

for their administrative support throughout various phases of the project. Martina Brandt, and Frederic Malter provided as assistant coordinators the backbone work in coordinating, developing, and organizing wave four of SHARE. Preparing the data files for the fieldwork, monitoring the survey agencies, testing the data for errors and consistency are all tasks which are essential to this project. The authors and editors are grateful to Annelies Blom, Johanna Bristle, Christine Czaplicki, Christian Hunkler, Markus Kotte, Thorsten Kneip, Julie Korbmacher, Gregor Sand, Barbara Schaan, Morten Schuth, Stephanie Stuck, and Sabrina Zuber for data cleaning and monitoring services at MEA in Mannheim and Munich. We owe thanks to Guiseppe de Luca and Claudio Rosetti for weight calculations and imputations in Palermo and Rome. Markus Berger and Lisa Schug were responsible for the design work around the book and we greatly appreciate their work.

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## 2 Becoming a New SHARE Country

This chapter reflects the experience of four countries which entered SHARE as new countries in wave four. We asked the authors to give an account of what motivated them to become part of SHARE, what obstacles and challenges they encountered, how these were overcome and to give a brief outlook of future directions. Countries appear in alphabetical order.

### 2.1 Estonia

*Luule Sakkeus, Liili Abuladze, Estonian Institute for Population Studies, Tallinn University*

#### 2.1.1 Introduction

As is true for all European countries, population ageing affects Estonia as well. However, Estonia experienced a slower change in age distribution than is typical for the ageing process in the other European countries. Three main determinants of population ageing withheld the rapid increase of population ageing during the second half of the 20th century in Estonia compared to Western and Northern Europe: a) post-war fertility trend in Estonia lacked the baby-boom effect, b) intensive immigration of younger cohorts into Estonia during five post-war decades and c) the same post-war period was characterised by mortality stagnation. Combined, these three determinants withheld the ageing process (Katus et al. 2003). However, immigrant populations that previously slowed down population ageing due to their younger age structure became one of the main determinants of rapid ageing starting in the 1990s, when the numerous inflows of immigrants from countries of former Soviet Union stopped. Thus, Estonia, together with Slovenia, has been among the European countries with the biggest annual average growth of the elderly during the last two decades, which amounts to around 4-5 percentage points per year. Adding sharp fertility declines due to postponement of childbirths into later ages since the early 1990s, the demographic trends present new challenges for the future. Additionally, long-term accumulation of bad health conditions during the period of mortality stagnation pose extra challenges for Estonia, in particular achieving the targets set in Europe 2020.

#### 2.1.2 Funding and assembling a national working group

The Social Agenda of the EU and the Open Method of Coordination programme of the PROGRESS call in 2009 came very timely. The negotiations between the Estonian Institute for Population Studies, Tallinn University (EDI) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (SOM) resulted in the decision of the ministry to give the mandate for implementing SHARE in Estonia to Statistics Estonia (SE), which applied for V2009/009 funds together with EDI, the Institute of International and Social Research (IASI) and the Institute for Social Work (STI), Tallinn University and the National Institute of Public Health (TAI). SHARE Estonia was funded by EC grant (VS/2009/0561), a grant from SOM, grants from Ministry of Education and Research

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A SHARE Estonia Working Group was formed with these institutes (SE, EDI, RASI, STI and TAI). This consortium monitored the translation of the generic SHARE questionnaire into Estonian and Russian, prepared the manuals for the interviewers and together with SE carried out the training sessions. The consortium also succeeded to respond to the call of the SHARE Management Board to enlarge the sample size to about 6000 respondents with extra funding from SOM. In 2011 under the lead of Tallinn University, the SHARE Estonia Steering Committee was constituted which comprises of representatives of four ministries - aside SOM also the Ministry of Education and Research (HTM), the Ministry of Economics and Communication (MKM) and the Ministry of Finance (RM)) and research institutes from Tallinn University (EDI, RASI, STI) and Tartu University (Institute for Health Care (TI), the Department of Economics (MTK), the Institute of Psychology (PI), the Institute of Internal Medicine (SK) and the Estonian Genome Center (GV). The Steering Committee was responsible for helping to find resources to maintain SHARE in the long run and make the most important decisions related to survey management and implementation. The representatives of the scientific institutions of the SHARE Estonia Steering Committee formed the core of the Scientific Board which decided on methodological questions of the survey. The country team leader and scientific coordinator of SHARE Estonia were located at EDI. SOM was the representative of Estonia in negotiations with the SHARE-ERIC.

### 2.1.3 Survey implementation

Estonia implemented SHARE wave four as its first round, using only the baseline version of the questionnaire. The sample frame of SHARE was based on a population register which allowed drawing age-eligible target individuals from each household. The data of the population register also helped to review the household composition. Our main challenges in implementing SHARE were mostly related to a shortage of information of the scale, organisation and management of the survey before submitting our grant applications. That put us into a very tight economic situation. Another challenge for newcomers like Estonia was the translation of the generic CAPI questionnaire. In Estonia, we needed double efforts as the questionnaire was implemented in two languages – Estonian and Russian - to accommodate the 30 percent of foreign-born target persons.

