

Clarifications Tender SHARE Wave 11



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How we age in Europe.

SHARE
SURVEY OF HEALTH, AGEING
AND RETIREMENT IN EUROPE

SHARE PROVIDES MICRO DATA ON HEALTH, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND SOCIAL & FAMILY NETWORKS.

**Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe -
European Research Infrastructure Consortium
(SHARE-ERIC)**

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1 CLARIFICATIONS FOR PROCUREMENT GROUP I

COUNTRIES: GERMANY, CROATIA, HUNGARY, ITALY, LITHUANIA, LATVIA, SLOVENIA

- **Regarding FiRe in Italy**

- **Can you please inform about the size of the preload?**

Estimated number of eligibles in FiRe panel sample: 185

Due to this high number of FiRe panel cases, we would suggest draw about 50 additional refreshment households to realize roughly 70 panel and 30 refreshment interviews.

- **How many cases of refresher must be included in the net sample of the preload?**

We assumed a proportion of 70 (panel)-30 (refresher)%. Could you confirm that?

The database management team is currently working on the preload to derive the number of panel cases. The number of refreshment cases is linked to that number. However, a proportion of 30% refreshment cases seems to be a realistic assumption.

- **Is the Drop off questionnaire included in the FiRe?**

Yes, the drop-off must be included in the field rehearsal.

According to 7.1 of the Task Order for Drop-off, SURVEY AGENCY shall test the drop-off during the field rehearsal. A drop-off will only be approved for the main data collection, if it has been tested. In case SURVEY AGENCY cannot comply with this requirement, SHARE-Coordination may allow deviating proceedings after individual assessment together with CTL and SURVEY AGENCY.

- **Is the linkage module included in the FiRe?**

Yes, the linkage module is included in the FiRe for preloaded countries. For IT, it will be included.

- **The TTT for IT personnel is to be considered in presence or not?**

It will be remote both for FiRe and Main.

- **Drop-off and Linkage module should be submitted to the Refresher sample as well?**

Linkage will be administered to the refreshment sample as well. Drop-off will only be conducted for the panel sample.

- **Regarding Main Data Collection in Italy**

- **Can you please inform about the size of the preload? According to the requested Net sample and the target of RR we assumed that:**

- **The total gross sample will be composed by 5006 eligible individuals of which:**

- 1182 coming from W10 refreshment
- 3824 coming from W10 panel sample (excluding exit interviews and code 217)

- **According to these figures, we would conduct:**

- 3516 panel interviews with people participating in W10
- 218 panel interviews with people NOT participating in W10

Yes, your numbers are pretty much in line with what we assume. However, the data is still being processed, and the final numbers will slightly deviate from the mentioned numbers.

- **The TTT for IT personnel is to be considered in presence or not?**

It will be remote both for FiRe and Main.

- **Drop-off and Linkage module should be submitted to the Refresher sample as well?**

In case a refreshment sample will be issued (which is dependent on the relevant funding being available), linkage will be administered to the refreshment sample as well. Drop-off will only be conducted for the panel sample.

- **How long is the duration of the NTS?**

The NTS should be conducted strictly following the instructions from the TTT in terms of content, length and mode, which according to the Model Contract (section 20) is two full days.

- **How many pages are planned for: recording booklets and for the showcards?**

Recording booklets: 7 pages

Set of showcards: 48-55 pages

Both are to be printed on A4 format and one-sided only.

- **Regarding Drop-Off in Italy**

- **Can you confirm the drop-off questionnaire must be programmed by the agency?**

Yes, SURVEY AGENCY will be responsible for programming the interview software for the drop-off questionnaire, testing it out and providing their interviewers with necessary instructions how to use it during fieldwork in coordination with the CT. SURVEY AGENCY needs to make sure that the programmed software fits the format requirements, defined matching variables are included and the data exports are in SHARE standard to be further processed.

- **The drop-off questionnaire must be submitted to all individuals or one per HH?**

If a drop-off is conducted, all interview eligible SHARE respondents are also eligible to complete a drop-off if they participate in a regular CAPI interview. Thus, the standard is that the drop-off should be handed out to every SHARE respondent.

