



Generations and Gender Programme – European Research Infrastructure Consortium

Scientific and Technical Description

March 2026



**Funded by
the European Union**

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ALAP: Latin American Population Association
BiB: Federal Institute for Population Research (Bundesinstitut für Bevölkerungsforschung), Germany
CDB: Contextual Database
CESSDA-ERIC: Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives - European Research Infrastructure Consortium
DANS: Data Archiving and Networked Services
DDI: Data and Documentation Initiative
DHS: Demographic Health Survey
EAPS: European Association for Population Studies
EC: European Commission
ERA: European Research Area
ERIC: European Research Infrastructure Consortium
ESFRI: European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures
ESS-ERIC: European Social Survey- European Research Infrastructure Consortium
EU: European Union
EU-SILC: EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
FFS: Family and Fertility Survey
GDPR: Generation Data Protection Regulation
GGP-ERIC: Generations and Gender Programme - European Research Infrastructure Consortium
GGP: Generations and Gender Programme
GGS: Generations and Gender Survey
GUIDE: Growing Up in Digital Europe
HH: Harmonized Histories
INED: National Institute of Demographic Studies (Institut national d'études démographiques), France
IUSSP: International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
KPI: Key Performance Indicator
NIDI: Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute
SDG: Sustainable Development Goal
SHARE-ERIC: Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe - European Research Infrastructure Consortium
SOEP: German Socio-Economic Panel
UNECE: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund
WFS: World Fertility Survey

Executive summary

The Generations and Gender Programme-European Research Infrastructure Consortium (GGP-ERIC) is an international research infrastructure that is dedicated to the study of population and family dynamics. It is the only research infrastructure that collects, processes, and disseminates cross-nationally comparable longitudinal data with a unique focus on young adults, families, and their life courses. GGP-ERIC holds a collection of data from around 350,000 people from more than 30 countries in Europe and beyond. The GGP-ERIC operates as an open-access infrastructure and currently counts over 6,000 registered users worldwide.

Population change has been defined as one of the megatrends that will shape the future of Europe. Low fertility and longer life expectancy have strained economies and social systems, but they also offer opportunities for innovation and inclusive social policies, emphasising demographic resilience. Shifts in fertility, gender roles, and equality norms have transformed labour participation and family dynamics, resulting in more complex life courses and family structures. Capturing these complexities and understanding their implications lie at the core of GGP-ERIC's motivation for producing its data.

The GGP-ERIC's main product is the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS), a collection of longitudinal survey data on the life experiences and family relationships of individuals aged 18 to 79 across different countries. The GGS provides panel data for a comprehensive understanding of social processes, enabling cutting-edge and supporting the development of evidence-informed policies to address key social challenges. Its optimal survey design ensures the data are of high quality, can respond to changes in society, and lead to advances in scientific work.

By establishing the GGP as an ERIC, European Union member states will take a significant step in jointly addressing demographic challenges that shape our societies today and in the future. The GGP-ERIC will offer its diverse and expanding user community continuous access to critical data, enabling them to explore new research avenues with real-life policy implications. The research infrastructure will facilitate the shift to a comprehensive, transnational understanding, providing new insights into crucial societal changes and ensuring the collection and dissemination of demographic survey data at a European level and beyond.

The Scientific and Technical Description of the GGP-ERIC provides a concise overview of the infrastructure's structure, scientific and societal relevance, data life cycle and technical operations, as well as its quality and risk management strategy. This document is primarily intended for the European Commission (EC) and governmental and non-governmental organisations, including funding bodies, data-collection institutions, and relevant policymakers interested in supporting or engaging with the future GGP-ERIC.

