

Question in Project:

SHARE Wave 9 – New items on financial decision making, successful ageing, eating habits, sleep, long-term care insurance, and long-term care expectations (English Version)

Question Topic:

Society & social affairs/ Relationships

Construct:

Planning financial future as a couple

General Information:

Note: This item was tested in German. This is an English translation of the original German wording.

Question Text:

Are you and your partner planning your financial future together as a couple?
[Planen Sie und Ihr Partner Ihre finanzielle Zukunft gemeinsam als Paar?]

Answer Categories:

Yes *[Ja]*

No *[Nein]*

Cognitive Techniques:

General Probing, Comprehension Probing

Findings for Question:

Question 11B was only asked to those respondents who had indicated in question 11A that they currently have a partner. This was the case for six respondents who all answered question 11B.

1. How do the respondents interpret the question? How do respondents understand the term "planning your financial future as a couple"?

All test persons interpreted the question as to whether or not they had a joint account with their partner, or whether or not they shared both income and expenses. Five of the six respondents answered question 11B in the affirmative, only respondent 06 stated that he and his partner kept separate accounts:

- *"I have only been with my partner for three years and each has his own account and manages his own finances. [...] For me, ['planning the financial future together'] would mean having a joint account into which both pay and from which everything is paid"* (TP 06)
- *"It was always clear to us. Since we've been married, we've been doing this together. It is also very important that both partners have insight into the finances and know where the money is invested. And also how it is spent. Over the years we have acquired something. A house, a small fortune perhaps also. And for the future, it is important to regulate what happens if something happens to either of them. That you're covered."* (TP 09)
- *"We'll emigrate in two years and then throw all the money together. And then we'll see where that takes us. [...] ['Planning the financial future together'] means throwing everything to-gether or sharing the expenses that arise."* (TP 10)

Two test persons (TP 02, 07) also mentioned that they did not want to separate from their partner. However, a misinterpretation, as feared before the pretest (i.e. that the question could be interpreted as to whether one plans to separate from one's partner), was probably not present here. Rather, the test persons gave the impression that they were starting from their current situation and using the unplanned separation as a reason why this situation would continue in the future:

- *"We are both 62 and we talk about it often. And my husband is retiring with, I think, 66/67 and therefore ... so to speak ... we just look at it and therefore together, yes. And also together financially, so we don't intend to separate or divorce, but rather to shape a future together in retirement. [...] That we both protect each other financially. I am self-employed, but my husband is employed and he has more advantages than I do. Therefore, we are combining our financial possibilities."* (TP 02)
- *"Because I want to be with my wife for the rest of my life. That automatically follows. I wasn't planning on divorcing my wife at some point. [...] Financial future is mutual assurance."* (TP 07)

2. Are there any other problems?

The interviewers occasionally noted that the female form of "partner" should also be

included in the German translation of the question, as otherwise unpleasant situations may arise, especially as both the male and female forms are mentioned in the previous question. For example, a test person answered question 11A with "Yes, I am married to my wife", but then received the question "Do you and your partner plan ...", which the interviewer found unpleasant.

Recommendations:

Question: We recommend, analogous to question 11A, to include the female form of "partner" [*Ihre Partnerin*] in the German translation of the question text.

Response Options: No changes recommended.