- **Could you inform about the length of the drop-off questionnaire?**

The standard length for drop-off is a maximum of 6–7 pages and not more than 10 minutes administration time.

- **The requested number of drop-off questionnaires (3361) include the FiRe cases?**

No, the requested number of drop-offs is taking into account only the target net sample size of panel and refreshment cases.

- **In SHARE W11 we intend to work with a contractor for setting up and hosting the SHARE survey tool. Please let us know if this has an impact on which parts of the document „Checklist: "Technical and organisational measures" we should fill in or how to refer to the contractor/if we should obtain all the info from them? In the TOMs review for W10 e.g. a large part of the questionnaire was considered superfluous after the switch to this contractor. (The reason we are asking this now is because in W10 we**

switched to our contractor after the completion of FiRe, so last time we did not have the contractor in our bid and therefore we are unsure how to proceed). The contractor we intend to work with is an independent non-profit research institute involved in several large-scale multinational research projects (including SHARE) who also offer hosting services to national agencies in these projects.

For SHARE Wave 11, the installation and configuration of the necessary software on the server side is carried out centrally by Centerdata on a dedicated host for SHARE. For this reason, SHARE-ERIC has commissioned Centerdata to set up a central SHARE environment (SbyC). Therefore, there is no need that for the Survey Agency to commission a contractor for this purpose.

Within its sphere of responsibility, the Survey Agency is obliged to take technical and organisational measures for the adequate protection of the processed personal data that must meet the requirements of the GDPR (Article 32). These measures must be documented in Appendix 1 of the "Data Processing Agreement" (DPA). The document "Checklist: 'Technical and Organisational Measures'" provides guidance on documenting the measures that are in place to guarantee the security of data processing. Only if data processing clearly falls within the sphere of responsibility of SHARE-ERIC or Centerdata (e.g., in the case of the SbyC), a reference to this in the Survey Agency's documentation is sufficient and the documentation of the respective measures is carried out by SHARE-ERIC or Centerdata.

- **We would like to use laptops or mixed devices – I can see in the Model contract that „Laptops (with Windows operating system) may only be used for the data collection in justified exceptional cases and with prior written approval from SHARE-ERIC.” – please let us know when this can be justified in your view and what extra information we should include in our bid to support our request.**

There is a plan to use tablets for wave 11. However, if we still have functioning laptops from wave 10, could we continue to use them, or will tablets be mandatory in all cases for wave 11?

Indeed, the standard for Wave 11 will be tablets, however if tablets would have to be purchased while functioning laptops are available, this would be a justification for the use of laptops – provided they are meeting the necessary technical requirements. Kindly indicate in your offer which client devices you plan on using.

- **As the last procurement took place 4 years ago, we would like to increase the size of incentives for respondents. I would like to confirm whether we can increase the incentives at our own discretion, and you will review their appropriateness only after the procurement documents have been submitted, or if we need to agree on this in advance?**

As the Model Contract does not stipulate a fixed amount for incentives, kindly include an amount at your discretion in your offer. SHARE-ERIC will not enter bilateral discussions with any tenderer before offers are submitted.

Important: Please provide reasoning for your suggestion in your tender, explaining how you intend to set up incentives for Wave 11.

- **According to the documents, the main fieldwork should start in spring 2027. Are there at least approximate dates for the FiRe as well?**

The TTT for Field Rehearsal is planned to take place end of September 2026. We expect fieldwork to take place October – November.

2 CLARIFICATIONS FOR PROCUREMENT GROUP II

COUNTRIES: BULGARIA, FINLAND, GREECE, MALTA, THE NETHERLANDS, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA

- **Could you please confirm whether interviews can be conducted offline in CaseCTRL and synchronized afterwards?**

Yes, this will work.

