



Generations &
Gender Programme



Report

**12th Meeting of the
Generations and Gender Programme
Council of Partners
UNECE International Working Group**

Vienna University of Economics and Business,
Vienna, Austria

02 December 2015



UNECE

Participation

Team representatives from a total of 23 countries attended the meeting including representatives from 12 GGP participating countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden) and representatives from 11 countries interested in the GGP (Belarus, Canada, China, Croatia, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America) attended the meeting. Together with representatives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI), Institut National D'études Démographiques (INED) and the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR), the meeting had a total of 40 participants (see list of participants: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41311#/>).

1. Opening

The Council of Partners (CoP) meeting took place on 02 December 2015 (morning), after the 3rd GGP User Conference. The meeting was chaired by Irena Kotowska (Warsaw School of Economics, Poland), the chair of the Council of Partners. Vitalija Gaucaite Wittich (UNECE) helped to moderate the discussion.

Vitalija Gaucaite Wittich welcomed participants and introduced the agenda, asking if there were any additional requests regarding the agenda. The agenda was approved as circulated ahead of the meeting without further amendments.

The report of the 11th meeting of the Council of Partners (25 June 2014 in Budapest) was adopted. It is available online: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=34549#/>.

In her opening address, Irena Kotowska gave an overview of the governance structure of the GGP with advisory board, consortium board, council of partners and coordination team. With regard to the Council of Partners, she highlighted that CoP members are all institutions involved in fielding the GGP or interested in fielding a GGP in the future and stressed that part of the role of the CoP is to contribute to the visibility of the GGP on the national and international level.

2. Activities of the GGP Coordination team

GGP Project Manager, Tom Emery (NIDI), provided updates on the work of the coordination team and on related developments since the last meeting.

- New harmonized data have been published, for Sweden (wave 1), for the Czech Republic (wave 1 and 2), for Austria (wave 2) and the consolidated wave 2.

- More data will be forthcoming, from Italy (wave 2), the Russian Federation (wave 2 and 3), the Netherlands (wave 3), Hungary (wave 3), Australia (wave 3) and France (wave 3).
- The Harmonized Histories, originally developed under the leadership of Brienna Perelli-Harris and supported by the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, and can be accessed by all GGP users. They contain data from GGP countries as well as from the United Kingdom, United States and Spain. Data from Pairfam was included for Germany. For the future, it is planned to add more data, including Canada.
- Data from the Family and Fertility Surveys for 25 countries will be released via the GGP as part of the new GGP website. The Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research currently works on an upgrade of the website and will launch the new website in spring 2016.
- The NESSTAR system enables users to search, browse and visualize GGS data and metadata, without the user having to apply for the micro-data and allows for basic data analysis. Three types of data files can be accessed: Consolidated wave 1 and wave 2 data, wave 1 and wave 2 country files (30) and a file on variable availability. NESSTAR features extensive documentation which is in compliance with the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI).
- Since the last meeting, five new data files were published as well as enriched wave 2 documentation and improved fieldwork descriptions for the Netherlands, Austria and Sweden. A few countries are still missing in the country specific documentation.
- In the contextual database, an updated dataset for Austria was released. The complete contextual database collection as well as a collection of meta-information and descriptions concerning the former contextual database and its data can be downloaded from the GGP website.
- The number of users of the GGP continues to grow and amounts to 2,800 now. The number of publications based on GGP data is also increasing with journal articles being the prevalent type of publication. The interactive bibliography allows each registered user of the GGP to create new entries and currently holds 1,100 entries.

3. Country progress reports

Tom Emery (NIDI) provided updates on recent developments in a number of countries.

Poland

Tom Emery reported that the wave 2 data was collected for Poland in 2014 with 62 per cent of Wave 1 respondents re-interviewed and a total of 12,419 interviews. The survey covered the topics of reproductive health, life satisfaction, migration, values and costs of children, religion and women's attitudes towards work and provides continued labour market biographies of the respondents. The data is currently cleaned and harmonized and will be submitted to NIDI in 2016.

Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, both wave 1 and 2 have been submitted and released. Especially among students, there is a renewed interest in the GGS.

Netherlands

Wave 4 of the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (NKPS) was collected in 2014 using only computer-assisted telephone interviews and computer-assisted web interviews. In this wave, a retention rate of 64.5 per cent was reached. Age and marital status had an effect on the selection of the interview mode with older people and women favouring the telephone interview. The data from the fourth wave was released to the public in June 2015 and can be accessed by registered users at the Data Centre on the NKPS website.

The Onderzoek Gezinsvorming 2013 (OG 2013) was pre-harmonized with the GGS and NKPS: The OG will likely be fielded again in 2018.