1. Introduction: the GGP case

Demographic change is a megatrend shaping Europe's future (European Commission, 2022). Decades of low fertility (e.g., Kotowska et al., 2021) and increased life expectancy have strained economies and social systems, raising concerns about infrastructure and service sustainability (European Commission, 2021). However, these shifts also present opportunities for innovation and the development of more inclusive social policies (United Nations, 2023), highlighting the potential for demographic resilience (UNFPA, 2023). Changes in fertility, alongside evolving gender roles and equality norms (England, 2010; Goldscheider et al., 2015), have transformed labour participation and family dynamics (Fanelli and Profeta, 2021). These trends have led to more complex life courses and family structures (e.g., Billari and Liefbroer, 2010). The key challenge lies in capturing these complexities and understanding their implications, which requires cross-nationally comparable micro-level data.

The GGP-ERIC will be aimed at addressing this challenge. As an international research infrastructure focused on population and family dynamics, the **GGP-ERIC will be the only research infrastructure with a mission to collect, process, and disseminate cross-nationally comparable longitudinal survey data with a unique focus on young adults, families, and their life courses.** In 2025, the infrastructure held a collection of data from around 300,000 people from more than 30 countries in Europe and beyond. The ambition of the GGP-ERIC is to expand this collection both over time and space. The GGP-ERIC operates as an open-access infrastructure and currently counts over 6,000 registered users worldwide.

In more detail, the GGP-ERIC will:

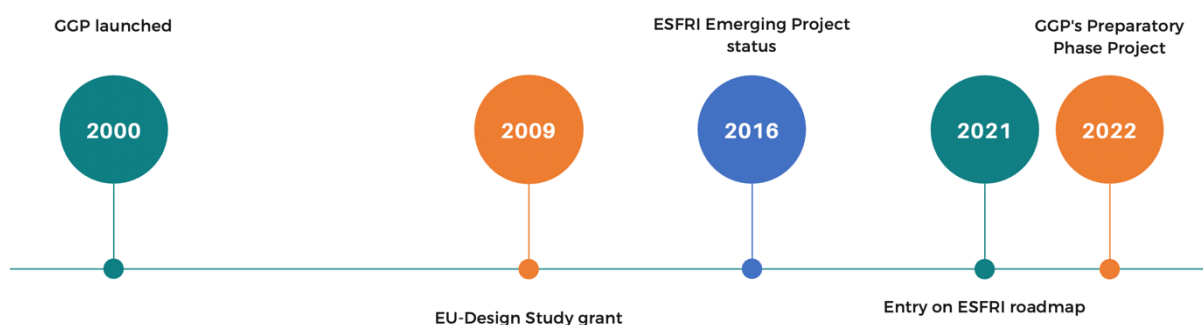
- Provide scientists and policy makers with high-quality data for targeted research and policy analysis on families and population change.
- Help formulate empirically-informed policies to address demographic challenges.
- Foster international collaboration in the interdisciplinary study of population.
- Train the next generation of scientists.
- Establish standards in the measurement and formatting of data on family dynamics.
- Enable innovation in the collection and analysis of data.
- Operate as an open-access infrastructure with its data being Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (FAIR).

GGP-ERIC will build on its predecessor, the GGP, which was started in 2000 as a Consortium of European partners under the umbrella of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The headquarters of the GGP were relocated to the Netherlands in 2009 where the GGP-ERIC Central Hub will also be situated. The infrastructure will follow a tradition of large international demographic surveys that was started in the 1970s with the World Fertility Survey (WFS), and in the 1990s with the Family and Fertility Surveys (FFS). These surveys aimed at providing cross-sectional, cross-nationally comparable data in order to monitor and understand the rapid and profound demographic changes that were happening at the time. Based on the successes and lessons learnt from these earlier surveys, the GGP's aim was to develop a permanent infrastructure that would provide cross-nationally comparable data to further address the scientific and societal challenges related to demographic changes. To achieve this goal, the GGP adopted a broader scope than its predecessors by collecting data on other important dimensions such as family dynamics, work-life balance, transition to adulthood, gender roles, wellbeing, and intergenerational exchanges. Most importantly, the

GGS was also conceptualised as a panel (prospective) study in order to monitor how people's lives unfold over time.