- **To be sure: the NTS takes as long as the TTT, so two full days? (“The NTS should be conducted strictly following the instructions from the TTT in terms of content, length and mode.”).**

Yes, the NTS should be conducted in the same mode and length and with the same content as the TTT.

- **Regarding Refreshment Sample in The Netherlands:**

Could you please clarify the practical and financial arrangements for obtaining the refreshment sample? The sample is probably obtained from CBS. Who will be responsible for placing the order, and who will bear the associated costs?

The refreshment sample will be provided, and the associated costs will be covered by the Country Team.

- **To be sure: Could you please confirm whether the absence of a separate unit price for end-of-Life Interviews means that the Survey Agency is to conduct these interviews without additional compensation? “End of Life Interview (XT Module) The end-of-life interview is a special form of proxy interview (see (18)). In case an age-eligible panel respondent deceased, a proxy will be asked to complete a short, separate interview. An end-of-life interview focuses on events that occurred between the respondent’s last interview and the time of his/her death. The end-of-life interview can be done face to face or by phone. It can be started via the Case CTRL and be done immediately after the coverscreen, after the - 13 - interview or postponed to a later appointment. There is no separate unit price for end-of-life interviews.”**

Complete and valid end of live interviews will be counted as complete and valid interviews and compensated with the unit price for panel sample interviews.

- **Question: the 61%/30% mentioned in 13.4 of the Framework contract is after refusal conversion?**

These percentages refer to the final achieved retention/ response rates after fieldwork has ended. The purpose of this section is to ensure that public funding is not being spent on data without scientific use because of improper performance of a contractor. If all agreed upon measures to increase retention have been taken and the final result still falls short despite proper performance, this section will not apply, and the sample will be paid as defined in the task orders.

- **In the Netherlands, all tenderers are expected to offer for both panel and refreshment sample. Everything in the model contract is to be considered a description of the tasks to be performed by the selected Survey Agency, including section 6.2 of the main task order (given the relevant funding will be available). Price specification forms for both panel and refreshment sample contain fixed costs. However, some fixed costs only need to be made once (or can be priced more efficient) if the Survey Agency executes both panel and refreshment (for example, we only need to train interviewers once). How does this work in specifying costs, if fielding a refreshment sample is not a certainty yet?**

Indeed, pricing can be optimised if full information of the available funding is available. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, which is why, as a standardised procedure, SHARE-ERIC always procures under the caveat that relevant funding will be available. In case of The Netherlands however, we can let you know that funding to conduct a refreshment sample has been secured.

- **As of Wave 11, the SHARE survey will be administered on tablets rather than laptops. Are there any other IT-related changes compared to Wave 10? If so, can you specify them?**

- SampleCTRL is now connected to a new tool called PreloadCTRL, which is why SbyC hosting is required in wave 11. But as you already used SbyC this wouldn't make a difference for the setup in NL. Administration of PreloadCTRL is fully on the SHARE Central team.
- Via PreloadCTRL SHARE Central can now directly push delete requests to SampleCTRL which should reduce communication necessary.
- Survey agency will be enabled to enter delete requests directly via the SampleCTRL systems, so CaseCTRL only has to be synced.

- **Are there any changes regarding the installation and functioning of CaseCTRL and SampleCTRL compared to Wave 10 that Survey Agency should take into account? If so, can you specify them?**

- CaseCTRL is now designed to be used on tablets.
- CaseCTRL is set up to work both in online and offline mode.
- As in Wave 10, the system syncs when logging into CaseCTRL. In addition, it now automatically syncs after every action that modifies data. Manual syncs are still possible.
- The questionnaire software that is used for the Main interview is now programmed in quest, which is the same as End-of-life interview in wave 10. We will adapt the training accordingly. Still, we tried to keep it as similar to wave 10 as possible.
- The overall usability of the CaseCTRL has been improved.

- **What is the prescribed or desired financial value per respondent for the incentive, and do you expect this to be in the form of cash or gift vouchers? Or is this at the discretion of Survey Agency?**

The type and the value of incentives should be discussed and agreed on with the Country Team.

