics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Physical Health</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ever, day;</td>
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<tr>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidentiality

The questionnaire contains only the initial statement of confidentiality that must be read out loud to the respondent. There are no other places throughout the questionnaire where this statement is required. However, the interviewer should assure the respondent about our promise to keep all responses confidential, if he or she senses that hesitation to give a response may be due to a concern that the information is considered especially sensitive and that the respondent may therefore be afraid to talk for fear that it might “leave the room.”

Showcards

Showcards refer to pages in a booklet that is handed to the respondent at the start of the interview. Each showcard contains answer categories for a question in the interview that has many or complex response options. The answer categories provided on a showcard match precisely those seen on the computer screen. The sequence of the showcards follows the progression through the interview.

Each respondent “borrows” a showcard booklet for the duration of the interview. No writing is permitted in the booklet. At the end of the interview, you will collect the booklet from the respondent.
Showcards are used in surveys to reduce the impact of recall bias. Some questions have quite a few or very detailed options that the respondent is asked to consider before giving his or her answer. In such situations, without the visual presentation of the options, the respondent either might not hear each option as it is read by you, or she might forget one or more of these options in the list.

Whenever you are required to read the options out loud, a clear on-screen instruction is provided (READ OUT). In certain instances, where the options shown on the showcard are extensive, you are not asked to read them out loud. However, you should be sensitive to whether or not the respondent is able to read them. If it seems like the respondent may not be able, you should read them out loud. Respondents may not readily admit that they cannot read. You may hear them say that they don’t have their glasses handy. If they don’t make a move to go fetch their glasses you should offer to read the options out loud.

Whenever there is a corresponding showcard, wording to direct the respondent’s attention to the showcard should be: “Please look at showcard number X.” However, as you become more comfortable with the instrument, you should feel free to change the wording of this one line (and this one line ONLY), to make the interview more conversational. For example, you could say:

- Now looking at showcard X
- Still looking at showcard X
- Please turn to showcard X

While not specifically stated on the screen, you need to be aware of the respondent’s interaction with the showcards. That is, if the respondent is still looking at a given showcard, but that showcard no longer applies (since most questions do not have showcards), then you should direct the respondent’s attention away from the booklet by saying: “Now, not looking at the showcard,” and proceed to read the question. Usually, if you clearly direct the respondent to the showcard every time when it is applicable, the respondent will learn to make use of it only when directed and will ignore it when not told to look at it.
Section VIII
Field Procedures
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Procedures Overview

There are many tasks that need to be completed in order to gain the cooperation of households selected for this study. These include notifying the household in advance that you will be coming to conduct an interview, explaining the nature and purpose of the study, addressing respondent concerns, screening the household to determine if there is an eligible respondent, before finally interviewing eligible respondents. The key to successfully completing these activities is to come well-prepared to the household and be knowledgeable about the survey.

Throughout this section we will be referring to informants and respondents. An informant is a person who has not necessarily been selected to complete the interview. Such a person may be a person living in the selected household knowledgeable about persons living there, or even the person selected to conduct the interview before you have screened the household and selected a respondent. By contrast, a respondent is the person who is selected to complete the interview after the household has been screened.

Finally, we routinely refer to households throughout this section. The operational definition for a household may differ from country to country as sampling restrictions dictate, but generally speaking refers to a shared living space where people live and eat together. Typically, institutions such as military barracks, mental health facilities, and prisons are excluded from the definition of households.

Precontact Mailing/Advance Letter

Share requires that an advance letter be mailed out to each sample address prior to the initial contact (phone or face-to-face). This letter describes the purpose of the study and informs the household that an interviewer will be contacting them in the near future. Research has shown that the advance household letter is an invaluable tool for you in making contact with a household member.

The content of this letter is meant to be standard across all countries and is provided by MEA. Study-specific modifications should be made only in consultation with MEA. This letter should be mailed to arrive no more than two weeks before the first planned contact (telephone or face-to-face). The advance letter will:

1) Certify the authenticity of the study
2) Encourage the household to contact the survey agency to set up an appointment
3) Provide the interviewer with a reference point to begin her interaction with a household member.

The letter incorporates a sentence to let the recipient know that she is free to seek the assistance of someone close to her if she thinks that this would be helpful during the interview. In countries where the initial contact will be made by telephone, the letter should mention that an interviewer will be calling shortly to see if there is anyone in the household who would be eligible to participate in the interview, and to set up an appointment to come to the home, when convenient.
In addition, the effect of the advance household letter diminishes over time. It is therefore important that you attempt contact with every household in your sample as quickly as possible after the letter has been delivered. The time between the delivery of the advance household letter and the initial contact attempt should be no more than two weeks.

Planning Your Visit

Why plan? There are many tasks you need to complete when you visit a household: obtain a listing of the people who reside there, screen the household to determine if there is an eligible respondent, and conduct the interview. All of these tasks need to be done smoothly and professionally and take careful planning to achieve. Familiarity with all the study materials and planning your work ahead will make you more efficient in working through your assignment. Being well prepared will also help to promote your credibility with informants and respondents.

Segment Visit

Sample will typically be assigned to you in specific geographic clusters, sometimes called “segments.” It is important that you familiarize yourself with the general area and with the location of specific households that have been sampled for participation in the study. Understanding the segment will give you clues as to whether there are problems with gaining access to any households, whether there are safety concerns, and will also aid you in preparing for any rest stops that you may need to make during the day.

First Visit to a Segment

If you are unfamiliar with a segment, the first visit to the segment should be made during daylight hours, either weekday or weekend. The purpose of this visit is to familiarize you with the area and the location of the streets containing selected households. Pay special attention to note the addresses that are part of a multi-unit structure, such as apartment complexes, as these often require greater effort to gain access to.

Specifically, drive or walk through your segment(s), looking for indicators that might identify the best time for your first contact attempt with the household. Some things you should focus on, when visiting your sample households for the first time, include the following:

- Look for evidence of **people at home during the day**. This may include a car parked in front of the house or lights on inside the household. If these exist, you should make note of it so that these households can be contacted earlier in the day, leaving other households for later contact attempts.

- Look at the **housing units**. Are they all single bedroom apartments? If so, it is possible that the units are occupied by working individuals and therefore it would be a better use of time to attempt contact at these households during the evenings or weekends.
• Look for *impediments to gaining access* to your sample households. Does your segment include an apartment building? Is it a locked apartment building? Where is the manager’s office for these buildings and what is its hours of operation? You should start working this sample early, as it may take more attempts to gain access to the household, or you may need special approval to do so.

• Look for *safety issues*. Are there housing units near abandoned buildings or others that are partially obstructed by bushes or other impediments?

• Look for *nearby restaurants or public places like libraries*. These places are useful not only as locations where you may find a bathroom, but could potentially also serve as places to conduct an interview if a respondent is uncomfortable conducting the interview in his or her own home.

Collecting these data is important not only to your safety, but also to working your sample efficiently. Use the information to determine not only which households should be contacted during daylight hours and which should be contacted during evening hours, but also how long it takes to go from one household to another. This could be critical information in planning and arranging appointments with respondents.

**Contacting Sample Households**

Once you have completed your first trip to your segment(s), you are ready to make contact with your sample households. Identify the area in your segment that you plan to visit first. Remember to take all the necessary forms for screening and interviewing with you.

Materials you should have with you minimally include:

• Your identification

• Advance household letters

• Question and Answer Brochures

• Consent forms (if applicable to your country)

• Materials the respondent uses during the interview

• Laptop computer and power cords

• Dynamometer, stopwatch, and tape measure

• Interviewer Recording Booklet.

