Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) as Active Ageing Index data source

Brief

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Note

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Introduction

The Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) is a multidisciplinary and cross-national panel database of microdata on health, socio-economic status and social and family networks of more than 140,000 individuals aged 50 or over (around 380,000 interviews). SHARE covers 27 European countries and Israel.[1]

SHARE is a biennial survey and the first wave was in 2004 when 11 European countries contributed data to the SHARE baseline study. Then six more waves have been carried out with an increasing number of countries reaching 27 European countries and Israel. Waves 3 and 7 of SHARE were SHARELIFE, which focuses on people's life histories.

SHARE wave 7 covered 25 countries of the European Union (EU), as well as Switzerland and Israel. Data from England (not the United Kingdom) and Ireland are collected in the harmonised studies — English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) and the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA). Also, the Netherlands did not participate in SHARE, neither in wave 6, nor in wave 7. Instead, the Netherlands conducted a telephone and online survey based on the SHARE questionnaire. Therefore, the total number of EU countries in SHARE wave 7 is 25: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

The questionnaire of wave 7 contains a SHARELIFE module for all respondents who did not participate in the first SHARELIFE wave (wave 3) (81.76 per cent of respondents), as well as a standard module for all respondents who already answered a SHARELIFE interview in wave 3 (18.24 per cent of respondents). SHARELIFE includes all important areas of the respondents' lives, ranging from partners and children to housing and work history to detailed questions on health and health care.

As a result, wave 7 covers a wide range of the EU countries but the information is not complete for all respondents. This leads to a restricted availability of data for some variables to 11 countries, instead of 25. A more detailed information can be found in the following section.

SHARE wave 8 is being prepared and, as of July 2019, about to be launched. Its results will be available from mid-2020. This wave includes the same 25 Member States covered by wave 7 and will not focus on the life course, meaning that the full current-situation questionnaire will be applied in all the countries. Therefore, the comparisons that, in this paper, are only applied to 11 countries will apply to all 25 countries in the future.

This document summarizes the analysis of the comparability of the indicators between the most recent wave of SHARE and respective original sources of data for the Active Ageing Index (AAI) indicators, as well as, the examination of the availability of the data for the EU countries in SHARE. In addition, data collection from last wave of SHARE and calculation of AAI indicators, where possible, were carried out. Results are presented in Excel files. Facing the impossibility of calculating all the AAI indicators and in all countries, due to non-comparability or absence of data, domain scores and overall scores were not calculated.

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[1] www.share-project.org

Comparability of indicators and availability of data

The analysis of the comparability of the AAI original indicators with the information provided by SHARE wave 7 (referred as SHARE7 from now on) and the availability of the data is sorted by domain of the AAI.

An explanation of the comparability of the indicators between SHARE7 and the original source of data is provided. Colour-coding has been applied taking into account the following aspects:
- Possibility of calculation of the indicator using only data from SHARE7
- Similarity of the concept of the indicator in question
- Similarity of the question asked.

Green colour means that the indicator can be calculated using data only from SHARE7, the concept and the question asked are similar.

Yellow colour stands for the situation where the indicator can be calculated using data only from SHARE7, the concept is similar, but the question asked is different (wider/restricted question or categories, a different scale, a different formulation, or different categories of frequency were used).

Red colour means that the indicator can be calculated using data only from SHARE7, but the concept and the question asked are different.

Grey colour indicated that the indicator cannot be calculated using data only from SHARE7 because comparison between older population and other age groups is needed or because this kind of information is not available in SHARE7.

In addition, for each indicator, information about the number of EU countries in which SHARE7 data are available is presented. Finally, the information about the question used in the original source of data and the proposed question from SHARE7 is detailed for each indicator.

Domain 1. Employment

The comparability of indicators in domain 1 is full (green) and data are available for 25 out of 28 EU countries.