The GGP's sustainability and viability as a research infrastructure have been shaped by two significant projects. In 2009, the EU-funded "Design Study"¹ focused on improving GGP's methodology, data access, and collection efficiency, during which the GGP's coordination shifted from UNECE to the Netherlands, at the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI), a crucial move for strategic leadership. In 2016, the GGP was recognised as an emerging project by the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and received funding as part of the Horizon 2020 programme. The GGP-EPI² project aimed at standardising the technical guidelines, data agreements, and service contracts, and centralising its operations. This centralisation at NIDI streamlined the administration of the GGP questionnaire and improved fieldwork monitoring, in turn facilitating quicker data release. Following its inclusion in the ESFRI Roadmap in 2021, the GGP secured a Preparatory Phase grant³ in 2022 to enhance its sustainability, FAIR compliance, and readiness for new societal and technological challenges.

Figure 1: GGP milestones



Looking forward, the GGP-ERIC aims to continue providing interdisciplinary, internationally comparable, and longitudinal data, relevant for different fields of fundamental and applied sciences such as demography, economics, population studies, public policy, psychology, statistics, and others that can be used to address scientific and societal challenges related to demographic changes.

2. The GGP-ERIC structure

GGP-ERIC will be a distributed research infrastructure with a **Central Hub** located at the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) and with a series of **institutional and national nodes**. The core activities, as described in the GGP-ERIC Scientific and Technical Description, as well as the GGP-ERIC Statutes, are carried out by the Central Hub, institutional nodes, and national nodes. The Central Hub is in charge of coordinating all

¹ Design Studies for Research Infrastructures, Grant Agreement No GGP 212749

² Generations & Gender Programme: Evaluate, Plan and Initiate (GGP EPI), Grant Agreement No 739511

³ The Generations and Gender Programme Preparatory Phase Project, Grant Agreement No 101079357

activities related to the GGP-ERIC, including the management of the infrastructure and activities related to the whole data life cycle.

The **institutional nodes** are institutions which contribute to the core activities of the infrastructure, particularly through specific expertise that complements the activities carried out in the Central Hub. In 2025⁴, these included:

- The Institut national d'études démographiques (INED, France) which led the work in documenting the data and maintaining the GGP Contextual Database.
- The Federal Institute for Population Research (BiB, Germany) which led the work on producing the Harmonized Histories (HH) datasets.
- The UNECE provided the secretariat for the GGP Council of Partners and supported the work of the infrastructure in data dissemination.

The institutional nodes are currently supported by in-kind contributions by the institutes hosting them.

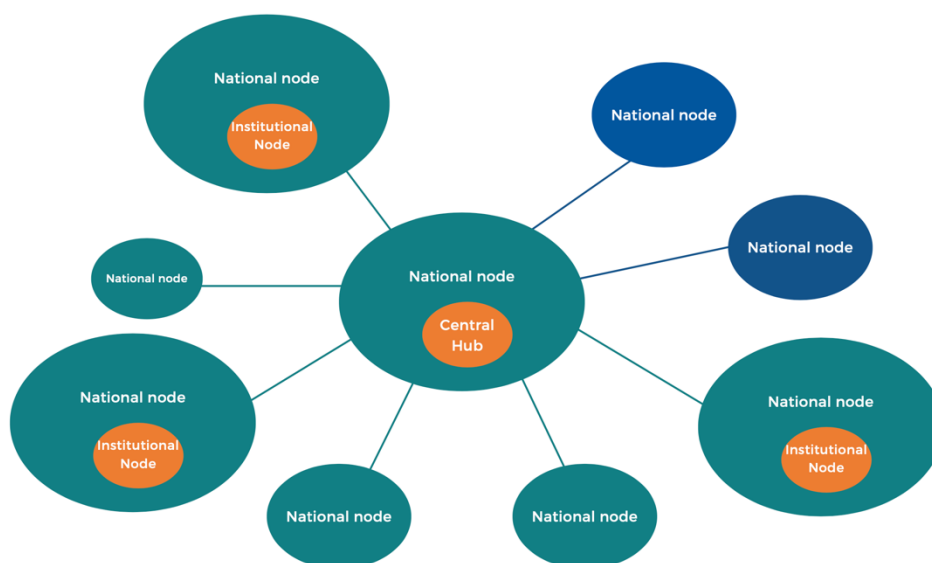
For continuity, these institutional nodes will continue their work on the core operation as part of GGP-ERIC for the 2027-2031 period. Part of the cost of carrying out these core activities will be covered by the GGP-ERIC central budget (the equivalent of 1 FTE respectively for INED and BiB). The work carried out by the nodes is described and agreed upon through a 5-year partnership agreement. The work is assessed yearly.