Make an effort to **call on as many selected households as possible in the segment area during each visit**. This means you should plan to work in large blocks of time, thereby maximizing your efficiency and minimizing travel time. It may not be possible to conduct interviews during this initial visit, but you may be able to complete a household listing and set up appointments to return to the segment. Record as
Doorstep Introductions

The confidence you display as a result of careful preparation will improve your chances of gaining participation, completing the household listing and conducting the interview at selected households. There are a number of procedures and tools available to you that should increase the likelihood of success. These items emphasize the importance of the study and document your legitimacy as the interviewer. Proper use of these materials also will ensure that respondents have all the information needed to grant informed consent. The following list of tools has been developed to assist you in gaining the cooperation of the informant or respondent:

- **Advance Household Letter** – All households with mailable addresses will be mailed an Advance Letter. There is no guarantee that it will reach the household or that the informant will have read it before speaking with you. Therefore, it is important to carry extra copies with you. Often, you will find that by putting the letter in a household member’s hand, they will be more willing to listen to you for a short period of time. The Advance Household Letter provides information about the purpose of the survey, who is sponsoring and conducting the research, how the household was selected for the study, assurances of confidentiality, and whom they can contact if they have any questions.

- **The Questions and Answers Brochure** – The SHARE Questions and Answers Brochure (Q & A Brochure) will provide a ready reference for additional details about SHARE, including answers to commonly asked questions.

- **Identification** – You should carry your identification with you. If your survey agency provides you with an interviewer badge, be sure to always wear it when working on SHARE. The badge will aid in verifying your identity and your affiliation with a reputable survey agency working on behalf of the European Union.

- **Verbal Introduction** – Your introduction will give the informant or respondent a general idea of what to expect from the study. Introductions are most effective when you tailor them to the individual respondent. You have been given a great deal of information in this manual and during training which you can use to formulate your own introduction. Take some time to write out several introductions that you feel will fit different situations. Practice them before contacting your respondents.

Introductions are important, not only during initial contact, but on subsequent contacts as well. Use your active listening techniques during all conversations with your respondents so you can develop introductions that address any questions or concerns the respondent may have. Remember to enter complete Call Notes after each contact so that on future contacts you can refer to the prior conversation. “I hope the doctor’s appointment went well” or “Did you have a nice time at your daughter’s house?”
• Establishing a good rapport by showing respect and compassion is essential in maintaining respondent cooperation. It is also important to remain professional in manner. Be certain not to become overly familiar with respondents. Providing personal assistance, such as running errands and/or meeting them on a social basis, is not appropriate. As an interviewer, you are required to maintain a professional relationship with all respondents.

Above all, it is important that you present yourself as a professional. This will establish your credentials and credibility with the household member. Try to keep your introductions short and to the point, rather than overwhelm the household member with information.

The following are two examples of introductions. Again, remember that you should be comfortable with your introduction – these are only suggestions.

1) Hi, my name is (FIRST/LAST) and I am with the (SURVEY AGENCY). We are conducting a very important study called the Survey for Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe. This study is sponsored by the European Union and gathers very important information on issues such as health, medical care, retirement, social support, and employment. Recently you should have received a letter (and brochure) about this study. (Let me explain it briefly to you.)

2) Hello, my name is (NAME), and I am stopping by today to let you know about the Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe being conducted for the European Union by the (SURVEY AGENCY). We sent a letter to your household about this study.

• (IF the informant remembers the letter:) Wonderful. Then I would like to answer any questions you may have had when you read the letter, and to tell you a little more about why it is so important to talk to someone in your household.

• (IF the informant does not remember the letter. Hand the brochure and letter to the informant.) Let me give you some information about the project and explain about this important study. I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Follow-Up Letters to the Respondent

A Follow-up Letter can be an extremely useful tool in easing respondent / informant concerns and encouraging participation. We have developed a set of letters to address specific concerns and unique situations for the main study. These include:

• general reluctance expressed by the household or respondent;

• a respondent/informant who is too ill to participate;

• a household in which no one is ever home;

• a respondent/informant who is “too busy” to participate;
- concerns about sharing **personal information**;
- comments about **not** being **interested** in the survey content;

After attempting to provide various information yourself, it may be time to request a Follow-up Letter addressing respondent concerns. This is done by contacting your supervisor, who will advise you on next steps.

**Developing Your Own Interviewing Style**

To be successful at interviewing, each interviewer must develop her own particular style, and then interact with potential respondents in a manner that is comfortable for her. However, when you are developing your style, keep the following “tips” in mind:

1) You should maintain a pleasant, friendly, professional attitude and always emphasize the positive: how important the study is, how important it is for all the selected respondents to participate, and how far we are willing to go to accommodate the respondent’s needs. **Do not argue with the respondent.** It is helpful to get the respondent to respond positively to some statement.

2) If the respondent starts to give reasons why he/she cannot participate, you should **present options** to ensure cooperation. You should find a way to get the respondent to say “yes” to an option. For example, you could offer to complete the interview in a couple of sessions, if necessary.

3) **Persistence** is the key to decreasing non-response. For not-at-home cases, attempts to contact the respondent should be made at different times of the day and on different days of the week. If necessary, you should talk to a neighbor to find out a time when the respondent is most likely to be at home, keeping in mind the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

4) If you are unable to persuade the respondent to participate during a visit, you should say “I’ll contact you when you are not so busy” or “I’ll come back the next time I’m in the neighborhood.” These statements leave the door open for re-contact, since they convey a respect for the person’s reason for not participating at that time. Before leaving, you should make sure the respondent has a Q&A Brochure to review.

5) It is very important to stress the **confidentiality** of the survey, i.e., the answers are only reported in aggregate form and individual names are never associated with the answers.

6) **Always stress the importance of each respondent.** Every respondent must be made to feel that he/she is critical to the overall success of the survey. The respondent must know that he/she is unique; that is, due to the precise nature of the sampling procedures, no one selected for the survey can be “replaced” by someone else.
Tips on Building Rapport

You want all of your interactions to be as strong, positive and professional as possible. Below are ten tips for building positive rapport with informants and respondents:

1) **Professionalism** sets you apart – Social science research is a sophisticated scientific manner of gathering data. You are associated with an organization that maintains high quality standards and trains its staff to be effective members of a research team. Use your full name and affiliation with both the survey organization and the European Union. Always speak clearly and confidently.

2) Get the person’s **attention** – People today have more contact than they would like with polls, market research, mail surveys and telephone surveys. They listen when they expect to receive a benefit or to influence change. Provide information about the importance of SHARE, and explain how the results are used by researchers and the public sector to improve health and other social and economic programs for families throughout Europe.

3) Establish a **dialogue** – All of us like a good conversation. You talk, I listen. I talk, you listen. We share information. Respondents need to believe that their views are worthy and valid, and that you understand any concerns that they have expressed to you. Do this by providing information as needed, rephrasing the respondent’s comments and incorporating these comments or concerns with further explanation. The dialogue need not be lengthy to be effective. Some effective approaches include:

   - Selecting responses which will answer the respondent’s concerns.
   - Responding quickly and smoothly in language that will be comfortable and easily understandable to the respondent.
   - Avoiding questions that can easily be answered with a “yes” or “no” response.

4) Build your **knowledge** of the project – Respondents incorporate information in different ways. By increasing your knowledge of how the study works and learning all you can about the respondent and informant, you will know how to relate the survey goals to your respondent’s situation.

5) Build your **knowledge** of the respondent – Each time you contact the respondents, you will learn a little bit more about them. You learn their schedules and when to call. You learn their family or job concerns. As you learn about a particular respondent, you learn how to explain the importance of the survey to his/her life. It is important to include all such details in the Call Notes. (See Recording Call Notes below).
6) Anticipate **common questions** – Respondents will have many different ways of asking “Why me?” Your task is not only to anticipate common questions, but also to know how to provide an answer which is understandable to the respondent. Listen for the **language** used by the respondent – the phrasing, style and pace, etc. This can provide you with clues and help you phrase your reply in a way that is more responsive to the respondent.

Some specific questions you should be prepared for are:

- What kinds of questions will you ask me?
- What is this study about?
- How long will this survey take?
- What will you use this information for?
- Who is paying for this study?
- Why do you need me to participate?
- Will they be able to find out that it was me that answered these questions?

7) **Use active listening techniques** – Listening is work! When people talk, they do not want advice, suggestions or judgments, they want someone to listen. Listen to the words, ask for clarifications and rephrase the statements. Use the **respondent’s words** in your explanations, signaling to them that you heard them.