Indicator	Comparability	Available countries
1.1. Employment rate for the age group 55–59		25 out of 28
1.2. Employment rate for the age group 60–64		25 out of 28
1.3. Employment rate for the age group 65–69		25 out of 28
1.4. Employment rate for the age group 70–74		25 out of 28

Question in the original source of data (Labour Force Survey — LFS):

WSTATOR: Labour status during the reference week

1. Did any work for pay or profit during the reference week — one hour or more (including family workers but excluding conscripts on compulsory military or community service);

2. Was not working but had a job or business from which he/she was absent during the reference week (including family workers but excluding conscripts on compulsory military or community service).

SHARE7 question for all indicators in domain 1 would be:

ep005_ "Current job situation"

In general, which of the following best describes your current employment situation?

1. Retired
2. Employed or self-employed (including working for family business)
3. Unemployed
4. Permanently sick or disabled
5. Homemaker
97. Other

Domain 2. Participation in Society

The comparability of the indicators is not full. First, third and fourth indicators are relatively comparable as they are attempting to measure the same concept but with a different formulation in the questionnaire (yellow colour).

Regarding the indicators 2.1 and 2.4, a shorter formulation of the same concept is used in SHARE7, including only one item instead a list of organizations in which to be engaged in (indicator 2.1), or a list of ways of participation (indicator 2.4).

The indicator 2.3, related to care for infirm or disabled people, is not fully comparable due to several differences: SHARE provides a more restricted list of care type; SHARE does not specify that the care receivers are infirm or disabled; SHARE distinguishes between care provided outside and inside households; EQLS in turn splits care receivers into those younger 75 years old and older.

Finally, for the indicator 2.2, the question in SHARE7 refers to care provided to grandchildren only, and without the presence of the parents (red colour).

Data are available for 25 out of 28 EU countries for the indicators 2.1 and 2.4, but only for 11 out of 28 countries for the indicators 2.2 and 2.3.

Indicator	Comparability	Available countries
2.1. Percentage of population aged 55 and over engaging in unpaid voluntary activity through the organizations (at least once a week)		25 out of 28
2.2. Percentage of population aged 55 and over providing care to and educating their children, grandchildren (at least once a week)		11 out of 28

Indicator	Comparability	Available countries
2.3. Percentage of population aged 55 and over providing care to infirm or disabled family members, neighbours or friends (at least once a week)		11 out of 28
2.4. Percentage of population aged 55 and over taking part in the activities of a trade union, a political party or political action group		25 out of 28

Indicator 2.1: Percentage of population aged 55 and over providing unpaid voluntary activity through the organisations (at least once a week)

Question in the original source of data (European Quality of Life Survey — EQLS):

Please look carefully at the list of organisations and tell us, how often did you do unpaid voluntary work through the following organisations in the last 12 months?

1. Community and social services (e.g. organisations helping the elderly, young people, disabled or other people in need);
2. Educational, cultural, sports or professional associations;
3. Social movements (for example environmental, human rights) or charities (for example fundraising, campaigning);
4. Other voluntary organisations

Frequency:[2]

   Every week

SHARE7 question would be:

How often done voluntary/charity work the last 12 months.

Frequency:

   Almost every day
   Almost every week

Indicator 2.2: Percentage of population aged 55 and over providing care to and educating their children, grandchildren (at least once a week)

Question in the original source of data (EQLS):

In general, how often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?

1. Caring for and/or educating your children;
2. Caring for and/or educating your grandchildren

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[2] Here and below, under "Frequency" only the options that need to be selected for calculation of respective AAI indicators are listed.

Frequency:

> Every day
> Several days a week
> Once or twice a week

SHARE7 question would be:

During the last twelve months, have you regularly or occasionally looked after [your grandchildren] without the presence of the parents?

Frequency:

> About daily
> About every week

Indicator 2.3: Percentage of population aged 55 and over providing care to infirm or disabled family members, neighbours or friends (at least once a week)

Question in the original source of data (EQLS):

In general, how often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?

