

Nutritional condition of the Algarve population – a preliminary vision

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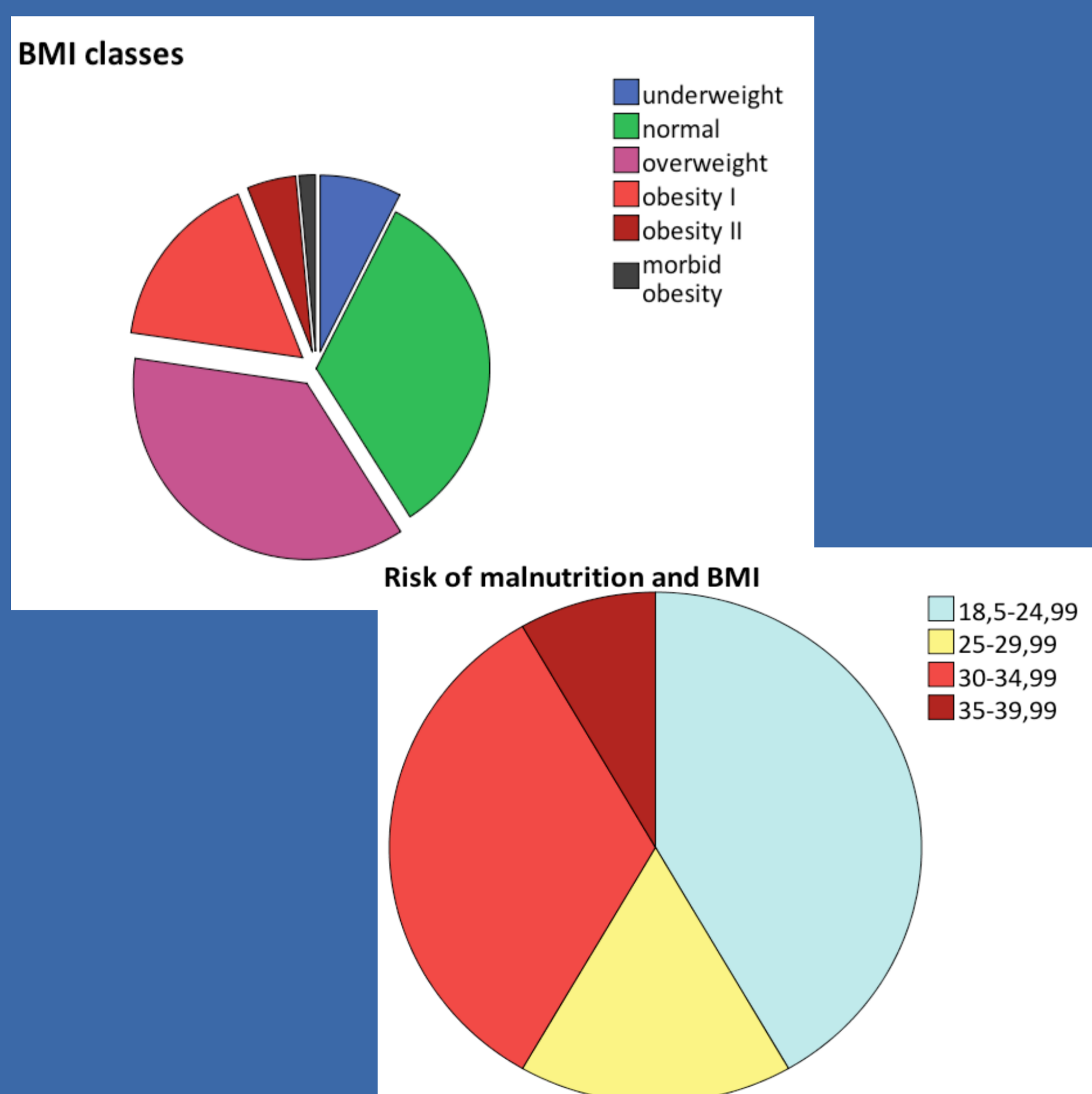