Some specific techniques are:

- Listen to the respondent’s comments as well as their questions.
- Listen to the respondent’s tone of voice and hesitations.
- Reply to the respondent with respect for his or her statements.
- Identify the concern **underlying** the respondent’s hesitation.
- Use the respondent’s words. For example, “I understand you’re not interested, but let me explain a few things …”

8) Each contact is **unique** – Ten people can see the same event and have ten different observations. Treat each contact with a respondent like a piece in a jigsaw puzzle. As each contact creates a new piece in the puzzle, a little more of the respondent’s situation is revealed. Remember to record all details in the Call Notes. (See Recording Call Notes below).

9) **Timing** is key – Respondents want a sense of what they are being asked to do, when and for how long. Although our request may seem like an intrusion into their schedules, your task is to create a convenient way for the respondent to make time for the interview.

10) End on a **positive note** – If at first you do not succeed, try again. Of course, you can only try again if the respondent lets you. And the respondent will let you if you know when to leave. As you sense resistance or annoyance building, try to end the conversation in a way that will make future contact possible, then ease back and wait for another day.
Scheduling Appointments

Setting an appointment with a respondent can sometimes be tricky. Many respondents have very hectic schedules. Work commitments or family obligations may take priority over an appointment to conduct an interview. When setting an appointment with a respondent, be sure you get an exact date and time of day. Ask specific questions to narrow down the best appointment time for the respondent. You can do this by not asking “yes” or “no” questions when setting the appointment. For example, if you said to a respondent “Would Tuesday evening at 8:00 p.m. be good for you?” You may be setting yourself up for a “no” response. Try first giving options to the respondent, and then narrowing them to identify a specific appointment slot. For example, “Would weekdays or weekends be better for you?” Or, “What evening this week would be best?” These appointment strategies let the informant or respondent know that you are prepared to work around their schedule and is more likely to elicit commitment on their part, giving you a greater assurance that they will honor the commitment.

You should also ask for a telephone number where the respondent may be reached. Let the respondent know that this is for their convenience, so that you can contact him or her in case you are running late for the appointment. You should also call the household the day before the appointment to make sure that the agreed upon appointment is still convenient for the respondent.

Finally, be sure to leave a telephone number where you can be reached with the household. Not only is this a professional courtesy, but it will enable the respondent to contact you if he or she has to reschedule for one reason or another. Moreover, by trading telephone numbers you are establishing a personal connection between yourself and the household.

When you schedule an appointment, record the time in your calendar and the Sample Management System, and make sure not to schedule appointments too close together. As a general rule, allow 2 hours plus travel time between specific appointments. Sometimes the respondent may not agree to a specific appointment time but you may form a more general impression about when you might find the respondent at home. In these situations, you should record this information in the Call Notes and plan to visit this household again along with others in the neighborhood at that time.

Appointments must never be forgotten – so take special care to record specific dates and times in your calendar. Overall, it is important to be organized and not to rely on appointments alone to meet weekly production goals. You should always be actively pursuing new contacts and interviews.
Recording Call Notes

The importance of documenting EVERY CONTACT ATTEMPT on the household cannot be overemphasized. The notes in the sample management system are the key to understanding not only WHEN to approach a household, but also WHAT to anticipate and WHO you spoke with in the past, if anyone.

Call Notes are made both when an interviewer achieves contact with a household and when he or she attempts but is not able to make contact. We call these “No Contact Notes” and “Contact Notes.” Their respective requirements are listed below.

No Contact Notes

No Contact Notes are notes that you make when you attempt contact on a household and you do not actually make contact with anyone in the household. This is most frequently because no one is home, but may also be because people in the household refuse to open the door. For No Contact Notes, you should minimally record:

- Date of the attempt, including which weekday the attempt was made
- Time of the attempt
- What the mode of attempted contact was
- Whether there was any evidence of people home
- What actions you took

Date, Time, and Mode of Contact Attempt

By recording the date and time of the contact attempt, you are documenting the patterns of the household. Specifically, you will be documenting a time when the household is vacant or when household members are reluctant to open the door. For example, if you attempt contact on a Wednesday evening and there is no evidence of people at home, you know that your next contact attempt should be on some day other than Wednesday. Your next contact attempt might be on a Saturday afternoon instead.

In addition, you should indicate if you attempted contact by telephone or in person. Some people may deliberately not pick up the phone if they have caller ID and notice that they don’t recognize your name, while others may be reluctant to answer their door to a stranger. Each attempt is valuable information for planning additional contact attempts.

Evidence of People At Home

There are times when you attempt contact and no one answers the door. However, you may hear voices inside the home or otherwise notice that people are moving inside the home, but refuse to come to the door. You may also find a car in the garage. This gives you a critical piece of information about the household. You should contact your supervisor about sending a personalized letter to the household letting them know who you are, why you are attempting to reach them, and telling them exactly when you will be making your next visit to the household.
Alternatively, you may find strong evidence that people are not at home, including a newspaper on the front door, no lights on in the household, trash cans not retrieved after trash day, and so on. Again, this provides strong indications to you that the day and time you attempted contact may not be the best time to reach the household.

You should make sure that you record these data EVERY TIME you go to the household. This will let you uncover the household patterns and maximize your chances of reaching someone at home the next day.

**Actions You Took**

You should be sure to document the actions you took, including knocking on the door, standing outside the household for ten minutes, asking a neighbor when the best time to reach the household is, or leaving a card with the household letting them know you stopped by. This information should be used to guide your subsequent contact attempt. For example, if you left a card with the household letting them know you stopped by, you can reference this the next time you speak with the household. Similarly, a neighbor’s comments may tell you when the best time is to reach the household.

**Contact Notes**

Contact Notes are notes that you make when you attempt contact on a household and you do make contact with anyone in the household. Hopefully, this will minimally result in a completed household listing and otherwise a completed interview. Alternatively, you may set up an appointment for an interview or even speak to a household member who is reluctant to participate. For Contact Notes, you should minimally record:

- Date of the attempt, including which weekday the attempt was made
- Time of the attempt
- Who you spoke with
- Whether there was evidence of more than one person in the home
- What the mode of the contact was
- Whether the respondent or informant made any specific comments
- Whether the respondent or informant asked any specific questions
- What actions you took

**Date and Time of Contact Attempt**

The same is true for Contact Cases as for No Contact Cases. By recording the date and time of the contact attempt, you are documenting the patterns of the household. Specifically, you will be documenting a time when you are able to locate someone in the household. This may be used, for example, if you experience broken appointments. Having documented when residents were at home, you know when to attempt recontact.
Who You Spoke With

There is often more than one person in a household. By recording who you spoke with, for example a female approximately 50 years old, you can more easily prepare for future contacts, particularly if another person answers the door the next time. This may also be helpful if you encounter resistance from one person. Initial resistance from one household member does not necessarily mean that other household members would be resistant.

Mode of Contact

You should indicate how you spoke with the informant or respondent. This may include speaking with him or her by telephone, through an intercom, through a closed door, both of you outside the household, or both of you inside the household. The success of these contact modes gives you insight into how to pursue future contact attempts. For example, if you spoke with someone through a closed door, the resident may have security concerns. You should be prepared to address these, either by premailing another letter to the household letting them know when you will be back in the neighborhood, or by calling in advance. If you spoke with someone by telephone, you should use your call note to reference that you spoke to a household member by telephone.

Research has shown that face-to-face contact is more likely than telephone contact to lead to respondent participation. You should use this information in targeting your sample for recontact.

Statements Made by the Informant or Respondent

Research conducted in the United States and Britain has shown that there are a limited number of comments that most respondents make when faced with the opportunity to participate in a survey. Some of these are positive, while others are negative. Some comments relate to privacy or time concerns that the respondent might have, while others refer to eligibility. These comments will be covered in greater detail in the section on encouraging participation. However, generally speaking, the comments you are most likely to encounter are:

- I like to do things that help the community
- I enjoy doing surveys
- I am too busy
- Now is a bad time, come back later
- Let me think about it
- Surveys are a waste of time
- I don’t trust surveys
- Surveys are a waste of taxpayer money
- I never do surveys
- I am not interested
- I don’t know anything about the topic
- I’m too young
- I’m too old / I’m too sick
- You’ll ask too many personal questions
- The government already knows everything about me
Because there are a finite set of comments that informants and respondents offer, you can prepare your rebuttal well in advance. Moreover, even if you encounter a comment that you had not previously heard or prepared for, by recording it, you can prepare for it the next time you speak with a household member. Finally, where appropriate, you should contact your supervisor about mailing a letter to a household that explicitly addresses concerns raised by the household member.