1. Caring for disabled or infirm family members, neighbours or friends under 75 years old;
2. Caring for disabled or infirm family members, neighbours or friends aged 75 or over

Frequency:

> Every day
> Several days a week
> Once or twice a week

SHARE7 question would be:

A combination of questions about care inside and outside the household:

1. In the last twelve months, have you given any kind of help listed on this card to a family member from <u>outside the household,</u> a friend or neighbour?

Which family member from outside the household, friend or neighbour have you helped in the last twelve months? (all except child or grandchild)

Which types of help have you given to this person in the last twelve months?

- personal care, e.g. dressing, bathing or showering, eating, getting in or out of bed, using the toilet
- practical household help, e.g. with home repairs, gardening, transportation, shopping, household chores

Frequency:

> About daily
> About every week

> 2. Is there someone living <u>in this household</u> whom you have helped regularly during the last twelve months with personal care, such as washing, getting out of bed, or dressing?

> Who is that? (all except child or grandchild)

> By regularly we mean daily or almost daily during at least three months

Indicator 2.4: Percentage of population aged 55 and over taking part in the activities of a trade union, a political party or political action group

Question in the original source of data (EQLS):

Over the last 12 months, have you …?

> 1. Attended a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group;
> 2. Attended a protest or demonstration;
> 3. Signed a petition, including an e-mail or on-line petition;
> 4. Contacted a politician or public official (other than routine contact arising from use of public services)

SHARE7 question would be:

Which of the activities listed on this card — if any — have you done in the last twelve months?

> Taken part in a political or community-related organization

Domain 3. Independent, healthy and secure living

In this domain there are indicators that are fully comparable (green), that is the case of indicators 3.3 and 3.8; partially comparable, 3.1, 3.2, 3.6 and 3.7 (yellow); and two that cannot be calculated using only SHARE7, 3.4 and 3.5, (grey).

Regarding the indicator 3.1, the SHARE7 question asks about physical exercise slightly differently and the frequency categories are somewhat different, but the concept that the indicator aims to grasp is similar.

In the case of the indicator 3.2, the original source of data asks about medical and dental care, whereas the SHARE7 only asks about medical care, not including dental care unmet needs.

The indicators 3.4 and 3.5, as they compare the income of older people with that of other age subgroups, require data from other sources, as SHARE7 collects data only for population aged 50 and over.

For the indicator 3.4, a substitute indicator would be the Aggregate Replacement Ratio; this is closely related to the relative median income — although it refers to populations aged 50–60 and 65–74. This would be a proxy.

For the indicator 3.5, a possible solution would be that of using the poverty thresholds computed from the SILC survey. However, this leads to different poverty estimate (at risk of poverty or "AROP"); the difference is larger than the sample size would justify, due to differences in the two surveys' methodologies in collecting household income data. Thus, such a calculation would yield a proxy.

Indicator 3.6 is not fully comparable as the items included in the SHARE7 questionnaire are different from those asked in the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). Thus, utilization of the SHARE7 to measure the material deprivation of older population requires the examination of and agreement on the deprivation items and the threshold used.

Indicator 3.7 is partially comparable: the feeling of safety in SHARE7 is put in more specific terms than in the European Social Survey (ESS) and refers to vandalism or crime being a problem in the area of residence.

With reference to data availability for the indicators in the EU28 countries, indicators 3.1, 3.2 and 3.7 are available only for 11 out of 28 countries. The rest of indicators in this domain are available for 25 countries.

Indicator	Comparability	Available countries
3.1. Percentage of population aged 55 and over undertaking physical exercise or sport almost every day.	🟧	11 out of 28
3.2. Percentage of population aged 55 and over who report no unmet need for medical and dental examination or treatment during the 12 months preceding the survey.	🟧	11 out of 28
3.3. Percentage of population aged 75 and over who live in a single person household or who live as a couple (2 adults with no dependent children).	🟩	25 out of 28
3.4. The relative median income ratio is defined as the ratio of the median equivalised disposable income of people aged 65 and above to the median equivalised disposable income of those aged below 65.	⬜	25 out of 28
3.5. Percentage of population aged 65 and over who are not at risk of poverty (people at risk of poverty are defined as those with an equivalised disposable income after social transfers below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 50% of the national median equivalised disposable income after social transfers).	⬜	25 out of 28
3.6. Percentage of population aged 65 and over who are not severely materially deprived.	🟧	25 out of 28