Another challenge was the late decision to increase the sample size up to 6000 respondents. There was, however, common understanding among members of the SHARE Estonia Working Group that this large increase was the only suitable way to obtain data that would allow any meaningful country-specific results over time.

### 2.1.4 Summary

The main challenge for SHARE Estonia appears to be securing sustainable funding for future longitudinal waves. Despite SHARE being on ESFRI and now (Sept. 2012) being the first ERIC, SHARE is quite costly from the social sciences perspective. The national funders, especially in new countries, where no country-specific results from SHARE are yet available, might be hesitant to include SHARE on national ESFRI

roadmap or commit themselves to ERIC. In our opinion, SHARE would benefit substantially from centralised funding for national data collection to be sustainable in the long run.

## 2.2 Hungary

*Gábor Kézdi, Central European University*

*Róbert Gál, TARKI*

### 2.2.1 Introduction

Many factors motivated Hungary's joining the SHARE project. Challenges arising from population ageing in the areas of health, employment and retirement are as important in Hungary as in other European countries. Yet, appropriate data were scarce in Hungary. One important advantage of SHARE is the possibility to analyse cross-country variation in institutions and policies of the welfare state using highly comparable data. We were convinced that joining SHARE would be beneficial from both perspectives: on the one hand, Hungary would add especially useful variation to SHARE by being a new Member State of the European Union where welfare regimes have undergone a very different trajectory than in the 15 older Member States. On the other hand, providing country-specific findings framed in a pan-European context would give Hungarian policy makers a better foundation for evidenced-based decision making around challenges of population ageing.

### 2.2.2 Funding and assembling a national working group

As other new countries in wave four, Hungary was funded by DG Employment, under grant VS/2009/0560. The grant was supplemented by contributions from the TARKI Foundation. No other funding was obtained for wave four. Putting together a research team for Hungary was accomplished without major problems. The two country team leaders, Róbert Gál (TARKI) and Gábor Kézdi (Central European University, CEU) have been long-time research collaborators in economic demography. We have been thinking of getting Hungary into SHARE for quite some time. Anikó Biró, an operative staff in the Hungarian country team, was a doctoral student at Central European University during wave four. Lili Vargha, another key operative person in SHARE Hungary, was already affiliated with TARKI. The fact that the survey agency TARKI was a research institute at once, hosting half of the research team, proved to be very helpful as well.

### 2.2.3 Survey implementation

Translating the generic questionnaire to Hungarian went relatively smoothly. The most important challenges in the translation process were fitting the Hungarian health and retirement institutions into the structure and response options of the generic questionnaire. The Hungarian pension system went through fundamental changes extremely quickly right before the fieldwork began, causing some extra difficulties. These challenges were overcome by the dedicated, hard-working members of the team and the fact that one member had been an expert in pension systems. A novelty of SHARE, compared to other survey operations, was that the CAPI questionnaire and the

electronic contact protocol allowed for real-time, very quick feedback on some aspects of fieldwork quality. All members of CEU and TARKI gave feedback to the interviewers and used indicators generated by the electronic survey infrastructure to check on their performance with respect to an incentive scheme. For example, the quality of interviewers' performance was checked through keystroke data right after interviews were completed, and outlier cases were double-checked with the interviewers. This was one of the many instances where having half of our team work at TARKI proved to be very helpful.

#### 2.2.4 Summary

The most important lessons from wave four include the importance of having an excellent team. The need to design more detailed incentives for interviewers that include feedback on data quality is another important lesson. We believe that our experience will help further improve the quality of the SHARE data not only in Hungary but in other countries, too. While internal funding for SHARE is still not secure in Hungary, we believe that an appropriate solution will be found so that the exceptionally rich SHARE data can help policy analysis in Hungary and appropriate data from Hungary can add to the scientific value of SHARE.

### 2.3 Portugal

*Pedro Pita Barros, Universidade Nova de Lisboa*

*Alice Delerue Matos, Universidade do Minho*

#### 2.3.1 Introduction

Like most other European countries, Portugal is undergoing rapid population ageing. Not only has longevity of the population increased, fertility rates have declined sharply. This implies a fast increasing ratio of the elderly population to the young and to the working-age population. Society and public policies at all levels – from central to local – will have to prepare and adjust for a different age structure of the population. SHARE fills a gap in scientific knowledge by providing a multidisciplinary and longitudinal approach of the ageing process in Portugal and a comparative analysis at the European level.

#### 2.3.2 Funding and assembling a national working group

Funding for wave four was provided by a DG Employment grant and by national funding from Alto Comissariado da Saúde (High Commissioner for Health). The national funding partner was very enthusiastic about the project from the start. After grants were approved, the main issue has been the rules applying to the use of funds, which had to follow the stricter rules of civil service in Portugal. The team was formed with an economist and a sociologist, which allowed for a suitable division of work. Several junior research assistants were also hired to participate in the project. The main lesson to take is that managing SHARE at the country level is a full time occupation.