- **Would SHARE-ERIC be willing to make a current ISO 27001 or NEN 7510 certification mandatory, in order to guarantee a consistently high level of information security for all providers?**

There are currently no plans to introduce mandatory certification; however, it is necessary to implement technical and organisational measures for adequate protection of personal data in order to ensure a level of security appropriate to the risk for the rights and freedoms of the

data subjects. These must be documented in Appendix 1 to the Data Processing Agreement. If relevant certifications are held, these may also be included there.

- **Which objective benchmark or standard does SHARE-ERIC use to assess 'fair compensation' for awarding the 16% score?**

In order to be awarded the full score, a detailed description of interviewer compensation is expected, demonstrating that interviewers are being compensated in such a manner that ensures high motivation, and incentives to reach the highest possible retention rate. This includes e.g. appropriate salaries and compensation for expenses as well as incentives for good performance.

- **Checklist: Does SHARE-ERIC apply a minimum cryptographic norm or standard (such as TLS 1.2+ for transport and AES-256 for storage) that the infrastructure and data transfers are required to meet?**

While the specific technical scope of this question would benefit from further definition, we can confirm that SHARE-ERIC mandates that all cryptographic protocols for infrastructure, data storage, and transfer strictly adhere to the current state of the art and established industry best practices.

- **Is SHARE-ERIC willing to apply an equal (to 'Main Data Collection') advance payment scheme for the 'Field Rehearsal' (for example, 40% at the start) to cover the initial investments in startup and hardware?**

The payment modalities as laid out in the task orders are harmonised across all SHARE countries and therefore not subject to individual adjustments.

- **How long does the specific IT staff training last (in hours or days), and is it conducted digitally or on-site?**

The IT training will be remote and last 1-2 hours.

- **Is an interview considered incomplete (and therefore unpaid) if the respondent refuses to complete a specific module halfway through the interview for personal reasons?**

No. Item-nonresponse does not make an interview incomplete. An interview is considered incomplete if entire modules are missing; i.e. the interview has not fully been conducted with the respondent and thus cannot be used for the released dataset.

- **Would you be willing to increase or lift the fixed limit of a maximum of 50 interviews per interviewer, provided we can demonstrate that data quality is strictly ensured through additional checks?**

If it can be convincingly demonstrated that data quality is ensured or there are very specific and well laid out reasons for assigning more interviews to certain interviewers, we are open to considering these options on a bilateral basis during fieldwork. However, the tenderer shall demonstrate that the interviewer pool is large enough to handle the project, irrespective of how experienced the interviewers might be.

- **If prepaid incentives are sent to the gross sample, should these costs be quoted as fixed costs (FC) or as variable costs (VC)?**

As laid out in the price file, respondent incentives will be attributed to variable costs.

- **Could you specify the exact requirements or certifications a tablet must meet to be considered "professional"?**

All client devices used for SHARE Wave11 must comply with the technical requirements as laid out in section 20.1 of the Framework Contract. "Professional" refers to client devices

provided by the tenderer for the explicit purpose of carrying out the interviewer work. No private client devices must be used.

- **Is SHARE-ERIC willing to move the submission deadline of the 'FiRe_AdvanceLetter' and 'FiRe_DPS' to the period after the completion of the TTT, so that tactical insights can still be incorporated into the letters?**

No. Both the Advance Letter and the DPS must be submitted before the FiRe TTT, exactly as specified in the task order. The purpose of the Field Rehearsal is to conduct a test run. "Tactical insights" from the FiRe may still be incorporated in the Advance Letter for the main data collection, provided that it is resubmitted and approved. The DPS is standardised across all SHARE countries and shall only be translated but not be modified.

- **Can you indicate whether the costs for returning the borrowed equipment will be borne by the contractor or by the contracting authority?**

The shipment costs will be borne by SHARE ERIC.

- **What is the methodological or budgetary reason for the significant difference (between Panel and Refreshment) in the maximum allowed fixed costs (25% versus 33%)?**

A higher share of fixed costs is expected in the setup of conducting a refreshment sample and reaching the target response rate, compared to the well-established panel.