Indicator	Comparability	Available countries
3.7. Percentage of population aged 55 and over who are feeling very safe or safe to walk after dark in their local area.		11 out of 28
3.8. Percentage of population aged 55–74 who stated that they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey.		25 out of 28

Indicator 3.1: Percentage of population aged 55 and over undertaking physical exercise or sport almost every day

Question in the original source of data (EQLS):

How frequently do you do each of the following?

Take part in sports or physical exercise

Frequency:

Every day
Almost every day

SHARE7 question would be:

BR015_PartInVigSprtsAct

We would like to know about the type and amount of physical activity you do in your daily life. How often do you engage in vigorous physical activity, such as sports, heavy housework, or a job that involves physical labour?

Frequency:

More than once a week

Another option would be a question related to moderated physical activity, such as gardening, cleaning the car, or doing a walk.

BR016_ModSprtsAct

How often do you engage in activities that require a moderate level of energy such as gardening, cleaning the car, or doing a walk?

Indicator 3.2: Percentage of population aged 55 and over who report no unmet need for medical and dental examination or treatment during the 12 months preceding the survey

Question in the original source of data (European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions — EU-SILC):

Unmet need for medical examination or treatment (unmet need for medical examination or treatment during the last 12 months).

Unmet need for dental examination or treatment (unmet need for dental examination or treatment during the last 12 months]

SHARE7 question would be:

HC114_UnmetNeedCost

Was there a time in the past 12 months when you needed to see a doctor but could not because of cost?

    1. Yes
    5. No

HC115_UnmetNeedWait

Was there a time in the past 12 months when you needed to see a doctor but could not because you had to wait too long?

    1. Yes
    5. No

Indicator 3.3: Percentage of population aged 75 and over who live in a single person household or who live as a couple (2 adults with no dependent children)

Question in the original source of data (EU-SILC):

Household type (HX060)

Categories:

    5.   **One-person household**
    6.   2 adults, no dependent children, both adults under 65 years
    7.   **2 adults, no dependent children, at least one adult 65 years or more**
    8.   Other households without dependent children
    9.   Single parent household, one or more dependent children
    10.   2 adults, one dependent child
    11.   2 adults, two dependent children
    12.   2 adults, three or more dependent children
    13.   Other households with dependent children
    16.   Other (these household are excluded from Laeken indicators calculation)

SHARE7 question would be:

A combination of the following variables is carried out to get the types of households of interest:

    Hhsize: household size
    Partnerinhh: partner in the household
    age2017: age
    agep2017: partner age

Indicator 3.4: The relative median income ratio

It is defined as the ratio of the median equivalised disposable income of people aged 65 and over to the median equivalised disposable income of those aged below 65.

In the SHARE7 there is no information for population under 50 years old. It would be necessary to have data from other sources of data.

Indicator 3.5: Percentage of population aged 65 and over who are not at risk of poverty

People at risk of poverty are defined as those with an equivalised disposable income after social transfers below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 50% of the national median equivalised disposable income after social transfers.

In the SHARE7 there is no information for population under 50 years old. It would be necessary to have data from other sources of data for the national median equivalised disposable income and the poverty threshold.

Indicator 3.6: Percentage of population aged 65 and over who are not severely materially deprived

Items in original source of data (EU-SILC):

The enforced inability to pay for at least four out of the following nine items:

> to pay their rent, mortgage or utility bills;
> to keep their home adequately warm;
> to face unexpected expenses;
> to eat meat or proteins regularly;
> to go on holiday;
> a television set;
> a washing machine;
> a car;
> a telephone.