Canada

The Canadian General Social Survey (GSS) on families from 2011 provides sufficient overlap with the GGP to be integrated into the harmonized histories. The approval to release the 'month of event' variables is expected shortly. The next Canadian GSS on families is planned for 2017 and has been further harmonized with the core GGS to increase comparability.

Australia

Australia has two waves available on the GGP website. Wave 3 was collected in 2011 and is partially harmonized but a change in staff has led to a break in the process. The Australian HILDA survey includes the GGS module in its data collection in 2015, making it a wave 4. Australia is currently in need of resources for the data harmonization.

Italy

The Italian National Institute for Statistics (ISTAT) provided support to the application of the GGP for the ESFRI Roadmap 2016. The Italian wave 2 was submitted to NIDI for

integration and release which is foreseen for January-February 2016. A new round of Families and Social Subjects Survey will be carried out in 2016.

Sweden

The fieldwork for wave 1 was completed in 2013 and the data was released in June 2015, making it the fastest ever harmonization. Wave 2 is taken from registry data and will be submitted to NIDI in 2016/7. The funding for the contextual database contribution is secured and will be submitted to INED in October/November 2016.

Turkey

The translation of the questionnaire was completed in May 2015 and a pre-test and interviewer training took place in July 2015, followed by a test study. The fieldwork will be carried out by The Ministry of Family and Social Policy and is planned for 2018 or 2019.

Belarus

A representative of Belarus reported that Belarus developed a questionnaire based on the GGS example questions. The United Nations Population Fund provides support for the research related to wave 1. Belarus plans to conduct three waves but more expertise and consultation on how to proceed will be needed. The next step will be to form a consortium to reach the necessary capacity and expertise to carry out the fieldwork and related steps.

China

A representative of China informed participants that the first wave of the Chinese Family panel survey was conducted in 2014 and is now in the data cleaning process with the data to be released in the near future. The family panel survey is funded by the government and comprises a sample size of 32,000 households and 98,000 individuals. The survey consists of different questionnaires for all different groups and there is currently no English version available. A second round of the survey is planned for 2015 and it is planned to include some core questions of the GGS into the questionnaires for the second and third round. They confirmed their interest to join the GGP.

Uruguay

Uruguay is currently forming their national team and confirmed their interest in the GGP. The aim is to raise money and to roughly align their national surveys in 2018/19 to the GGS.

Portugal

Eduardo Castro from the University of Aveiro informed that the Portuguese statistical office is the contact point in Portugal but due to the financial crisis they have no capacity to run surveys. The university is mainly a user of information but has no resources to conduct surveys. They aim to strengthen the connection with the Portuguese statistical office and can assist in any issues related to data treatment, modeling etc. In 2016, the Horizon 2020 programme is going to launch a call for data modelling etc. and the University of Aveiro will be very happy to participate.

Taiwan

Lillian Lih-Rong Wang expressed Taiwan's interest in joining the GGP. Plenty of data similar to the GGS is available and as a first step, a harmonization of this data is planned. The second step would then be to develop a survey which would be based on the GGS questionnaire for 2019. She expressed an interest in the GGP team having a regional workshop in Asia.

4. Plans for a new round of data collection

Tom Emery presented the plans for a new round of data collection in 2019. The previous questionnaire will be revised and improved, aiming for a greater standardization in sampling, collection and processing. For the longitudinal components, the aim is to improve respondent tracking and to use multi-mode and administrative data.

Three different options of operation for this new round of data collection were presented and put up for discussion: an associated survey, a centrally led and a nationally led survey.

The option of associated surveys would make use of preexisting surveys with significant overlap with the GGS. The central team provides feedback on the design in order to maximize the overlap. The national teams design and field the survey and the central team then harmonizes and releases the data.

Nationally-led surveys require preexisting national teams and a strong research community in the country. The research agenda and design is developed on the national level which facilitates including for example sub-samples or additional modules. Questionnaire and fieldwork guidelines have been centrally designed, national teams complete the translation and adapt the survey design which is then approved by the Consortium Board alongside the back translation.

In the option of centrally-led surveys, the GGP coordination team coordinates the data collection and ensures its compliance with the GGP design and standards. This option can be beneficial if it is applied for regions or clusters such as the Balkans, Baltics or Iberia due to economies of scale.

The timetable for the new round of data collection from 2018 to 2020 was suggested. It foresees that the country questionnaires are translated in spring 2018 and approved in fall 2018. The in-country testing is planned for spring 2019 and the fieldwork is then planned to commence in fall 2019. In spring 2020, all data should be delivered to the central team.

In the following discussion, the question was raised if it was efficient to cover the entire age range until the age of 79 in the next survey wave. The replies highlighted that including people over 50 holds a significant value and older people are needed as some questions require people to look back on certain life events. It was added that expanding the age range is not very expensive due to the household screening process.