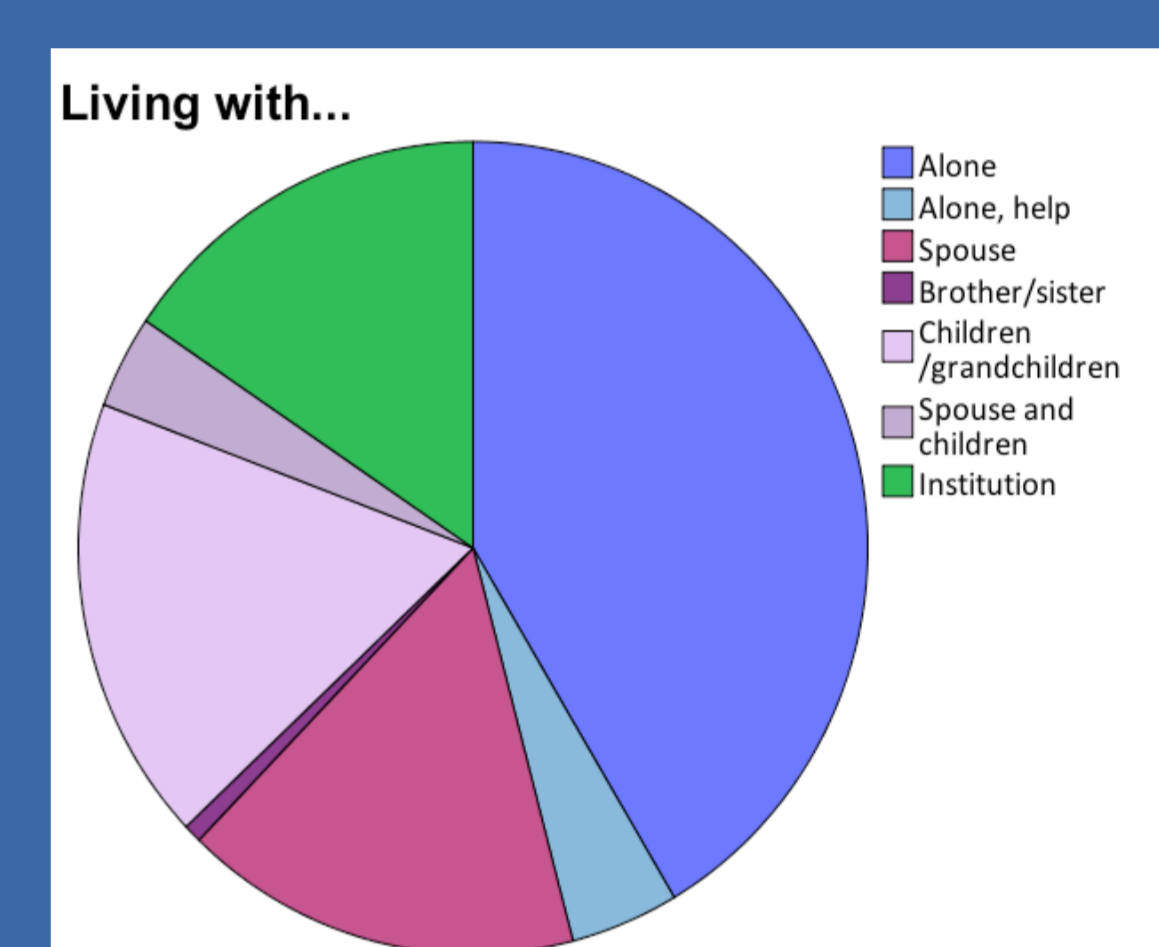
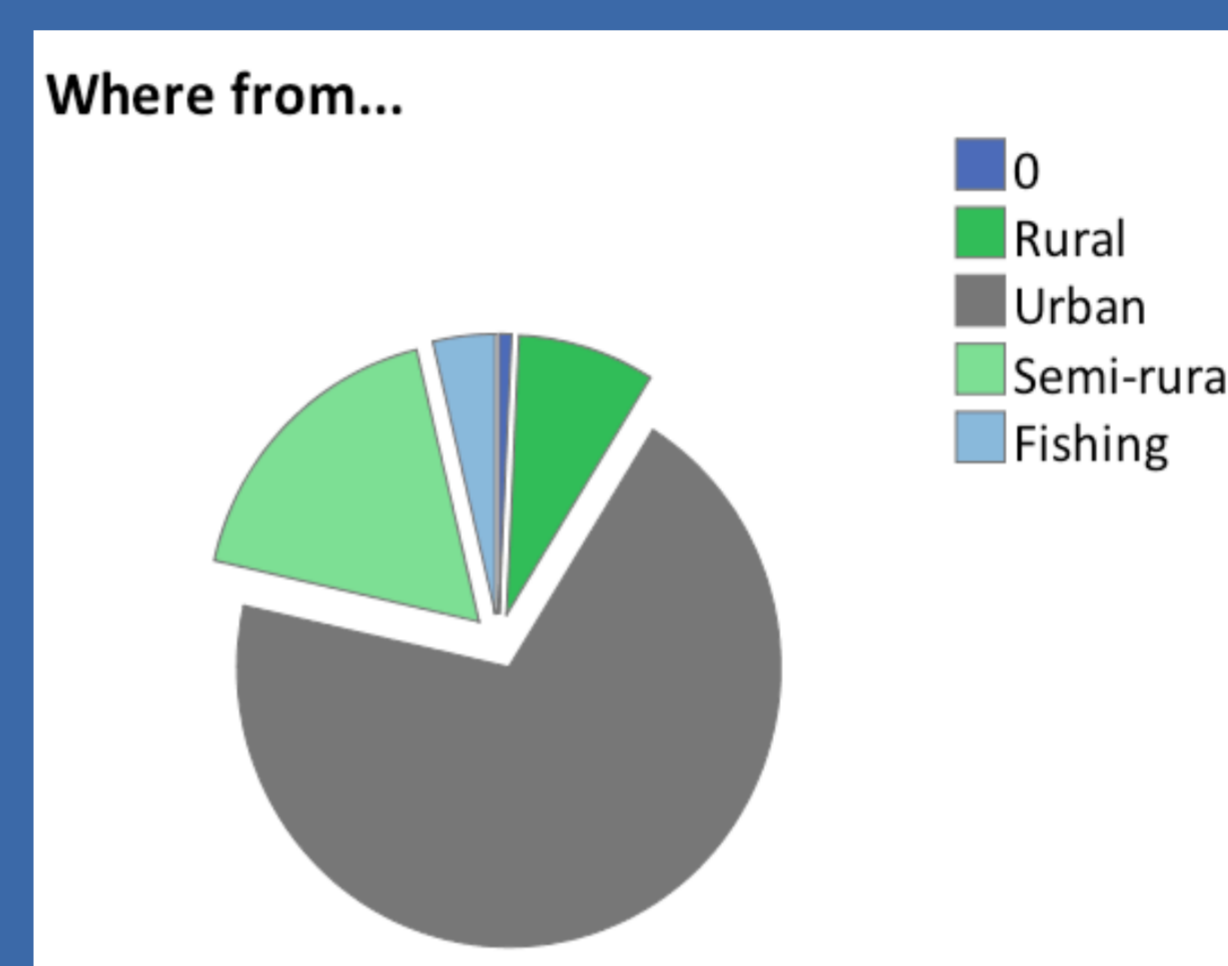
1. Background and aims