The use of the **following SHARE7 items is proposed**. Material deprivation would be the enforced inability to afford at least two out of the following three items:

CO206_AffordExpense:

Could your household afford to pay an unexpected expense of [AffordExpenseAmount] without borrowing any money?

> 1. Yes
> **5. No**

CO209_PovertyPutUpWith Cold:

In the last twelve months, have you put up with feeling cold to save heating costs, to help you keep your living costs down?

> **1. Yes**
> 5. No

BR028_MeatWeek:

In a regular week, how often do you eat meat, fish or poultry?

1. Every day
2. 3-6 times a week
3. **Twice a week**
4. **Once a week**
5. **Less than once a week**

If BR028 >2, then BR033_MeatAfford:

Would you say that you do not eat meat, fish or poultry more often because...

1. you cannot afford to eat it more often
2. for other reasons

Indicator 3.7: Percentage of population aged 55 and over who are feeling very safe or safe to walk after dark in their local area

Question in the original source of data (European Social Survey — ESS):

How safe do you — or would you — feel walking alone in this area (Respondent's local area or neighbourhood) after dark? Do — or would — you feel

Very safe
Safe

SHARE7 question would be:

hh023_LocalVandalism:

Vandalism or crime is a big problem in this area

Disagree
Strongly disagree

Indicator 3.8: Percentage of population aged 55–74 who stated that they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey

Question in the original source of data (Labour Force Survey — LFS):

Education or training received during previous four weeks.

SHARE7 question would be:

ac035_4

Have you done any of these activities in the last month?

Attended an educational or training course

Domain 4. Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing

In this last domain, three different comparability situations are found (grey, yellow and green). Indicators 4.1 and 4.2 cannot be calculated using SHARE (grey), as mortality and population data are needed.

The indicator 4.3 is partially comparable (yellow), as the measurement of mental well-being is different between SHARE7 and original source of data. SHARE7 includes in the questionnaire the EURO-D scale instead of the WHO Major Depression Inventory, used in the original source. However, the concept that this indicator measures could be approached using both scales, although the results will be probably slightly different.

In the case of indicator 4.5 comparability is limited (yellow) due to a more restricted social network asked about in SHARE7 and at the same time a much broader list of options of keeping contact (phone, email etc.). The original source of data (ESS) collects information about meeting socially with relatives, friends and neighbours, whereas SHARE7 asks only about some relatives (mother, father and children).

Indicators 4.4 and 4.6 are fully comparable (green). For them the questionnaire of SHARE7 includes questions that are very similar to the questions in the original source of data, with some slight differences that do not change the indicator substantially.

Indicator	Comparability	Available countries
4.1. Remaining life expectancy (RLE) at 55 divided by 50 to calculate the proportion of life expectancy achievement in the target of 105 years of life expectancy.		
4.2. Healthy Life Years (HLY) measures the remaining number of years free of activity limitations caused by health problems.		25 out of 28
4.3. Percentage of population aged 55 or over reporting good mental well-being.		11 out of 28
4.4. Percentage of population aged 55–74 using the Internet at least once a week.		11 out of 28
4.5. Percentage of population aged 55 or over that meet socially with friends, relatives or colleagues at least once a week.		11 out of 28
4.6. Percentage of population aged 55–74 with upper secondary or tertiary educational attainment.		25 out of 28

Indicator 4.1: Remaining life expectancy (RLE) at 55 divided by 50 to calculate the proportion of life expectancy achievement in the target of 105 years of life expectancy

As mortality and population data are needed, it would be necessary to have data from other sources of information.

Indicator 4.2: Healthy Life Years (HLY) measures the remaining number of years free of activity limitations caused by health problems

It combines information on quality and quantity of life

The calculation of HLY uses Global Activity Limitation Indicator (GALI) as the health limitation variable, that is the same as in the original source of data (EU-SILC). However, as SHARE7 target population consists of persons aged 50 and over, life tables can only be calculated from 50 years. Moreover, as HLY needs life expectancy data (see indicator 4.1), this indicator cannot be calculated using only SHARE7 data.