The **national nodes** are those involved in data collection at the national level in collaboration with the Central Hub. These nodes are composed of a national focal point (the national data coordinator) and a consortium of various stakeholders. All Members of the GGP-ERIC are considered national nodes, additional national nodes may join the infrastructure as Observer or Cooperating Partner countries as described in the Statutes⁵.

⁴ The nodes are subject to change depending on GGP-ERIC membership.

⁵ The definitions and procedure of becoming a GGP-ERIC Member, Observer or Cooperating Partner is outlined in the GGP-ERIC Statutes.

Figure 2: GGP-ERIC as distributed research infrastructure



Note: where national nodes are involved in national data collection, and institutional nodes are involved in other GGP-ERIC core operations. Colours: **Orange** is for core operations, **green** for countries that are a member of the GGP-ERIC, and **blue** for countries that are not members.

The GGP-ERIC will be governed by its Statutes which define its **governance, operational and community structure**.

The **governance structure** includes the GGP General Assembly and Advisory Board:

- The **General Assembly** is the ultimate decision-making body of the GGP-ERIC. It takes the necessary decisions on essential matters related to (the future of) the infrastructure, including appointing the Director. The General Assembly can create or disband advisory, governance or management bodies as deemed necessary.
- The **Advisory Board** provides input to the General Assembly through advice on strategic issues, including but not limited to vision, new initiatives, work plans, and quality assurance.

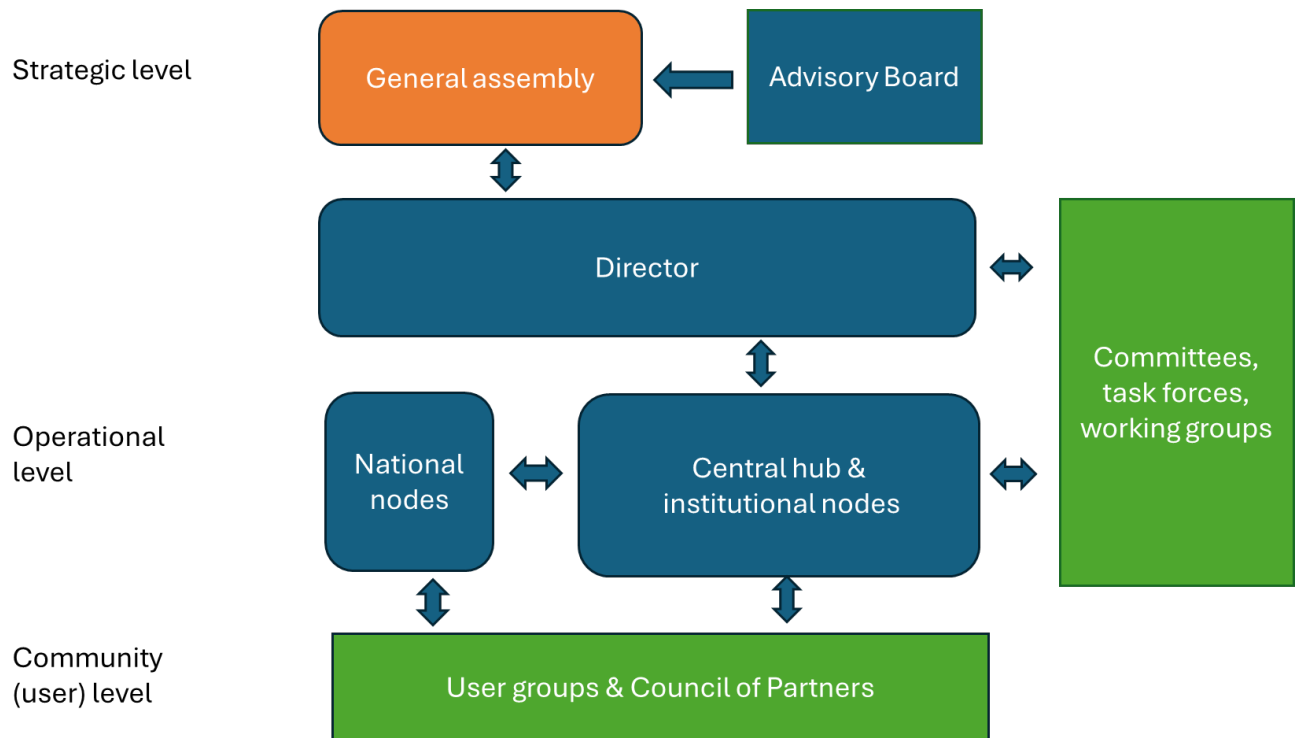
The **operational level** of the GGP-ERIC is the Central Hub, supplemented by institutional nodes. The management of the operational level lies in the Director, supported by other committees as needed.