- **In what way can the implementing agency concretely demonstrate that it has taken 'all reasonable measures' in the event of a response below 30%, and does this evidence then guarantee full payment for work performed?**

Survey Agency is expected to demonstrate compliance with all contractual obligations (e.g. proof of requested number of contact attempts). In addition, Survey Agency is expected to consult with SHARE Coordination about measures to improve retention during fieldwork if it becomes apparent that these rates may turn out lower than expected. Communication and cooperation with SHARE Central and the SHARE Country Team will be considered. In such case, yes, survey agency will be paid for the work performed. The purpose of this section is merely safeguarding public funds in case of improper performance or noncompliance attributable to a contractor.

- **I understand that responses regarding the technical and organizational measures should be completed in the file <2_Appendix1>. I also noticed that the PDF document covers largely the same topics and questions. Could you please clarify the intended purpose of the <2a_Checklist> file and whether any additional action is required on our side regarding this document?**

The Checklist is simply meant as a supporting document for your convenience to fill out Appendix1. No need to adjust or submit this file.

- **I understand from the pricing request included in the tender package that a quotation for a refreshment sample is required, as was the case in the W10 tender. Apart from the target sample size, I could not identify any methodological specifications regarding the refreshment sample. Therefore, at this stage, the only feasible assumption for budgeting purposes is a nationally representative refreshment sample. This may result in relatively high fieldwork costs, as these are directly influenced by the distribution of interviews across locality-size strata (with approximately 70% in rural areas and small towns). We would therefore appreciate confirmation that a nationally**

representative refreshment sample (population aged +50) should be assumed for the purpose of this tender.

Yes; the general specification is laid down in Section 6.2 of the task order for main data collection (esp. that a "probability refreshment sample will be conducted with selected sample units"). However, the concrete sampling frame and design will be developed together via the completed sampling design form (SDF). In this respect, please see the Sampling Guide, which contains all relevant information on drawing a refreshment sample: https://share-eric.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/SHARE_Working_Paper/SHARE_WP_87-2023.pdf

- **When should the data collection (fieldwork period) be carried out?**

FiRe: Oct-Nov 2026

Main: March-August 2027

- **Regarding Sampling in Finland:**

The call for tender specifies the target number of interviews for the different components (panel sample and refreshment sample). What are the gross sample sizes for these components?

The net expected number of interviews refers to gross sample sizes according to the following specifications:

- 85% retention rate in the panel sample
- 40% response rate, 1.5 eligibles per household, and ~5% buffer for invalid addresses in the refreshment sample; further, we stipulate random reserve batches in case fieldwork performance is worse than expected.

- **Regarding Refreshment Sample in Finland:**

What are the requirements regarding the regional coverage of the refreshment sample? Should all sampled units be contacted in accordance with the minimum contact attempt requirements and with geographically balanced coverage, or is it acceptable to exclude some cases (e.g. due to long travel distances) and instead achieve the target number of completed interviews by drawing additional sample units?

In principle, all sampled units need to be contacted in accordance with the minimum contact attempt requirements and with geographically balanced coverage according to the sampling design form we agree on. However, in Finland, we made an exception for Åland islands in the past due to long travel distances.

- **Should the drop-off questionnaire be completed only by those respondents who participated in the interview?**

Yes, SHARE-ERIC will only approve drop-off data that can be matched to a complete main interview.

- **Is the drop-off questionnaire handed to respondents at the end of the face-to-face interview, or are they also sent by post to respondents?**

The drop-off questionnaire is a separate paper and pencil questionnaire for self-completion to be handed out to the respondent by the interviewer after the regular CAPI interview. Sending out drop-offs per post of drop-off is not intended. The drop-off is left with the respondent to be *sent back* via postal service to the Survey agency.