Indicator 4.3: Percentage of population aged 55 or over reporting good mental well-being

Question in the original source of data (EQLS):

WHO Major Depression Inventory:

Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the last two weeks.

1. I have felt cheerful and in good spirits
2. I have felt calm and relaxed
3. I have felt active and vigorous
4. I woke up feeling fresh and rested
5. My daily life has been filled with things that interest me

Categories:

1. All of the time
2. Most of the time
3. More than half of the time
4. Less than half of the time
5. Some of the time
6. At no time

SHARE7 question would be:

EURO-D scale:

MH002_Depression
In the last month, have you been sad or depressed?
1. Yes
5. No

MH003_Hopes
What are your hopes for the future?
1. Any hopes mentioned
2. No hopes mentioned

MH004_WishDeath

In the last month, have you felt that you would rather be dead?

1. Any mention of suicidal feelings or wishing to be dead

2. No such feelings

MH005_Guilt

Do you tend to blame yourself or feel guilty about anything?

1. Obvious excessive guilt or self-blame

2. No such feelings

3. Mentions guilt or self-blame, but it is unclear if these constitute obvious or excessive guilt or self-blame

MH007_Sleep

Have you had trouble sleeping recently?

1. Trouble with sleep or recent change in pattern

2. No trouble sleeping

MH008_Interest

In the last month, what is your interest in things?

1. Less interest than usual mentioned

2. No mention of loss of interest

3. Non-specific or uncodeable response

MH010_Irritability

Have you been irritable recently?

1. Yes

5. No

MH011_Appetite

What has your appetite been like in the last month?

1. Diminution in desire for food

2. No diminution in desire for food

3. Non-specific or uncodeable response

MH013_Fatigue

In the last month, have you had too little energy to do the things you wanted to do?

1. Yes

5. No

MH014_ConcEnter

How is your concentration? For example, can you concentrate on a television programme, film or radio programme?

1. Difficulty in concentrating on entertainment

2. No such difficulty mentioned

MH016_Enjoyment

What have you enjoyed doing recently?

1. Fails to mention any enjoyable activity

2. Mentions ANY enjoyment from activity

MH017_Tear

In the last month, have you cried at all?

1. Yes
5. No

Indicator 4.4: Percentage of population aged 55–74 using the Internet at least once a week

Question in the original source of data (Eurostat ICT Survey):

How often on average have you used Internet in the last 3 months?

Frequency:

Every day or almost every day
At least once a week (but not every day)

SHARE7 question would be:

it004_usewww:

During the past 7 days, have you used the Internet for e-mailing, searching for information, making purchases, or for any other purpose at least once?

1. Yes
5. No

Indicator 4.5: Percentage of population aged 55 or over that meet socially with friends, relatives or colleagues at least once a week

"Meet socially" implies meet by choice, rather than for reasons of either work or pure duty. The indicator measures contacts outside the household.

Question in the original source of data (ESS):

How often socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues?

5. Once a week
6. Several times a week
7. Every day

SHARE7 question would be:

DN032_ContactDuringPast12Months

During the past twelve months, how often did you have contact with [your mother / father], either in person, by phone, mail, email or any other electronic means?

1. Daily
2. Several times a week
3. About once a week

CH014_ContactChild

During the past twelve months, how often did you have contact with [CH004_First NameOfChild], either in person, by phone, mail, email or any other electronic means?

1. Daily
2. Several times a week
3. About once a week

Indicator 4.6: Percentage of population aged 55–74 with upper secondary or tertiary educational attainment

Question in the original source of data (LFS):

Highest ISCED level attained?

3. (upper) secondary,
4. Post-secondary non-tertiary,
5. Tertiary

SHARE7 question would be:

DN010_HighestEdu

What is the highest school leaving certificate or school degree that you have obtained?

ISCED2011 code.