- The **Director** has full authority to act on behalf of the GGP-ERIC, in accordance with the statutes of the GGP-ERIC and its legal constraints.
- The **Central Hub** is the central management office for the daily operations of GGP-ERIC. It executes the day-to-day management of GGP-ERIC, including assistance to the General Assembly. It is set up and managed by the Director. The Central Hub is complemented by the activities of the Institutional Nodes.

The GGP-ERIC community will be represented in the **Council of Partners** which is an informal network of national focal points and other members of countries or territories,

including international organisations, interested in the GGP-ERIC which aim at exchanging experiences in collecting GGP-ERIC data and/or other activities.

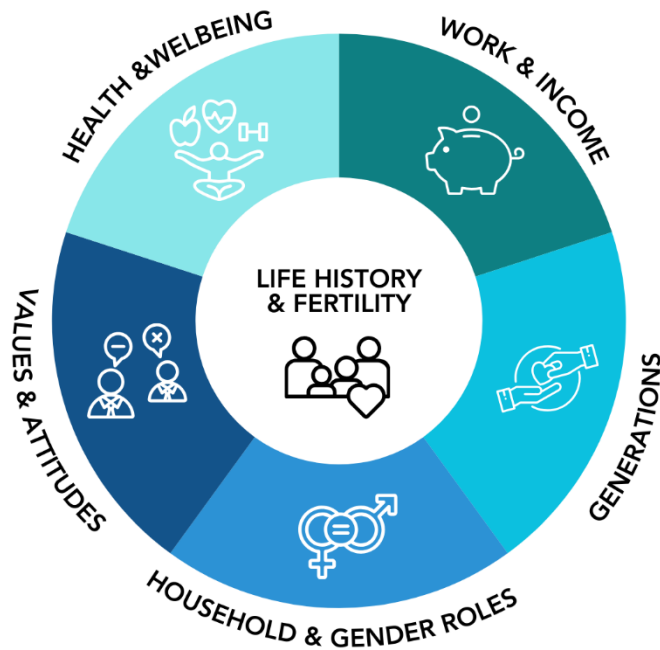
Figure 3: Organisation structure of GGP-ERIC



3. Scientific and societal relevance

Profound demographic changes have significantly altered the composition of population as well as the relationship between genders and generations. The GGP has had a significant scientific and societal impact in addressing the questions related to these changes in population and family dynamics, evidenced by numerous publications and governmental reports that contribute to policy and research discourse (for a discussion see [Gauthier et al., 2018](#)). Until now, the GGP data (for more information on GGP data products see sub-section 4.2) has been used extensively both in the population studies community and across multiple scientific disciplines. The data have been central for several international research projects, and master and doctoral theses. Given that the GGP data focus on life course and family dynamics, topics such as leaving the parental home, fertility decisions, union formation and dissolution, intergenerational relationships, gender roles, work-life balance, and well-being have been prominent in GGP data-based studies (see Figure 4 for topics covered in GGS). With transition to the new ERIC status, the GGP-ERIC will continue striving to excel in both scientific and societal spheres.