The three different options of operation for the new round of data collection were controversially discussed. A bigger role of the central team would require more central funding. Zsolt Speder (Hungary) favoured centrally-led / financed surveys with added value for old countries and as a second strategy to incorporate new countries and strengthen the harmonization work.

5. Networking and dissemination activities

Anne Gauthier (NIDI) gave an overview of possible strategies for networking and dissemination activities. Key performance indicators of the GGP are the number of users, its interdisciplinarity, scientific outputs and publications in the peer-reviewed top journals. The number of users can be increased by making efforts to get students interested in working with GGP data and by ensuring that all co-authors are registered as GGP users. It was suggested to remind all major institutions that all users of GGP data should register instead of distributing the data among themselves without registering. The bibliography reflects the scientific outputs of the GGP but a lot of output in national languages and publications which do not explicitly mention the use of GGP data are missing in the bibliography. Members of the Council of Partners are therefore encouraged to report publications, especially those in their national language.

The potential of the GGP in addressing societal challenges of Horizon 2020 on the European level should be highlighted.

Members of the Council of Partners are encouraged to use publications or journals aimed at the general public in their country to increase the visibility of the GGP.

The Pan-European relevance of the GGP is reflected in its application for the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) which was supported by six countries. At the formal hearing in Brussels, the GGP was considered excellent scientifically while governance was identified as the weakest aspect. The network

structure of the GGP should be improved including clearer roles and responsibilities between the central coordination team and national teams (Note that since then the GGP has reached the status of ESFRI Emerging Project).

National roadmaps to support research facilities currently exist in all European Union member states and the GGP is currently on the national roadmap of the Netherlands, France and Norway. Other countries are encouraged to explore ways to apply for inclusion on their national roadmaps.

It was advised to make relevant ministries aware of the GGP and to work on the links to political institutions in order to ensure that the GGP is supported on the political level. National networking and dissemination activities include national events and publications as well as national GGP websites which Belgium and Austria have in place.

Reaching out to stakeholders is another important element of networking and dissemination activities. Each institution is asked to identify stakeholders on the national level with which relationships could be established. Stakeholders can be policymakers, statistical offices, NGOs and the industry.

The following discussion focused on ways to improve the GGP and the quality of the data as well as on funding and cost efficiency issues.

It was proposed to include a clear citation suggestion on the GGP website to facilitate the reference to GGP in publications. Another idea was to classify the publications in the bibliography which would allow for analyses of how and in which fields the data is used. This could be a possibility for the new website.

Irena Kotowska (Poland) advocated increasing the country coverage and extending the data platform. She highlighted that the comparability within the GGS is limited due to the flexible approach and in order to increase the comparability a greater centralization and more funding would be needed. In the discussion, comparisons to SHARE and to ESS were drawn while noting that SHARE and ESS have far more resources and bigger teams. Anne Gauthier (NIDI) reported that the GGP is starting methodological cooperation with SHARE at the European level. There are various ways to collaborate with SHARE, in particular in countries where both surveys exist. SHARE could for example help in finding the right correspondents as they dismiss the younger respondents which are relevant for the GGS.

Trude Lappegard (Norway) was concerned with the cost of the GGS. She suggested to develop guidelines and share best practices on how to cut costs. Tom Emery informed that the interview length and the sample size are among the main determinants of cost.

Christos Bagavos (Greece) informed that Greece did not take part in the GGS because of budget constraints. The strength of the GGP lies in the focus on youth and gender

while SHARE is more linked to societal aspects such as health and ageing. He suggested specific applications of the GGP in the context of gender or youth. He underlined the importance of policy implications, especially with regard to applications for funding.

Anne Gauthier highlighted that the strength of the GGP lies in the support of the demographic community and the partner involvement. She stressed the need for further funding in order to not rely solely on funds from the European commission and to be able to finance a slightly bigger central team which can then assist national teams and explore further dissemination activities. The aim of more central funding was also supported by Karel Neels (Belgium) and Zsolt Speder (Hungary). They were skeptical of the national model and national teams having to raise funds.

Karel Neels (Belgium) suggested to develop a methodology on how to use the GGS and the contextual database in combination as not many papers make joint use of these two infrastructures. Isabella Buber-Ennser (Austria) suggested to focus on improving the quality of the current data as some variables are disharmonized. She proposed to organize a meeting of people working in the field in order to find a solution for this problem. The new website might also have a space for users to share new imputed variables or syntax to correct variables etc.

6. Summary and conclusions

The Chair, together with colleagues from NIDI and UNECE, thanked participants and summarized the discussion of the meeting. They also thanked the Austrian colleagues, organizers of the 2015 GGP Users Conference, for the possibility to host the meeting on the side of the Conference.

The next meeting will take place for half a day on 31 August in Mainz, before the official opening of the European Population Conference. Information on the exact time and location will be sent in due course.