



Generations &
Gender Programme



Report

15th Meeting of the Generations and Gender Programme Council of Partners UNECE International Working Group

Brussels, Belgium

6 June 2018



UNECE

Participation

There were GGP team representatives from 22 countries (Austria, Belarus, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom). Together with representatives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) and the Population Europe/Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR), the meeting had a total of 41 participants (see [list of participants](#))

1. Opening

The Council of Partners (CoP) meeting took place on 6 June 2018 (afternoon), on the day preceding the 2018 European Population Conference. The meeting was chaired by Zsolt Spéder (Hungarian Demographic Research Institute), the Chair of the Council of Partners. Vitalija Gaucaite Wittich, UNECE, helped to moderate the discussion and procedural matters. Following the round of participants' introduction and the welcoming remarks by UNECE and the Chair of the Council of Partners, the meeting participants adopted the proposed agenda and the minutes of the last meeting.¹

2. Activities of the GGP Coordination team

The central Coordination Team (CCT) is composed of the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI), the Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques (INED), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR).

The report on the ongoing and planned activities by the GGP central Coordination Team was divided into three parts: (a) General update on CCT scope of work over the last year (presented by Anne Gauthier), (b) Data products and dissemination (presented by Judith Koops and Arianna Caporali), and (c) Field work update and planning (presented by Tom Emery).²

(a) General update on current CCT structure and scope of work

GGP central Coordination Team is (formally?) structured into five sections and covers a broad range of activities:

- 1) Management and direction – strategic development, human resources, reporting to funders, collaboration with other research institutes, contact with the Consortium Board.
- 2) Data developments and services to users – data harmonisation and enrichment, data documentation, archiving, release, NESSTAR, data agreements (UNECE), user registration (UNECE), user queries, Harmonized Histories, Contextual Database (INED).
- 3) Liaison and dissemination - website, newsletter, social media, liaison with stakeholders, impact monitoring – both scientific and related to policy priorities -, fundraising, support to countries (re: roadmap, funding, dissemination).

¹ The report of the 2017 meeting (in Berlin) may be found at:

<https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/ggp/iwg/Berlin/Report-14th-meeting-GGP-COP.pdf>

² The power point presentations are available on the 15th CoP meeting webpage

<https://unece.org/population/events/fifteenth-meeting-ggp-council-partners>

- 4) Fieldwork operations – sampling and fieldwork guidelines, Blaise coded CAPI questionnaire, integration of tools, support to countries including fieldwork management, quality checks, reporting (key indicators), and training.
 - 5) Research and innovation and projects – survey experiment, questionnaire evaluation and development, SERISS, European Cloud, other innovations.
- (b) Data products, services and dissemination
- 1) *Core data products/releases*: GGS harmonized data (Poland wave 2; Wave 3- Netherlands, Hungary, France); special teaching dataset - a subsample of the GGS datasets for use in teaching environment, simplifies access for students - to be released in 2018.
 - 2) *Releases for the Contextual Database (CDB)*: Sweden's data in spring 2018; Multilinks database – aggregate indicators for all GGS countries on intergenerational support – incorporated.
 - 3) *Contextual Database*: new governance - since last CoP, INED is responsible for the CDB; a new online platform PX-Web is being implemented. A consultation on the core list of indicators to reduce the existing number in the database has been launched. The aim is to reduce burden through more efficient data collection and promote more widely the CDB
 - 4) *Other data products*: Harmonized Histories (Belarus, Uruguay, Canada); Associated Surveys (NKPS) – all information available via the GGP website. There is the possibility that data from a similar survey in Colombia can be made available through the Harmonized Histories.
 - 5) *Services*: GGP 2020 test (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Buenos Aires); Pilot web survey (Portugal, Germany, Croatia)
 - 6) *Dissemination*: Unique users: 3,912 (increase by 10%), Newsletter readers: 1,199, Bibliography: 1,220 titles and growing – CoP members were encouraged to update and enter information on their recent publications; Twitter is now extensively used to disseminate information and flag promotional material; NESSTAR – had more than 10,000 visits, of which 8,000 are returning visits. 35% increase of unique users since 2017 CoP. Important events promoting the programme: GGP webinar; stakeholder seminar (23 January 2018, Brussels) as well as presentations and attendance at various conferences.
- (c) Field work update and planning (Evaluation – 2017; Planning – 2018; Initiation - 2019)
- 1) *Completed or ongoing: Belarus*: fieldwork completed; gains expected and rapid release of the data. *Kazakhstan*: same questionnaire as Belarus, with a sample of over 15000; challenging environment and diverse fieldwork conditions; fielded in both Kazakh and Russian, sample management system used. *Latvia*: fieldwork starting in June; sample management system also provided; questionnaire in Russian and Latvian (live switching). *Argentina*: translation of the questionnaire in Spanish (TMT); fieldwork to start in late 2018.
 - 2) *Planning 2018*: The above-mentioned work is going on in parallel to the EPI project and the pilot studies. To facilitate GGS 2020 implementation, CCT aims to provide national teams with full specifications for tendering, fieldwork and a costing assessment; also, for CCT to engage fully there is a need for formalization of Council of Partners and relationship with Central Coordination Team (Service Agreements). Model agreement will be available by end of 2018.
 - 3) *Initiation 2019*: CCT will provide final questionnaire for translation; national teams translate and back translate questionnaire and submit to Consortium Board for final approval; CCT will work with national teams to ensure sustainable funding through three waves. National pre-testing may begin in late 2019.

