

# CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON SUCCESSFUL AGEING

Promoting a comprehensive  
understanding of well-being factors  
in the silver years - data from the  
Singapore Life Panel



# AGEING IN SINGAPORE

With rising life expectancy and a low fertility rate, Singapore has one of the fastest ageing populations in the world. In fact, it is estimated that Singapore will experience an increase in the proportion of older persons aged 65 or older by **21%** between 2019 and 2050, making us the second nation in line with the most rapidly growing senior subset.



1

23%



2

21%

Given a population that continues to age with low fertility, the **old-age support ratio**, which represents the number of people who can provide economic support to the current older population, has been on a steady decline in Singapore.

7.4 in  
2010



4.3 in  
2020



To ensure the well-being of older Singaporean adults, better support systems in both the private and public sphere have to be implemented. Hence, a greater comprehension of the factors contributing to successful ageing beyond economic support is imperative.

# AGEING CONCERNS

The ageing problem is a multifaceted one; whether one can enjoy their silver years is dependent on several aspects which together can contribute to the individual's overall well-being. From whether an individual is able to economically sustain themselves, to whether they can physically upkeep their health, these questions should continually be raised as our people age, such that we are always on top of the issues that may affect our older counterparts.



## OUR ROLE AT ROSA

The Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (**ROSA**) was established in 2020 to carry out a long-term programme for research on the well-being of Singapore's ageing population. Our team of skilled academics and researchers are the leading experts on research related to ageing. Using the data collected longitudinally through the Singapore Life Panel, our team feeds insights to key stakeholders and the community about the current ageing issues and thereafter suggest innovative interventions.



# RESEARCH AT ROSA

Our goal is to define and measure a holistic construct of well-being among older adults and to identify the factors that impact older Singaporeans' well-being as they transition through the ageing process. ROSA focuses on research relevant to the four domains of well-being, namely, Economic, Mental, Physical and Social (EMPS). For each domain, information could be attained from the data collected on a variety of variables related to the specific domain in question. Below, we introduce some of the key data available at ROSA.



## DEMOGRAPHIC

Age, gender, marital status, education, housing, occupation



## CONSUMPTION

Personal & prosocial spending, transfers, investments



## PENSION

CPF, savings, retirement plan, Medisave, insurance



## SOCIAL

Social network, family, neighbourhood, support from others, caregiving



## ATTITUDES

Worries, beliefs, religiosity, gender norms, marital satisfaction



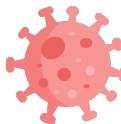
## COGNITIVE

Cognitive failure, reasoning and thinking, technology literacy



## EMOTION

Happiness, sadness, resilience, stress



## HEALTH

Self-rated health, chronic conditions, COVID-19



## SINGAPORE

Elections, trust in government, social cohesion, social norms



## ACTIVITY

Leisure, volunteer, exercise, hobbies

...and more

# SINGAPORE LIFE PANEL

The Singapore Life Panel (SLP) began under the stewardship of the Centre for Research on the Economics of Ageing (CREA) in 2015. Since then, the SLP has followed more than 12,000 Singaporeans aged between 50 and 70 at baseline (July 2015) for five years. In the 70 completed monthly waves, the average number of monthly responses has been remarkably stable at about 7,500, yielding nearly 550,000 interviews. Under CREA, the SLP sought detailed information on indicators of the economic well-being of individuals and limited information on other domains of well-being.



**7,228**

Respondents  
with over **70%**  
response rate



**48%**

Female respondents

**52%**

Male respondents

Following CREA's transition into the Centre for Research On Successful Ageing (ROSA) in 2020, the SLP will be refreshed. A new cohort of adults aged 50-55 years will be included in order to allow the tracking of the impact of pre-retirement life changes on the different domains of well-being, as well as identifying cohort differences between the “young” old and the “older” old that is already part of the SLP. Additionally, the SLP will now seek to understand other aspects of well-being beyond the economic to obtain a holistic picture of well-being among older adults in Singapore. The SLP will continue to run under ROSA for another five years in the first instance, from 2020 to 2025.

ECONOMIC

MENTAL

PHYSICAL

SOCIAL

**WELL-BEING**

# DATA COLLECTION



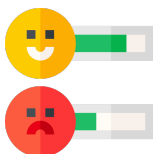
## Two months before the survey

Researchers begin to develop survey questions.  
Translation of survey into four main vernaculars.  
Pilot testing.



## Pre-launch of survey

Logistic arrangements for people who are unable to use the internet (e.g., preparing face-to-face interviews).



## During the survey

Survey will be distributed via online means.  
Call centre will be activated for respondents to dial-in to complete the survey via a proxy.



## Post-survey

Respondents who have completed their survey will receive an NTUC voucher (amount based on length of survey).



All surveys are completed online, either by the respondent or a proxy (e.g., ROSA staff). Respondents' personal information are kept confidential and under the highest level of data protection.

## OUTREACH AT ROSA

In addition to the monthly surveys, the team at ROSA is committed to getting to know our SLP members better in a number of different ways. This includes sending quarterly newsletters to SLP members to update them on developments or events occurring at the centre, as well as to provide them with snapshots of the findings that their contributions had made possible. Separately, ROSA organises regular meet-up sessions with SLP members to get to know them better and to get a deeper perspective on responses and trends surfaced in the monthly surveys. Thus, such sessions include focus groups where our researchers will ask SLP members more about their experiences. Such sessions are also a wonderful opportunity for the ROSA team to show their appreciation for the dedicated support that the SLP members have shown over the years.

## ROSA's SUPPORTERS

The research at ROSA is supported by The Ngee Ann Kongsi and the Ministry of Education.



The Ngee Ann Kongsi is a foundation that is actively involved in educational, cultural and welfare activities in Singapore.

The research at ROSA is also supported by the Ministry of Education, Singapore, under its Academic Research Fund Tier 3 programme (Award reference number MOE2019-T3-1-006).



**Ministry of Education**  
SINGAPORE

# ROSA LEADERSHIP TEAM



DIRECTOR  
PAULIN  
STRAUGHAN

*“At ROSA we aspire to promote successful ageing in Singapore. Well-being is a multi-disciplinary construct, and we strive to have a comprehensive and holistic appreciation of well-being. In addition to important academic research, we also focus on translational research, to impact change in the communities we live in.*

*”*

*“Mental well-being and mental health are so important for our ability to function in daily lives. Positive emotion and life satisfaction predict health and longevity and is also important for our relationships. We need to understand what makes people satisfied with their lives.*

*”*



CO-DIRECTOR  
WILLIAM TOV



CO-DIRECTOR  
SEONGHOON  
KIM

*“We want to ensure adequate retirement preparedness and economic well-being among older Singaporeans by conducting rigorous, credible, empirical research using data from the Singapore Life Panel survey. Our research can help the government better design public policy to improve the overall well-being of older citizens in Singapore.*


*”*





## CONTACT DETAILS

[rosa.smu.edu.sg](https://rosa.smu.edu.sg) 

+65 6808 7910 

[rosa@smu.edu.sg](mailto:rosa@smu.edu.sg) 

Singapore Management University  
School of Social Sciences  
90 Stamford Road, Level 6  
Singapore 178903