Survey of Health and Ageing in the Region of Algarve (SHARA) is a Global Geriatric Evaluation, in course in the Algarve since 2013.

The commitment, accepted by the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA), is one of the ongoing projects at CESUALg.

2. Screening tools and target population

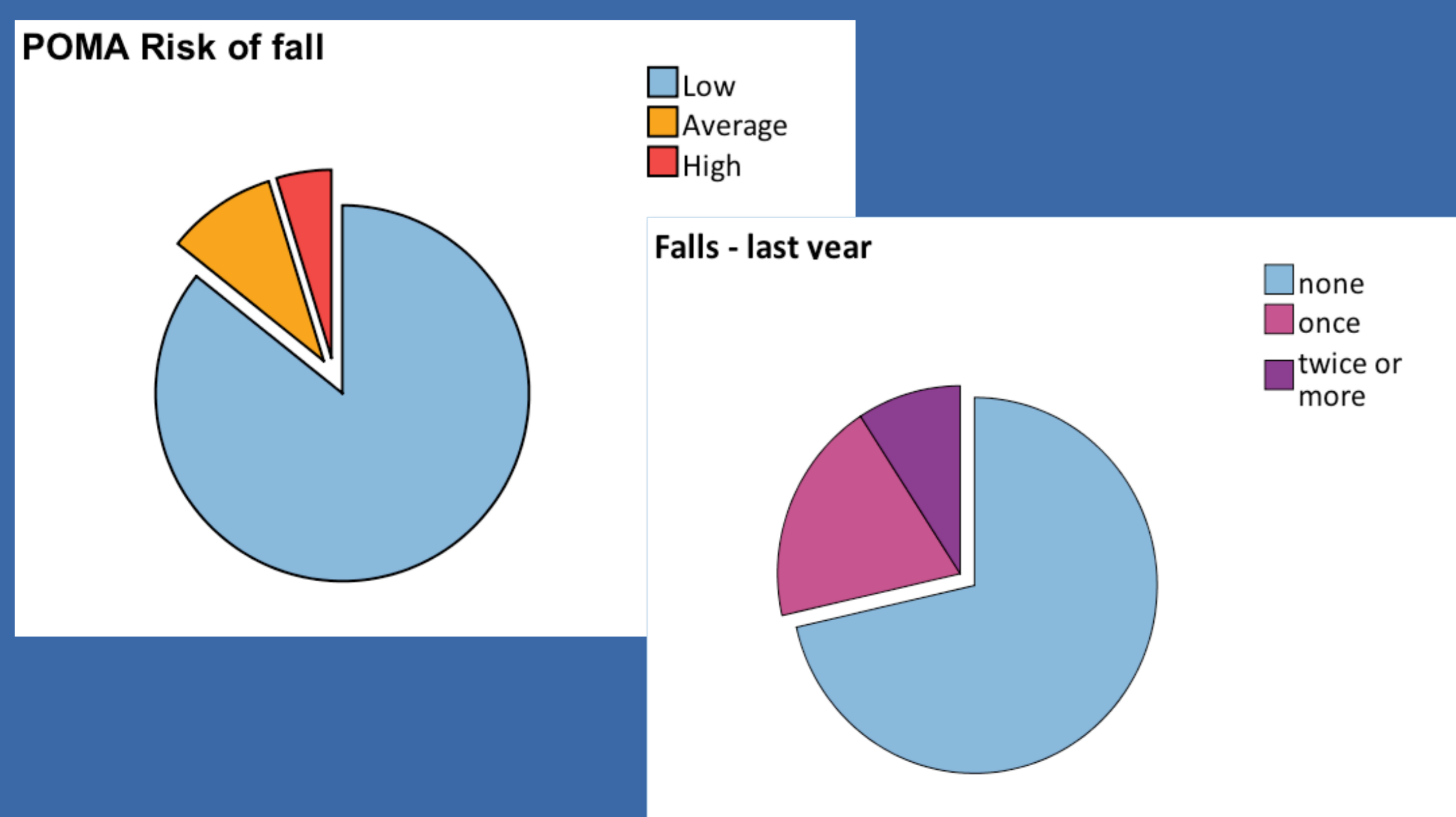
The screening tool in use for SHARA includes well-known instruments to measure health condition (EASY-care), risk of fall (Tinetti POMA), physical activity (Baecke's modified questionnaire), nutritional condition (MNA, NSI), cognitive and depressive status (MMSE, Yesavage GDS), and also socio-demographic questions. Mini Mental State Examination questions appear early in the questionnaire and play an important role in identifying individuals with impaired cognitive function, that are discarded from further answering (34%).



This questionnaire has been applied to subjects (with ages ranging from 62 to 96) from different elderly communities, such as community centers, assisted homes, senior residences and senior universities, throughout the Algarve, from Lagos to Vila Real de Santo António. Most respondents live in an urban environment (70%), rural and semi-rural communities (26%), some in fishing communities (4%). At present it has been applied to 138 individuals.

Most of our sample can read and write (82.8%), a few can only write (3%) or read (1%); an important size group never attended school (20.2%) and only a small group attended higher education (8%).

The inquired elderly include: community dwelling senior citizens, living on their residences, either alone (41.5%) or with relatives (spouses, children and grandchildren) (38.5%); people living on their own but assisted either by a family member, a friend or an institution for personal hygiene, shopping/cooking and cleaning, in a daily or weekly basis (4.4%); people living on their own residence but attending day care facilities and people who live in an institutional residence.



3. Preliminary results

A first glance of the results points out risk of malnutrition (17.7%) or malnutrition (1.3%); individuals with normal nutritional condition often show overweight; those living with relatives present the highest incidence of overweight and the lowest risk of malnutrition.

A number of elderly reports falling at least once during the past year (28.6%), risk of fall is medium to high (29.7%).