- 4) *Fieldwork procedures*: future GGP data collection will be coordinated centrally; sample management will be coordinated in each GGP country; sampling and fieldwork procedures pre-harmonized.
- 5) *Pilot Studies*: testing Push to Web study; primary concern to see how this affects data quality and response rates – Portugal: fieldwork is currently under way; Germany: about to start, probably next week, Croatia: fieldwork to start in September.

3. Plans for a new round of data collection

There are over 20 countries that have signed Statement of Intent for GGS 2020 round. It is not a binding agreement however, it is an important indicator to gauge interest and the breadth of the study. The list of countries with signed Statements is broader than in previous rounds and includes countries from Latin America, East Asia which had not been on board previously and demonstrate the potential. About nine countries are also working on funding applications (Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, and Germany have already identified the funding). As earlier mentioned, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Latvia have /are doing the fieldwork; while Argentina, Croatia, Germany, Portugal are engaged in pilots.

4. Country progress reports

Italy

Romina Fabroni reported that GGS has been earlier integrated in a national project. However, since there are other two surveys on themes close to the GGS, the prospects to get funding are not promising for the time being as the funding for social surveys was cut in general. The Families & Social Subjects survey (quasi GG survey) used a different sample design in 2016 with individuals 18 and older and there is no possibility to follow up with this panel. Administration data is being integrated and a rolling census is planned in Italy and therefore the government won't fund this type of survey. In 2016, the ISTAT President did sign the ESFRI application but there is no assurance that the next ESFRI application support would be forthcoming.

In response to a question “would it be possible to post-harmonize the 2016 data of Italian Families & Social Subjects survey”, Romina Fraboni suggested to have a follow-up discussion with CCT and indicated that among its sample of 33,000, there are some original GGS respondents.

Sweden

In 2012, the GGS was completely based on register data; Sweden has recently compiled and provided necessary data for CDB. For further involvement, the issues remain with funding (research council had delegated the fund distribution to Universities); there are also some legal hurdles in particular in regard of the use of register-based data.

Germany

The Pairfam survey (yearly panel) funding ends in 2022; and the idea is to bring together Pairfam with other surveys and create a research infrastructure. The German Ministry of Interior is very open to fund this infrastructure, but it is necessary to get support from the Ministry of Education. The plan is to have a GGS at the end of 2020 (CAPI, 10,000 individual respondents as well as partners of couples (3,700)). In the years between the waves there would be a web-based survey with questions from Pairfam and GGS and there would be a space for incorporating some specific questions from the scientific community.

The difficulty of convincing the political community remains. Each ministry is concerned not only about the benefit for the country but also for the issues on their portfolio, hence there is a need for a differentiated approach.

Estonia

The national team applied for funding for fielding a GGS – but social sciences usually get a small proportion of funding. Still possible also to try to get direct support from the ministries (there is now lots of interest in fertility). Working more directly with the government officials might yield some results.