Conclusions

SHARE is the largest pan-European social science panel study that provides a wealth of information and allows for extensive research on one of the main challenges of our societies in modern times: population ageing.

SHARE has many advantages that make it a very appreciated source of data. First, the coverage of countries that has been increasing, reaching in the wave 7 (with the harmonized studies ELSA and TILDA for England and Ireland, respectively, as well as the telephone and online survey for the Netherlands) all the EU countries, Switzerland and Israel. Second, SHARE allows country comparison for researchers and policymakers thanks to big sample sizes. Moreover, its questionnaire is large and covers a wide range of topics related to economic, health and social life of older population. It is a panel, linked to previous surveys collecting data on the respondents' life courses, allowing to follow individual experiences. Finally, SHARE data are available free of charge and easily accessed, which allows for a rapid and effortless usage.

Above-mentioned advantages make SHARE a pertinent source of information which could be used in the measurement of the Active Ageing Index for the EU countries. However, the examination of the SHARE7 questionnaire, analysis of data availability in EU countries and of comparability of the indicators between the SHARE7 and the original data sources have identified the impediments to the usage of SHARE as a sole source of data for AAI.

Although SHARE7 uses a questionnaire that covers the majority of the information that AAI indicators need, the data comparability is not full for some of them due to different reasons. Sometimes, the question applied in SHARE7 is wider or more restricted than the question of the original data source, its formulation or the scale (items) used is different, or the categories

of response are different. Moreover, in one indicator (2.2), the concept used in the SHARE7 questionnaire is not the same as in the original source, so the comparability is restricted.

Furthermore, some of the AAI indicators require information that cannot be found in SHARE7. This is the case of two of the financial security indicators (3.4 and 3.5) because information about the younger population (below 50 years) is not available in SHARE7. Similarly, indicators related to life expectancy and healthy life expectancy (4.1 and 4.2) need mortality and population data that are not provided by SHARE7.

Finally, regarding the availability of data for the EU countries, some difficulties arise too. SHARE7 collects data in 25 out of the 28 EU countries. The data for the other three countries, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom are available although these are not exactly the same as SHARE7 data.

In the case of the United Kingdom, data are available only for England, provided by ELSA study, which is harmonized with SHARE. Data for Ireland can be provided by TILDA study, which is also harmonized with SHARE. In these two cases, accessibility to data seems to be free of charge (under registration). Third, data for the Netherlands are collected through a different telephone and online survey, and its questionnaire seems close to the original SHARE7 one. Because of the different interview modes used, SHARE team does not guarantee data comparability and does not include data from these three countries. However, a separate file for the Netherlands will be released in the near future on the SHARE project webpage.

To conclude, SHARE provides valuable information about older population in Europe and could be a good source of data for the calculation of AAI in the EU countries. However, the use of SHARE as the main source of information for the AAI would lead to some issues. First of all, the comparability of the AAI results throughout time would be lost, as most of the indicators are not fully comparable. Moreover, data for three of the EU28 countries are not available in the same methodological conditions, and some of the SHARE7 indicators are available only for 11 out of 28 countries. As a result, SHARE can be regarded as a source to be used in a context where there is a necessity to use alternative data sources as it is done for non-EU countries or regions where the original data sources are not available.

Such deviation from the original methodology — and shortcomings of using SHARE — could be justified for specific purposes. As indicated above, SHARE would allow computing (almost) all the indicator as a single source. This would allow for:

- Linking AAI values to other indicators of interest (e.g., education levels, income) at an individual level, enriching the comparative analysis.
- Computing AAI at individual level; this has been attempted by various researchers and SHARE would make this easier.
- Taking the advantage of SHARE panel nature;[3] changes in AAI and its indicator could be analysed in view of the sample individual's change and the differences between those who exit it (mostly older people) and those who enter it (mostly younger people).

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[3] In principle, LFS and SILC have also repeated/rotating samples; however, their methodology makes it difficult to use their panel nature; Eurostat carried out only experimental work on this. With SHARE the linking of individual respondents across waves is more reliable.