Questions Asked by the Informant or Respondent

As with the comments made, there are a finite set of questions that households ask about when asked to participate in a survey. You CAN prepare for these. In addition, research has clearly shown that when households ask questions, they are more likely to participate in the survey. The reason for this is that it not only indicates some base level of interest in the subject matter, but it also provides you with the opportunity to convince the household of the importance of the survey.

Most respondents will ask one of nine specific questions:

- What is the purpose of the survey?
- Who is paying for this?
- How was I chosen?
- How long will the interview take?
- Who's going to see my answers?
- Can I get a copy of the results?
- Will I get any compensation for my time?
- How will you guarantee that no one sees my answers?
- Who are you?

Actions You Took

As with No Contact Cases, you should be sure to document the actions you took, such as, the specific brochures you left with the household member, the specific responses you gave to their statements or questions, and how far you got in the interview. This information should be used to guide your subsequent contact attempt.

Interviewing Special Populations

There are many different types of special populations in the SHARE sample. Being aware of the particular circumstances you may encounter can add to your success. Some of the older sample respondents in SHARE will require special attention in your interactions. Following are descriptions of different situations you may face and suggestions on how to handle them.

Physical and Cognitive Limitations

Physical limitations such as hearing loss, loss of eyesight, illness or diminished physical endurance may make an interview difficult. Your sensitivity to these factors is critical, not only for “getting the interview” and obtaining high quality data but, more importantly, for maintaining rapport and ensuring cooperation in the future.
As people grow older it is not uncommon for them to experience some cognitive changes. Changes in cognitive functioning may be frustrating, but they do not usually affect day-to-day functioning. Examples of memory impairments associated with the normal aging process include occasional difficulty recalling a name or number, having to use calendars or notes to remind yourself about appointments, and trouble concentrating when there is a lot of background noise such as conversations or TV.

Some loss of mental capacity may be due to degenerative impairments such as Alzheimer's disease. In its early stages, it may be difficult to assess; however, later stages will be fairly obvious.

Death in the Family

Samples will differ from country to country. In some cases, you may receive prelisted households based on your country's census data. If you receive prelisted household information, you may be more likely to come across more recently deceased respondents than in other studies. This is one of the more difficult situations that interviewers must handle.

Some suggestions for how to approach the surviving spouse/partner in the case of recent deaths are listed below. Please remember to retain a professional demeanor, but at the same time be compassionate.

• Offer condolences to the family and tell them you will contact them at a later date.

• If appropriate, request that a letter of condolence be sent to the family. Please describe any circumstances that should be included in the letter. This will not be a form letter, but will be a letter written to the individual family of the respondent.

• After a time, contact the household and find out when you can schedule an interview.

Gatekeepers

A “gatekeeper” is an individual who acts as a barrier to direct contact with a respondent. When interviewing respondents in this age group, the most likely gatekeepers you will find are family members who provide live-in or continual care for their aging relative.

The gatekeeper may be the spouse, adult child/child-in-law, a close relative such as a sister or brother, a grandchild, or even a neighbor or professional caregiver. Women are more likely than men to have the major responsibility of caring for an elderly person. Spouses (usually older females) are the most common caregivers, followed by daughters, and then daughters-in-law.

Gatekeepers are genuinely concerned and are trying to protect the respondent from situations with which the gatekeeper thinks the respondent will be unable to cope. Caregivers can themselves be subject to stress and exhaustion. You must be sensitive to the situation. However, gatekeepers are not always correct in their assessment of the respondent’s ability to engage in an interview.
Try to establish rapport with gatekeepers. Listen to their concerns, and respond with understanding as well as information. If the respondent has asked that you speak to the gatekeeper, you may use more latitude in determining the amount of study information you share. Tell such gatekeepers about the study and its importance. Let them know that you would appreciate it if they could “assist” by being there when the interview takes place. They can even help to answer some of the questions in the interview. Reassure them that if the interview becomes a burden to the respondent, the gatekeeper may ask you to complete the interview another day.

You may also find respondents who are following the advice of an absent gatekeeper. If you make contact with a reluctant respondent who explains that he or she has been advised by children or someone else not to talk to anyone, let him or her know you understand the concerns. Ask if you may have the address of the gatekeeper so that you can send information about the study directly to him or her. If the respondent refuses to provide this information, leave the phone number the gatekeeper can call for further information. He or she can check the number with the operator and also call the number and ask questions about the study.

Please stress to both the respondent and the gatekeeper the confidentiality of the research. Any identifying information will be kept separate from the interview. Only summary statistics will be reported. Also stress the importance of the research. Many gatekeepers have become allies in getting a respondent to do an interview.

To summarize:

- The gatekeeper acts as a barrier to direct contact with a respondent.

- Be sure to maintain a good rapport with all informants on all contacts with a household, just in case you should have to enlist their help as an assistant or proxy respondent.

- Remember that all reports of a respondent being incapable of doing an interview are not necessarily accurate. Some individuals are simply protecting an elderly loved one from situations they feel the respondent cannot or should not have to handle.

- Fully explain the study to the gatekeeper and stress the importance of speaking directly with all respondents.

- Offer that the respondent may request the gatekeeper to sit in on the interviewing session to make sure questions are appropriate and the respondent is comfortable. The caretaker or gatekeeper may become an assistant, helping the respondent with answers if s/he has trouble remembering.

- Never attempt to circumvent gatekeepers to reach respondents. Respect their desire to protect the respondent and work to convince them of the significance of the study and the respondent’s participation.
Resistance Aversion

People are becoming more reluctant to participate in surveys. Losing the representative nature of the survey due to high non-response is something that is taken very seriously—the validity of the study will be challenged if we experience a high percentage of non-response.

We must identify the reasons that respondents are reluctant to participate. But it is difficult to tease out the issues that play a part in non-response. The more detailed information we can gather about the circumstances of our uncooperative respondents, the better we can make adjustments that will lead to greater success in future waves.

Statement of Philosophy

Part of any survey research effort is dealing with those respondents who are reluctant to participate. Our techniques for addressing respondent concerns come from speaking with successful interviewers about their experiences with reluctant respondents and from spending hundreds of hours observing the interviewer–respondent interaction.

Our philosophy is based on the importance of the following five basic principles:

1. **Knowledge about the Survey** – Become an expert about SHARE.

2. **Active Listening** – Pay attention to what the respondent is saying; *listen carefully.*

3. **Identifying Respondent Concerns** – Diagnose the concerns of the respondent.

4. **Selection of Response** – *immediately.* Have a large and ready supply of responses to match various respondent concerns.

5. **Delivery of Response** – Use words *appropriate* to that respondent; deliver information *relevant* to the concern.

In the remainder of this section, we will describe this philosophy and the process of addressing respondent concerns in greater detail, as well as outline some specific comments you can use to address respondent concerns.

Addressing Respondent Concerns

The process of addressing respondent concerns involves bringing a number of tools and techniques together quickly in order to effectively handle any concern(s) that a respondent might have.

The diagram below demonstrates the process for most effectively addressing respondent concerns. Each of the principles mentioned above will be described in detail as they relate to this process:
Figure VIII-1: Five Basic Steps for Encouraging Survey Response

1. Prepare for the Interaction

2. Engage in Active Listening to Keep the Conversation Going

3. Diagnose the Main Concern

4. Select a Response to the Main Concern

5. Quickly Address the Concern

Start the Interview or Make and Appointment to Return

The process should continue, looping back to step #2, as the respondent presents more issues, questions, or concerns. The goal is to engage the respondent in an exchange – a dialogue – that addresses each of their concerns and leads to the start of the interview. The dialogue is what establishes your rapport with the respondent.