Czech Republic

The Czech team has submitted an application to the national roadmap. Awaiting for final decision from the ministries. Other funding opportunities under analysis. The national team is more confident now that following Austria's example it is possible to focus sample on the age range 18-49. Otherwise it is very difficult to convince national funders because there are already three social science research infrastructures in the Czech Republic (Sociological Data Archive, ESS, SHARE) and the willingness of existing research institutes to cooperate/ merge efforts is rather low.

Belarus

Representative of the UNFPA Belarus office that co-funded and helped to coordinate the GGS in the country, reported that after the fieldwork was concluded and data became available to the national research community there is clearly a growing interest in it and several new analytical publications are already in preparation. The UNFPA local office also helped to prepare and submit a funding proposal for a GGS wave 2 and is awaiting for the results. The national GGP team is composed of very different institutions: University (research team) representatives of ministries and statistical office, local representatives from the United Nations agencies (UNFPA, UNICEF). This brings some difficulty in coordinating efforts but also speaks for a strength of interest and support.

The field work for GGS first wave was completed in November 2017 and the subregional forum to discuss the very first findings and their implications was organised in March 2018.

Hungary

Hungary has completed the 5th wave of GGS last year. GGS is considered a very important data for the research community in the country. A user codebook was produced, there is also ongoing work in terms of data harmonization. There was a large panel attrition between the third and fourth wave and also between fourth and fifth wave. Therefore, this panel will not be followed in the future - it is very hard to keep the panel for so many years and with such a complex questionnaire. The team will be investing in making GGS data available and keep serving the community.

Taiwan

Yen-hsin Alice Cheng noted important changes in demographic dynamics in Taiwan and noted that scientific evidence base for deeper understanding of the developments is somewhat lacking. At the moment, there is only one similar study available - the Panel Study of Family Dynamics (PSFD). The Principal Investigator of that study at the National Academy of Science is interested in joining efforts to introduce the GGS in Taiwan. There are prospects to get additional funding from the government for which the international aspect is a key marketing point. The national team based at Academia Sinica is quite small, four members with two new members coming on board. The aim is to have a sample of 8,000 – 10,000 respondents.

5. Brief summary of comments, questions and answers

Several country reports raised similar issues and provided an opportunity to clarify some questions by the CCT or share useful experience by other country teams. From the CCT side, Anne Gauthier and Tomas Emery reiterated the availability of centralized support in preparing funding requests and confirmed that the web based questionnaire (used for piloting) is already available. By referring to the Netherlands example they also explained the benefit of working collaboratively under one “Umbrella” with other social survey infrastructures.

CoP Chair Zsolt Spéder pointed to a need to share in a more detailed manner how to integrate with the national roadmap consortia by providing examples as best practice, or criteria on how to do this.

Monika Mynarska and Irena Kotowska, Poland, offered to share their experience in more detail with interested teams on how they are building on efforts to merge the infrastructures and incorporate other projects in Poland. They also pointed out the beneficial outcomes in using references to various successful cases from France, Netherlands, etc on how to implement such an approach. Isabella Buber-Ensser added a few points from the Austrian experience.

6. Update on ESFRI and national roadmaps

CCT member Suzana Cabaco presented some key aspects related to the current status of the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures. In 2016 GGP was considered as ESFRI Emerging Project, with an EPI status it received funding by Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme. CCT is currently preparing an application to join 2020 ESFRI. She also provided details on the national roadmaps and reminded about the need to receive the letters of national support.

During the follow-up question and answer session, the CCT pointed out that what is needed is a Letter of Political Support – political commitment recognising the importance of the GGP as a research infrastructure, it does not imply a commitment for financial support. The letter should come from national government, ideally the ministry where ESFRI is located in a given country. Also getting expressions of support from outside EU could demonstrate GGP’s global appeal.

7. Closing of the meeting

In her closing remarks Vitalija Gaucaite Wittich, UNECE, briefly summarised the discussion and thanked the CCT and the country teams for the work done in the last year.

The CoP agreed to hold the next meeting back-to-back with the GGP User Conference in December 2019 to be hosted by INED in Paris.