

Call for submissions

Surveying people living in nursing homes: Challenges and Solutions

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A substantial part of every society's older adults reside in nursing homes, retirement homes, or long-term care facilities. However, many surveys restrict their samples to people living in private households, excluding institutionalised populations. This leads to biased estimates in population-level research on older adults. Including these populations is crucial for providing a more comprehensive understanding of social outcomes across different living conditions and informing policies that address the needs of vulnerable groups. Yet, surveying people in institutional settings comes with unique methodological, ethical, and practical challenges.

This special issue invites submissions of short papers (up to 3,000 words), and full-length research articles (up to 6,000 words). "Survey Methods: Insights from the Field" is a double-blind peer-reviewed open access online journal.

The special issue will focus on methodological and practical challenges in surveying people living in nursing homes and similar facilities, as well as innovative solutions to overcome these. We welcome contributions from different disciplines and contexts, including empirical case studies, meta-studies and methodological reflections. Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- **Sampling institutionalised populations:** constructing sampling frames; two-step sampling (institutions first, then individuals), tracking participants' transitions from private households to nursing homes in the context of panel studies
- **Data quality and comparability:** ensuring reliability and validity of responses; handling measurement error and missing data; maintaining comparability with household-based surveys and previous panel waves
- **Assessing ability to participate:** evaluating cognitive and physical capacity; adapting survey procedures (consent, question design, interview length, approach) to individual needs
- **Ethical considerations:** ensuring informed consent and voluntary participation; balancing inclusion with protection of vulnerable residents; avoiding excessive interview burden
- **Alternative interviewing approaches:** assisted and proxy interviews; evaluating their validity, reliability, and impact on data quality and representativeness
- **Strategies for engaging with institutional and family gatekeepers:** cooperation of institutions, nursing home management and staff, and family members as formal or informal gatekeepers
- **Practical considerations**

Submissions to the special issue are welcome until 30 April 2026. Upon submission, manuscripts will be peer-reviewed in accordance with standard journal practice and will be published online soon after acceptance.

Timeline:

April 30, 2026	Manuscript submission
July 31, 2026	Feedback from the reviewers and editors
September 30, 2026	Revisions due
October 31, 2026	Final feedback from the editors
November 30, 2026	Final draft due
End of 2026	Publication of the special issue

Electronic copies of the manuscripts should be uploaded at <https://surveyinsights.org> following the guidelines of the *Survey Methods: Insights from the Field* ([For Authors](#)). You may want to use the template of the *Survey Methods: Insights from the Field* ([SMIF article template](#)). To ensure consideration in the special issue, please check the category box "Surveying people living in nursing homes: Challenges and Solutions" on the right-hand column when creating a new article on the journal platform.

All queries about this special issue should be addressed to Michael Weinhardt at Michael.Weinhardt@dza.de.