If you are deeply familiar with all aspects of the study, you will be in a position to address respondent concerns competently and confidently. There are several aspects of preparedness that should be addressed, and these are addressed through this section.

Step 1: Prepare for the Interaction

People have different concerns about the survey request. Some respondents will be interested in what types of questions you will be asking. Even at the onset of the study, you must be very familiar with the topics that are covered in the interview so that you can provide the appropriate level of detail for the respondent.

Some respondents will ask questions about study procedures. To some respondents, this will be more important than the survey questions themselves. Be sure you are able to give accurate responses to questions about consent, confidentiality, any token of appreciation procedures (if they apply in your country), the average length of the interview, how data are handled, and how they will be used. This information is available to you in all the study materials including this manual, in the brochures and letters, as well as in what you learned during training.

Prepare, or script, responses to questions about the purpose of the survey and other commonly asked questions. Do so “in your own words” so that you sound relaxed and natural.
Each interview is an individual, one-on-one negotiation of time and effort. There is no single knockout phrase guaranteed to convince every respondent to participate in a survey. To effectively address reluctance, we think that it is important to understand the process of gaining cooperation. This section outlines common respondent concerns, but simply memorizing and repeating the phrases from the manual or project materials will probably NOT work. For this approach to work, you must take an example response and practice it in your own voice and tone. Most important, you must customize your responses to the situation at hand.

If you do not know the answer to a question, explain to the respondent that you will have to check on the response. It is better to let the respondent know that you do not immediately have the answer, than to later have to correct an inaccurate response.

Remember, a respondent concern, hesitation or even reluctance can be a good sign! Those who ask questions typically just need to know why you are visiting them.

Research has shown that most respondents who ask questions will participate (about 92%) as will many of those who say that they are “too busy” (more than 80%). They just mean that they are too busy “right now.” More than half of those who make negative statements will also respond. Don’t be discouraged. Questions and frustrations about the timing of the request, even negative statements are all signs that the respondent is willing to negotiate their participation if you are ready to respond to their individual concerns.

Your preparedness is most crucial in the first moments that you spend in contact with an informant or respondent. In these few minutes, you must convince participants that:

- You are a professional interviewer – use both your first and last name as befits your culture, and be friendly, but not overly eager;
- You are calling from a legitimate and reputable organization on behalf of the European Union – identify the organization you represent and the European Union;
- The respondent’s participation is critical to the success of the research;
- That the data you are requesting are important and worthwhile.

**Step 2: Active Listening**

Active listening is the key tool you have to inform you about the individual respondent’s concerns. Active listening requires that you pay close attention to the words, the tone, and the body language of the respondent as he/she raises concerns or voices questions about the research. This process will provide you with the information that you need to tailor your response for that individual, that is, to provide the information that is of greatest concern to that individual without inundating him/her with unnecessary information.
One goal of active listening is to “hear” the tone of the respondent and mirror it back in your response. For example, if the respondent sounds impatient and harassed, make sure your data request is brief and to the point. If he/she sounds formal and refers to him/herself as “Mr.,” “Ms.,” or “Dr.” Jones, use the full title when addressing the respondent. Another goal of active listening is to rephrase or “play back” the respondent’s answers in your own words so that she/he knows you heard and understood her/him. Using your own words to rephrase what the individual has to say will help foster rapport and encourage the respondent to feel that you are on his/her side.

To build the skills required of active listening, you should:

- Pay attention to what the respondent says and how he or she says it.
- Listen carefully to the respondent’s language and tone of voice.
- Be professional, confident, and courteous.
- Be able to paraphrase what you have heard.
- Listen for the whole message; avoid interrupting the respondent.
- Listen to everything the respondent says before diagnosing his or her exact concern.
- Listen as an ally; avoid being defensive.
- If necessary, enlist the respondent as an ally; ask him or her to help you personally.
- Build positive rapport with the respondent.

**Step 3: Identifying Respondent Concerns**

A. Working to Identify the Primary Concern

As soon as the respondent hesitates or signals reluctance, you should use your active listening skills to quickly identify the source of reluctance. The main question you need to answer is: What concern is the most central to the respondent’s reaction to your introduction?

Experience has shown that respondent concerns typically fall into one of several, limited and definable themes. Sometimes the respondent asks a question revealing the concern. Other times he or she gives a facial expression or uses body language that shows a concern. Either way, you need to try to identify what the main concern is for the individual.

Keep in mind that in some cases, it is the gatekeeper who is the major obstacle you will need to navigate around to be effective. This is often the person most likely to answer the door who is then likely to act as your primary informant, so it is important to try to build rapport with this individual as well.
B. Themes of Reluctance

Following are the general themes that we identified as the most common reasons that respondents are reluctant to participate in surveys:

1. Time/Burden Concerns
2. Confidentiality Concerns
3. Privacy/Personal/Sensitive Questions
4. Purpose of the Study Concerns
5. Government Concerns
6. “Why me?” Concerns
7. Surveys are Voluntary
8. Lack of Interest

C. Time and Burden Concerns

There are two different concerns respondents may express using the word “time” – concerns about when they are being asked to participate, and concerns about the cost in effort to participate. We refer to the former situation as timing concerns, and to the latter as burden concerns.

Respondents, of course, may refer to both as time concerns, but the response to these concerns will differ depending on the underlying cause.

The respondent may express timing concerns if you are making the request for participation at a truly bad time for him or her. Perhaps it is a busy time of year for the respondent because of work or family obligations, or perhaps he or she just happens to have other commitments on that particular day or at that time of day. Emphasize that, “We understand busy schedules and we can find a time that works best for you. When would that be?” Make sure you offer the potential range of times when the respondents may receive another call. Respondents often assume that data collection times may be limited to very strict business hours (e.g. 9-5 weekdays). Arrange a specific time to call back or be called back, emphasizing that the call will occur at the time selected.

It is also critical that you distinguish between completing a household listing and conducting an interview. A household listing should take no more than five (5) minutes. You should stress this to the household informant, as – depending on your sample listing – you may find no one eligible in the household to conduct the interview.

Burden concerns – the cost in effort – are likely to be a genuine obstacle for a small portion of this sample population. Again, it is critical that you distinguish between completing a household listing and conducting the interview. If you have not completed a household listing yet, assure the informant that you just want five minutes of his/her time to determine if anyone in the household is eligible to take part in this important, cross-national research project.
Once a respondent has been selected, you should respond to burden concerns by indicating that the interview does not have to be completed in one sitting. You can get started, see how it goes, and if the respondent wishes to finish the rest of the interview at another time, then you will accommodate him or her.

D. Confidentiality Concerns

Concerns about confidentiality may stem from several different sources. Your job is to address any of these concerns, so that the respondent understands our procedures for protecting confidentiality.

Consider the following concerns related to confidentiality that respondents might express:

**Uncertainty that you are a legitimate caller**
You should always carry identification and, if your survey agency provides you with a badge, wear it. If an informant needs further assurance of your identity, provide him or her with a phone number where he/she can speak with someone who will confirm your role on the project.

**Uncertainty that his/her data will truly be protected**
Reassure the respondent that the data are held in strict confidence, and that the researchers are interested in the country and Europe as a whole, and not in any one person’s situation. You could respond by saying: “All the information is kept in the strictest confidence; we are interested in your experiences. However, we analyze and report the findings that affect whole groups of people.”

**Resentment that you are intruding on the household**
Acknowledge that you realize that you are asking for a commitment from the respondent. Emphasize the importance of the individual household selected and explain that in return for the respondent’s time and effort, the quality of the research will be enhanced, and we will provide him/her with a token of appreciation (if applicable).

**Potential repercussion to the respondent**
Assure the respondents that they, and their families, will not be affected personally by their decision to participate or not participate. Their family’s participation will be completely confidential, and their answers will never be associated with their names. Therefore, they are not susceptible to any follow-up from other government agencies or programs.

Some of these concerns can be hostile and are particularly difficult to address. Be certain to adhere to high standards of interviewer professionalism and neutrality.
E. Privacy/Personal/Sensitive Questions

A respondent’s reluctance to disclose personal information about him or herself may stem from several perspectives. The respondent may be concerned that the information will not be kept confidential; he/she may feel uncomfortable talking about the information because others in their household may not know the information; he/she may not feel comfortable talking about personal information to an interviewer; or the respondent may be embarrassed by some aspect of his/her behavior and, therefore, be reluctant to talk about it.