#### 2.3.3 Survey implementation

The translation process posed no particular problems, but was quite time consuming. It required expertise and knowledge of the technical terminology used in some items. A translator's work was reviewed, especially for translation of terms that are usual among experts but not commonly used outside a certain context. More problematic was to adapt concepts that are adjusted for one set of countries but do not correspond to a general situation in another country. One example of this were the questions regarding asset holdings and investments, which in Portugal are not widespread (due to general poverty of the old age population, a public pension system and lack of widespread knowledge on how to buy and sell financial assets, either through banks' funds or directly at the stock exchange).

There were two main challenges worth mentioning. The first challenge was the definition of the sample. The source of information ended up being the national registry of National Health Service's beneficiaries. The National Health Service covers the total population that resides in Portugal. The registry had, however, inaccuracies. These necessitated two different types of procedures. First, before selection of the sample, addresses without zip codes were dropped (about 6 percent of the total sample). Checks on representativeness yielded no statistically significant differences in the age and sex distributions of the units included and excluded from the sampling frame. Second, after sample selection took place, a time-consuming check of each incomplete address had to be performed (by telephone). The second main challenge was to have the survey agency comply with all quality requirements, and permanent communication was required.

#### 2.3.4 Summary

The main lessons learned were the importance of securing sufficient funding, and setting up a very clear contract with the survey agency. We have high hopes of the possibility of using ERIC to facilitate the availability of national funds. The expected gain will not only be financial but also add flexibility. For example, to achieve a long-term goal of 6,000 interviews, the expected costs would force us to launch an international tender procedure, which according to current Portuguese rules can take six months or more. A full-time executive manager would improve the management of the SHARE process considerably.

### 2.4. Slovenia

*Boris Majcen, Vladimir Lavrač, Saša Mašič, Institute for Economic Research, Ljubljana*

#### 2.4.1 Introduction

Slovenia is among those EU countries where the process of population ageing is most pronounced. Projected trends of demographic change present big challenges: population ageing burdens public finance, health and pension system and affects the labour market negatively if no corrective action is taken. These demographic trends are taking place in the context of preparations for serious structural reforms (welfare state, labour market, pension, health, long-term care reforms) and severe austerity measures, adopted recently (as of July. 2012).

Research on public policies and consequences of population ageing at the Institute for Economic Research (IER), Ljubljana has shown a severe lack of consistent and reliable data, which would enable researchers to assess the overall situation of this segment of the population, carry out scientific analysis and suggest measures and reforms to the policy makers in relevant areas. Joining SHARE with its multidisciplinary, internationally comparable and longitudinal dimension based on an ex-ante harmonised questionnaire was therefore most welcome. This was finally also recognised by all five relevant ministries (labour, health, science, finance, development) in Slovenia, which crucially contributed to securing funding for the inclusion of Slovenia in SHARE by signing letters of support.

#### 2.4.2 Funding and assembling a national working group

Securing long-term funding of SHARE was a complicated and demanding process which took us 3 years and finally resulted in the inclusion of SHARE among SISFRI projects (Slovenian version of ESFRI road map), which in principle should be financed until 2020. Unfortunately, the ability to finance each consecutive wave of SHARE still depends on each year's available budget. As a consequence, it was uncertain until the end whether funding for SHARE wave four would be available or not. As all the activities (translating and preparing questionnaire, pilot and pre-test etc.) had to be undertaken in time anyway, the country team had to invest their time and own finance in the interim period, hoping that financing of SHARE in Slovenia would finally be approved.

The Slovenian SHARE country team was assembled at the Institute for Economic Research, founded in 1965 and led by Dr. Boris Majcen, director of the institute. Fieldwork coordination, data cleaning and questionnaire development were led by Vladimir Lavrač and Saša Mašič. As part of the University of Ljubljana, the Public Opinion and Mass Communication Research Centre (CJMMK) at the Faculty of Social Sciences was chosen to carry out the fieldwork.

#### 2.4.3 Survey implementation

CJMMK, founded in 1965, has a long tradition in national and cross-national projects and well-established fieldwork procedures, including monitoring and incentives for interviewers. The translation of the questionnaire was done by the SHARE country team at the University of Ljubljana. Our ample experience in translating other social surveys carried out in Slovenia made the process of translating the SHARE questionnaire easier. The sampling procedures took less effort due to the existence of the Central Register of Population (CRP), where all residents with current address (citizens and non-citizens) are included and which is regularly updated. However, strict regulations apply to protection of personal data, which prolonged the planning phase that led to obtaining the sample.

#### 2.4.4 Summary

The most important lesson learned was the need to secure financing for the entire wave, not just for one budget year, and the need to sign a contract with the survey agency that contains specified deliverables for both parties (the country team and the survey agency).

#### References

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