- **How many postal mailings per sampled unit are included in total (i.e., all letters and materials combined)?**

- Respondents chosen in the sample are mailed a cover letter
- Interviewed respondents are mailed a gift voucher
- Reminders are sent electronically (in this case no mailed letters are needed)

- Interviewer or interviewee mails Finnish country team consents forms for register-linkages and drop off questionnaires (if in paper). There can be several schedules in one return envelope if the interviewer mails them. Return envelopes have been paid by the Finnish country team in earlier waves.

- **In which languages will the survey be conducted in Finland? Who is responsible for translating the questionnaire?**

In Finland the questionnaire is administered in Finnish and Swedish. The translations for the questionnaires (both in Finnish and Swedish) are provided by the Finnish country team

- **Is the use of the centrally provided questionnaire and systems (SampleCTRL, CaseCTRL) mandatory? In which languages are these available?**

Finnish and Swedish are provided in Finland.

- **Is the validation (back-checking) conducted by telephone and by the data collection organisation? What is the typical duration of the validation interview?**

See 12.2 of main task order: Verification involves calling the selected respondents by telephone or visiting them face-to-face if telephone contacts are unsuccessful and re-asking factual questions from various parts of the interview according to SHARE deliverable Main_BackCheck. Back-checks should be short: about 10 questions.

- **Is it possible to omit some questions in the questionnaire and instead use corresponding information from national register data?**

No, that is not an option.

- **What are the “tests” following the interview questions in practice? How many are there, and do they require any special expertise from the interviewers?**

1. Cognitive tests

The SHARE cognitive module assesses several domains of cognitive functioning that are relevant for studying cognitive ageing, cognitive decline, and dementia. It includes the following tests:

Cognitive Domain	Test	Purpose
Orientation	Giving the Date	Assesses orientation in time.
Episodic Memory	Immediate and Delayed Word Recall	Measures the ability to learn and remember information over a short period.
Verbal Fluency / Executive Function	Animal Naming Task	Assesses word retrieval, verbal fluency, and executive functioning by asking respondents to name as many animals as possible within one minute.
Attention & Processing Speed	Serial 7 Subtraction	Measures concentration, attention, and mental processing speed through repeated subtraction of seven from 100.
Attention & Processing Speed	Counting Backwards from 20	Assesses attention and processing speed using a timed backward counting task.
Semantic Memory	Word Knowledge Test (65+)	Measures semantic memory and retrieval of common words and concepts.
Visuospatial Abilities	Drawing Tasks (Infinity Loop, 3D Cube, Clock Drawing)	Assesses visuospatial skills, constructional abilities, and aspects of executive functioning.

2. Grip strength measurements using dynamometers (equipment).

None of the cognitive tests require interviewers to have specialist clinical knowledge or prior expertise in cognitive assessment. Regularly trained interviewers with experience in standardized survey interviewing are fully capable of administering the tests. The SHARE survey software and interviewer materials guide interviewers step-by-step through each test, including the administration procedures and scoring rules. SHARE Central provides comprehensive training materials and detailed instructions to the Survey Agencies, which subsequently train interviewers on the administration and scoring of all cognitive tests. This standardized approach ensures consistent implementation and high data quality across countries.

- **What equipment is required for the “tests”, and is the data collection organisation responsible for procuring these?**

Dynamometers will be provided by SHARE-ERIC.

- **Our interviewers currently use laptops. Are tablets required for conducting the interviews? If so, is the procurement of these devices the responsibility of the data collection organisation?**

The standard for Wave 11 will be tablets, however if tablets would have to be purchased while functioning laptops are available, this would be a justification for the use of laptops – provided they are meeting the necessary technical requirements. Kindly indicate in your offer which client devices you plan on using.

- **Does the interviewer complete the questionnaire during the interview, or is the device handed over to the respondent to fill in themselves?**

The interviewer will type the answers into the client device.

- **Could you kindly clarify what is meant by the selection criterion: Number of requested changes to harmonised model contract**

The tender will be awarded the full score if acceptance of the harmonised model contract is explicitly confirmed. If deviations to some of the procedures and/ or requirements are suggested or part of the submitted offer, this score will consequently be reduced.