In any of these cases, it is your job to assure the respondent that everyone’s answers are equally respected and important to the study. Issues of confidentiality should be emphasized in these situations by explaining that the promise of confidentiality extends to protecting the respondent’s information from his or her family and friends as well as the way it is handled by the research staff. As an interviewer, you should work with the respondent to find a private location in which to conduct the interview, and you can remind respondents that they are free to skip any question which they prefer not to answer. Maintaining your confidence and professionalism as an interviewer will be key to collecting good data for sensitive questions. If the respondent realizes that you are comfortable asking these questions, he/she will be more comfortable answering them.

F. Purpose Concerns

The respondent may ask why the survey is being conducted, how the information will be used, and how it will benefit her/him. Use your knowledge about the uses of SHARE data to explain to the respondent why the data are collected and how they are used. Try to use what you have learned about the respondent by actively listening and customizing your response to the characteristics of the respondent. Remember, questions from respondents suggest they are interested and engaging in a dialogue. Be prepared to answer these questions simply, quickly, and in your own words.

G. Government Concerns

Some respondents may exhibit fearful, skeptical, or even hostile feelings toward the government in general, or toward you in particular because of your affiliation with a government agency, even though you are directly employed by a survey agency, not the European Union. If you do hear this issue expressed by a respondent, it is a good idea to let the respondent “vent” his or her feelings -- don’t interrupt. Explain you are from a national survey agency and working on an important cross-national project aimed at understanding and improving conditions for people over the age of 50. Do NOT engage a hostile respondent in a dialogue about his/her viewpoint. Doing so will likely prolong the monologue. Although it might be impossible to get some respondents to ever like and trust either the national government or the European Union, it is very possible to get them to trust and like you and see the usefulness of this particular study and your specific request to complete an interview.
H. “Why Me?” Concerns

Respondents may wonder why and/or how they have been selected to be a participant in the survey. Depending on the nature of the concern, you may need to explain that they are part of a random sample of people selected from the entire population of the European Union, and that their address has been selected randomly through a scientific process.

I. Voluntary Survey Concerns

Some respondents may not want to respond because the survey is voluntary. For these respondents you will need to emphasize that the accuracy of the survey depends on their participation because they represent many other people in their country. If possible, try to share how specific uses of the survey data could benefit the respondent’s community. Use your active listening skills to keep him or her talking and to find out what hidden concerns he/she might have.

J. Lack of Interest Concerns

The respondent may refuse to participate in the survey outright and often this can be masked by the dreaded “I’m not interested” statement. First you should express that we need the help of all people we contact in order make the study valid. Also, let the (potential) respondent know that you can arrange to meet him/her at a more convenient time – but don’t give up the conversation, yet.

Use your active listening skills to keep the respondent talking to you so that you can learn more about his/her specific concern(s) and make the appropriate responses. Often a statement like “I am not interested” may mean “I am not interested now.”

You may be able to keep the conversation going by expressing a genuine interest in the potential respondent. Be sincere and try to establish a connection with the respondent.

Summary

Becoming “expert” at addressing respondent concerns comes with practice. Willingness to listen to informants/respondents and to provide concise and convincing answers usually leads to completed interviews. Keep in mind that these listening skills are something you already have and use every day when you interact with your family, friends, your children or your colleagues. The only difference is that you are already familiar with those people’s style of communication. In the survey you are simply learning another person’s style of communication.
Section IX
Case Sample Management
Managing the SHARE Sample

The interviewer must attempt to interview each selected household and identified respondent, and will be required to enter a call record and assign a result code every time he or she performs work pertaining to that case.

Thus, during the fieldwork period, a history of the experience with the address and every eligible person will be recorded. This history will consist of full written call records and interim result codes, including appointments and call notes. At the conclusion of the study all addresses will receive a final result code.

**NOTE:** SHARE requires a minimum of five call attempts for each case before it can be coded out as a non-interview or non-sample household. These calls may not all take place at the same time of day or day of the week.

Excellent call records are important for many reasons, most significantly, because they allow interviewers to tailor their approach to each household they work. Given the large number of households SHARE interviewers will screen to identify eligible respondents, it would be impossible for them to mentally retain all of the pertinent details of their past contact attempts for each household and to keep the details straight so as to plan appropriate follow-ups for each. Call records are also crucial when addresses are transferred from one interviewer to another, who must then identify appropriate next steps based upon all of the past contact attempts, not just his or her own. If contact attempts or reluctance aversion fail and an interview is not obtained, call records are important in allowing the interviewer and his or her supervisor to determine what final result code should be assigned to the line: an important decision that affects the study’s response rate.

Call records also allow researchers to identify calling patterns that are most successful both by region and by type of respondent and are important to SHARE’s longitudinal success as they provide future interviewers with information on successful and unsuccessful attempts to contact each particular household.4

Each SHARE call record must contain the data listed below as discrete variables (i.e. not incorporated within the call notes). These data must be included in the paper & Pencil (P&P) contact protocol which the interviewer may wish to use, before entering the data into the case management system (CMS) later.

Thus, depending on the sample management system used in a country, these data all may be entered manually or some may be automatically recorded by CMS.

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4 Legal and ethical considerations in some countries may prevent the use of call record data for future waves.
An interim result with a hypothetical contact history may look similar to the following:

![Table showing contact history details](image)

Note that the individual ID contains 15 digits. For example, we refer to the example of a household ID “10-042-000002-0000” (15 digits), and the person “01” within this household.

- **HH_ID**: Household ID (000002 within 10-042-000002-0000)
- **R_ID**: Person ID (last two digits 01 within 10-042-000002-0001)
- **IV_ID**: Interviewer ID (e.g. “ABS1234”)
- **C_date**: Call Date (e.g. “02.06.2004”)
- **C_time**: Call Time Start (e.g. “21:01”)
- **C_mode**: Mode of Contact
  - Telephone (remote)
  - In Person (FTF, intercom, through open or closed door, inside or outside HH, etc.)
  - Other (mail, fax, etc.)
- **C_note**: Call Note (see below)
- **C_result**: Result Code (see below)
Call Notes

Call Notes are notes that the interviewer makes when he or she attempts to contact a household and succeeds or does not succeed in making contact (with someone in the household).

The interviewer should minimally record:

- Whom he or she spoke with
- Whether there was evidence of more than one person in the home
- Whether the respondent or informant made any specific comments
- Whether the respondent or informant asked any specific questions
- Whether there was any evidence of people home if call was not successful
- What actions he or she took
- Exact date and time of any appointment made and the telephone number of the person with whom he or she made the appointment (in case he or she needs to recontact the informant or respondent)
- If the interview was started, then suspended, the question number of the last question the respondent answered.

Result Codes and Their Usage

A result code is assigned after each and every contact attempt (regardless of whether contact is achieved). The following is a list of all of the result codes that will be used on the SHARE project. The list contains step-by-step instructions and examples for the interviewer.

This description refers to the Case Management system used in most SHARE countries (exceptions are Switzerland and The Netherlands who use a similar system but with a different coding scheme). The codes are divided into four major parts:

1. Interview
2. Contact failure
3. Contact
4. Non-sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>000</td>
<td><strong>Unworked address:</strong> You should make an effort to contact every housing unit as soon as the sample is released to you. Thus, the unworked result code should be the most short-lived of all. There may be occasions when your supervisor instructs you to focus your efforts on certain addresses, but generally-speaking, you should focus on unworked sample first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td><strong>Complete Interview:</strong> You have fully completed the CAPI interview with the Respondent. The drop-off may or may not be complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td><strong>Interview started:</strong> You started the interview, either the main or the CV section. It was not possible to resume the interview for some reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reason, to be entered in the call notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td><strong>Interrupted interview – Appointment made to resume</strong>: You started the main interview, which was interrupted for some reason, to be entered in the call notes. An appointment was made to resume the interview. Appointment date and time must be noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td><strong>Interrupted interview – No appointment to resume</strong>: You started the main interview, which was interrupted for some reason, to be entered in the call notes. An appointment to resume the interview was not possible at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td><strong>Answering Machine, No Message Left</strong>: You tried to call the household, but did only reach an answering machine, and did not leave a message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td><strong>Answering Machine, Message Left</strong>: You tried to call the household, but did only reach an answering machine, and did leave a message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td><strong>Phone Number wrong</strong>: You tried to call the household, but tried a non usable number. Identification of a correct phone number may be necessary depending on your country’s sampling frame.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td><strong>Respondent Not known at Address, please fill new address in notes, if known</strong>: You attempt to visit the Respondent in-person but find that the address is not correct. The residence is inhabited by residents who do not know the Respondent or appears clearly to be uninhabited. Identification of a corrected address may be necessary depending on your country’s sampling frame.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td><strong>Mail Returned, please fill forwarding address in notes, if given</strong>: A piece of mail sent either by you or by the Agency to the Respondent or Household is returned because the address provided is incorrect. The address may be for a residence where the Respondent no longer lives or it may be non-existent and the mail piece may be returned by either the Post Office or a person. The corrected address is normally provided when the mail was returned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>207</td>
<td><strong>Ring No Answer (phone)</strong>: You attempt to telephone the Respondent. The phone rings but no one answers and no answering machine or voicemail system picks up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208</td>
<td><strong>Phone Busy</strong>: You attempt to telephone the Respondent and receive a busy signal. Retrying again is necessary until declaring the address a final non contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209</td>
<td><strong>No one home</strong>: You attempt to visit the Respondent in-person but find that no one appears to be at home, and the building does not appear to be abandoned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210</td>
<td><strong>Final No Contact</strong>: You have attempted to contact the household or Respondent multiple times and none of your attempts yielded any sort of contact with anyone in the household. Your attempts to locate the household members or Respondent may have failed and you may have no accurate address or telephone number for them or you are certain that you know their contact information, yet have been unable to reach them. Further attempts are determined unlikely to yield contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211</td>
<td><strong>Locked Building / Gated Community</strong>: You are unable to obtain the interview because contact with the household is precluded by a locked building, gated community, guard or dog.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212</td>
<td><strong>Other non contact, please describe in call notes</strong>: You attempt to telephone or visit the Respondent in-person but are unsuccessful for a reason not described in any of the other codes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Contact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301</td>
<td><strong>Contact no Resistance, contact again</strong>: This code should be used when a household is contacted and you are told something like “now is not a good time” to talk and the person is not able to give more information about a better time to call back. For example, a household is contacted and a household member who is leaving to go shopping is reached and he or she says, “Just try back another time.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>302</td>
<td><strong>Contact no Resistance, Appointment Made</strong>: This code should be used when a hard appointment is set to talk with either the Respondent or someone in the household. A hard appointment is one in which you have been provided with a specific date and time at which you can reach either the Respondent or the household.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>303</td>
<td><strong>Contact Initial Refusal</strong>: This code should be used whenever contact is made with a household and the person you speak to expresses some sort of reluctance. The reluctance could be from an informant or from the identified Respondent. He or she may be reluctant to pass on any additional information, to complete the household listing or to be interviewed. This series also encompasses contact attempts during which you are hung up on or have the door shut as you speak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304</td>
<td><strong>Final Refusal: reason given: too busy, no time</strong>: This code is to be assigned when the respondent, informant or proxy has refused to participate and no further contact attempts will be made. You should obtain permission from your supervisor before assigning any codes from this series. You have attempted to contact a household or a Respondent, either in-person or via telephone and reach an informant who refuses for the interview to be conducted with the selected respondent. When known, please include the name of the informant in the call note documenting this contact. It is used only when no further conversion attempts will be made; either all conversion attempts have been unsuccessful or the reluctance was sufficiently strong that follow-up contact is prohibited or unadvisable. This code is also used when the Respondent is determined to be unable to complete his or her own interview and the identified Proxy Reporter refuses to complete the interview on the Respondent’s behalf. Note: this code may be used even if reluctance was not expressed at the last contact attempt, as long as the overall reason for which contact attempts are being stopped is due to reluctance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305</td>
<td><strong>Final Refusal: reason given: no interest, against surveys</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>306</td>
<td><strong>Final Refusal: other</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>308</td>
<td><strong>Unable to Identify Proxy (R unable to do interview by himself)</strong>: You have determined (preferably through contact with the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respondent, but sometimes only through contact with an informant) that the selected Respondent is unable to complete his/her own interview but you have been unable to identify anyone able to complete the interview on his or her behalf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td><strong>Other, please describe in call notes:</strong> You have successfully contacted the household or the Respondent, but have been unable to complete either the household listing or the interview for a reason not encompassed in the other final result codes. For example, the Respondent was selected but the informant who completed the household listing indicated that the Respondent is leaving the country for the duration of the study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 401   | **Permanent Condition, other than deceased.** The Respondent has been selected but has been determined unable to complete the interview for one of the following reasons:  
 The Respondent is cognitively impaired (and refuses to have a Proxy completed on his or her behalf)  
 The Respondent is deaf and unable to complete the interview  
 The Respondent is mute  
 The Respondent is ill and unable to complete the interview but refuses to have a Proxy Reporter do so.  
 Or, another permanent condition prevents the Respondent from participating.                                                                                     |
| 403   | **Occupants Currently Reside Elsewhere:** You attempt in-person contact with the household and find it unoccupied during the study period and your study’s sampling rules require you to code the line out non-sample.                                                                                   |
| 404   | **Bad Address / Address Non-Existent / Sample Listing Isn’t Proper (SLIP):** You attempt to visit the Respondent in-person but find that the address is not correct. The address may not exist due to a listing error, residence demolition or natural disaster or it may be a non-residence building (such as a store or an office building). Alternately, you may discover through the post office that an address does not exist. For example, you send a letter to the Respondent at his or her address. The post office returns the letter marked “address does not exist.” You should always verify that you are looking for the right address or that you had originally addressed the letter properly. Besides, this code applies if the listing is not the proper type for the study. For example, your country’s sample was selected based on a list of residential addresses. When you visit this address, you realize that it is, in fact, not a residence, but a business. This code also encompasses the following:  
 Prisons  
 Dormitories  
 Nursing Homes (unless considered eligible in your country)  
 Demolished homes  
 Non-existing addresses  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>405</td>
<td><strong>Language Barrier:</strong> You have attempted to contact the household or Respondent and have determined that either the household listing cannot be completed because all adult members of the household speak a language in which the questionnaire is not available for their country or because the selected Respondent speaks an unavailable language. Please note the language spoken in the call note documenting the contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>406</td>
<td><strong>Respondent Deceased:</strong> It is discovered that the respondent is deceased, either after the household listing has taken place or, in the case of countries whose sample frames include names, before.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION X
Drop-Off (Self-Administered) Questionnaire
Introduction

The drop-off questionnaire is a paper questionnaire that we ask respondents to complete on their own. The main purpose for having the drop-off questionnaire is to be able to ask questions that may be particularly sensitive in nature, or to expand on some critical substantive areas when this expansion could not be accommodated in the Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) application.

NOTE: As mentioned in Section IV, SHARE does NOT permit proxy for the drop-off.

Content of the Drop-Off

The content of the drop-off is as follows:

♦ **Social & Psychological Well-being** (Questions 1-11)
  o Questions about satisfaction with life in general and measures of psychological well-being
  o Perceptions of people’s expectations of responsibility and duties among family members and assessment of the quality of family relationships

♦ **Health Care** (Questions 12-29)
  o Preventive care, including vaccinations, eye examinations, and screening for cancers
  o Joint pain and pain treatment

♦ **Accommodations** (Questions 30-33)
  o Amenities such as central heating, air condition, elevator or garden. Perception of the adequacy of amenities, amount of space, and costs.
  o Transportation and shopping; neighborhood conditions
  o Household pets

♦ **Background** (Questions 34-38)
  o Religiosity
  o Political affiliation
  o Sex (gender) and age

NOTE: It is critical that all versions of the drop-off contain the mailing address and telephone number of the survey agency on the back cover. This helps the respondent locate the mailing address in case he or she misplaces the envelope that the interviewer provided, or make it possible for the respondent to ask questions about the drop-off or the mailing process.

The instruction to hand the drop-off to the respondent is provided at the end of the interview. Note that it is NOT permitted to ask an eligible person to fill out the drop-off before he or she has completed the interview! In households with more than one eligible person, the interviewer should ask the person who first completes the interview to fill out the drop-off while she interviews the second eligible person.
Drop-Off Protocol

All respondents who complete an interview must be given the self-administered paper questionnaire with an envelope at the conclusion of the interview.

If the respondent needs help completing the drop-off, the interviewer may help him or her to do so if she wishes, though we do not expect the interviewer to do this. However, we do not recommend that the interviewer do this at the end of a long interview. Also, we do not expect the interviewer to wait in the respondent’s home till she has completed the drop-off.

When the respondent has completed the paper questionnaire, the interviewer should instruct her to put it into the proper envelope and seal it, before handing it to the interviewer or before mailing it.

Collecting the Drop-Off

Depending on how the interviewer collects the completed drop-off, different envelopes must be given to the respondent:

(a) A blank envelope should be used if the respondent completes the drop-off while the interviewer is in the household; and
(b) A pre-addressed and pre-franked return envelope should be used, if the respondent needs to mail the completed drop-off to the survey agency after the interviewer has left.

The interviewer may make arrangements to collect the questionnaire at a later date, if he or she plans on being in the vicinity. If there is a firm arrangement to do this, the interviewer should leave the blank envelope with the respondent. However, if there is any reason to suspect that this arrangement will fall through, the interviewer should leave a franked envelope. It is still highly preferable for the interviewer to attempt to pick it up if the respondent is in favor of this AND the interviewer plans to come out to that vicinity again for any reason. If the situation occurs where the plan of picking it up at the respondent’s home does not work out, the interviewer and survey agency must instruct the respondent to mail it in such a way that the respondent is properly reimbursed for the cost of the stamp.

It is very important that each respondent puts his or her drop-off into a separate envelope. There are two reasons for this:

(a) To protect the confidentiality of each completed drop-off for each household member in relation to other household members; and
(b) To prevent the weight of the packet from being heavier than what is covered in stamps (affixed based on the weight of one drop-off).
Logging and Follow-up for Drop-Off

After all interviews are completed, the interviewer will be prompted to record the status of the drop-off of each eligible person in the electronic case management system (CMS) or the paper (Logging System).

Upon the prompt “What happened with the Drop-Off questionnaire which you handed to the respondent?” the interviewer will mark the appropriate choice from among the following options:

1) Filled Drop-Off handed over [by respondent to interviewer] and taken to agency
2) Drop-Off left with respondent, together with a prepaid envelope
3) Appointment made with respondent to collect filled Drop-Off. Note appointment date and time.
4) Other, please specify____________________

In addition, the date for the appropriate activity (1-4) must be noted in the CMS/Logging System.

The survey agency needs to be able to access the date, so that it can implement a follow-up protocol specified by SHARE. This protocol states that:

- If the questionnaire has not been received by the agency 10 days after the date noted in the CSM/Logging System, the agency will mail out a Thank You/Reminder card. The purpose of the card is to thank those who may have returned it already, but the Agency has not yet logged it in, or to remind those who have not yet mailed it to do so.

- 10 days later, the Agency will mail out a replacement questionnaire (being sure to use the correct version), together with a brief coverletter.
Upon receipt, the survey agency is responsible for checking if the number of items with missing or wrongly marked data are significant, and attempting to recover the data before doing data entry.

Drop-Off Instructions Overview

♦ Make sure that the interviewer writes the complete sample ID as well as the respondent's first name or initials (only), AND her own interviewer ID on the front page before giving the respondent the questionnaire.

♦ The interviewer should point to the cover of the drop-off to ensure that the respondent is aware of the agency phone number in case he or she has questions or concerns about the task after the interviewer leaves the home.

♦ The interviewer should remember to give the respondent an envelope to insert the completed paper questionnaire to protect confidentiality.

♦ If the respondent completes the drop-off and intends to hand it to the interviewer, he or she should use a blank envelope.

♦ (Optional, depending on requirements of survey agency) Hand the respondent a special pencil to use when completing the drop-off.

♦ If the respondent (a) wants to mail it back or (b) is uncertain whether he or she will put it in the mail or wait for the interviewer to pick it up, the interviewer should be sure to give him or her a pre-franked, pre-addressed envelope.
Section XI
Putting It All Together
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**Working Successfully**
The steps involved in completing the typical SHARE interview are quite simple. Figure IX-1 below depicts the basic steps that are part of all SHARE interviews. However, if the Respondent is difficult to contact, you may need to make many unsuccessful attempts before being able to obtain the household listing and conduct the interview. Each of these steps would be thoroughly documented in a call record, regardless of whether or not contact was achieved. Please note that in many countries, the follow-up on the receipt of the drop-off (DO) will be conducted centrally by the survey agency and not by the individual interviewer assigned the sample line.

In addition to the basic step depicted above, there are some general rules that all SHARE interviewers should remember in planning their work.

**Work Face-to-Face Efficiently.** Plan your face-to-face work so that you work several sample lines each time you visit a neighborhood. For example, when you have an interview scheduled in a particular area, review your sample to see if there are any other households in the vicinity that you could visit to set interview appointments. Some survey agencies will likely instruct their interviewers to share their travel plans with others so that sample lines can be transferred to further geographically consolidate sample to maximize efficiency.

**Prepare Well for Face-to-Face Visits.** Refer to the Checklist below in gathering materials for Face-to-Face visits. Each time you leave to conduct face-to-face work, prepare as though you expect to complete several interviews that day. Don’t be caught unprepared if a Respondent is willing to be interviewed on-the-spot.

**Vary The Times You Work.** Vary the time of day and the days of the week you make your contact attempts, so as to increase the likelihood that you reach Respondents with different schedules. Keeping good call records will enable SHARE researcher to analyze your contact attempts to determine the most successful calling pattern in your country and for this population. Recognize that Respondents of different ages may be at home during very different times of the day and during very different days of the week.

**Transmit Regularly!** Transmit your data frequently, as specified by your survey agency. In many cases, your transmissions will submit your data to the agency. Your frequent transmissions of data will enable SHARE project staff to closely monitor individual, national and study-wide progress.
Mail Advance Letter
Mail letter to arrive no more than 2 weeks before your first planned contact attempt.

Telephone Contact (if applicable)
If HH is eligible, schedule an appointment.

Enter Call Record for your contact call, regardless of its outcome.

Interview the HH
- Complete the HH listing
- Interview the selected R(s)
- Provide the R(s) with the DOs and either retrieve or provide return envelopes.

Enter Call Record for the visit during which the interview was conducted.

Send Thank You/Reminder to R(s) if DO not received 10 days later.

Send Replacement Questionnaire to R(s) if DO not received 10 days later.

When received, log DO and check for missing data.

Code line out Ineligible.

Enter Call Record for your contact call, regardless of its outcome.
Materials to Bring on Face-to-Face Attempts

Checklist

- Laptop
- Laptop Power Cord
- Extra Copy of the Advance Letter
- SHARE Brochures
- Showcard Booklet
- Q by Q Booklet
- Dynamometer
- Tape measure
- Tape (masking or surgical) or cardboard strip to mark walking course
- Stopwatch
- Calendar (for recording appointments)
- Letter to the Authorities (if applicable)
- Interviewer Identification Card (if applicable)

**Plan Enough Supplies for At Least 2 Respondents per Household**

- ✔️ 2 or more copies of the Interviewer Recording Booklet
- ✔️ 2 or more copies of the Drop-Off (DO)
- ✔️ 2 or more blank envelopes (for Respondents to submit their DOs during visit)
- ✔️ 2 or more pre-addressed, franked envelopes (for Respondents to send in their DOs)
- ✔️ 2 Tokens of Appreciation/Receipts, if applicable
- ✔️ 2 Pens or Pencils

GOOD LUCK!