Figure 4: Main topics covered in GGS data



3.1 Population research

Cross-country comparative analyses

The cross-national comparability of the GGP data products provides unique research opportunities, setting the GGP data apart from single-country datasets (e.g., German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) or Understanding Society in the UK). For example, the broad geographical coverage of the GGS helped researchers study cross-country differences in topics such as life-course events (Schwanitz et al., 2021; Vikat, et.al., 2007; Zimmermann and Konietzka, 2018) and fertility intentions (Dantis et al., 2023; Barker and Buber-Ennsner, 2024). At the same time, recent research based on GGP data has highlighted that classic theories like gender equity theory (McDonald, 2000) and gender revolution theories (England, 2010; Esping-Andersen, 2009; Goldscheider et al., 2015) may not fully explain these phenomena in non-Western societies (Kan et al., 2022). In recent years, the GGP has further expanded its geographical scope to Latin America and East Asia, thereby allowing global comparisons of family dynamics, population trends, and gender equality.

The GGP data have also enabled researchers to examine the impact of the broader social contexts on individual life courses and well-being. These macro-micro relationships have been a central focus since the start of the GGP and its data collection (Vikat et al., 2007). They have led to analyses of how institutional, economic, social, and political setups influence individuals' lives. This includes examining the effects of different welfare systems, levels of welfare support and generosity, economic prosperity, religiosity, and demographic profiles of countries (e.g., Hofäcker et al., 2011; Fernández Soto et al., 2020).

Longitudinal studies using GGP data

The longitudinal design of GGP datasets has significantly advanced the understanding of life course transitions and their implications. It has been instrumental in studying changing life course patterns, particularly the transition into adulthood. By providing detailed retrospective

information on key demographic events such as leaving the parental home, marriage, divorce, and childbirth, GGP data allow researchers to analyse how these events occur and in what sequence. Research using GGP data has revealed significant shifts in the timing and order of these events, highlighting that different pathways to adulthood in Europe have evolved. For example, Schwanitz (2017) finds that young adults in Western Europe leave home later and cohabit longer, while Eastern Europe shows more traditional patterns. GGP data have also been used to shed new light on people's evolving understanding of cohabitation (Hiekel et al., 2014), the impact of education on family formation (Martín-García et al., 2017), the gendered relation between family formation and moving (Deimantas, 2023) and the impact of labour force participation on childbirth (Tomatis and Impicciatore, 2023).

Another core strength of the GGS lies in its prospective panel design. One key application is the study of the realisation of intentions. By linking intentions (at wave 1) with actual outcomes observed in the follow-up wave, researchers have investigated the factors that facilitate or hinder the realisation of these intentions. For example, studies have examined the impact of attitudes towards having a child, subjective norms for having a child and perceived behavioral constraints for having a child on (the realisation of) fertility behavior (Ajzen and Klobas, 2013; Dommermuth et al., 2015). Additionally, the prospective design allows researchers to observe the impact of earlier life events and decisions on subsequent outcomes, for example changes in family circumstances, economic status, living conditions, and family support networks.

By covering a large age range, the GGP datasets also make it possible to study changes across cohorts, including changes in life course trajectories over time. For instance, studies have shown that more recent cohorts have been delaying the transition to adulthood (Schwanitz, 2017) and that the partnership status at the birth of the first child has strongly changed across cohorts, with the most recent cohorts most likely to have a child within a non-marital cohabiting relationship than in the past (Koops et al., 2017).

3.2 Contribution to policy making

A core aim of the GGP-ERIC is to contribute to the broader discourse on societal challenges and to continue providing the data necessary for the development of evidence-informed policies. GGP data have been used in national contexts to address demographic and social developments as well as changes in family structures, gender roles, the shift in the age structure etc. It has also been used to measure Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): use of modern contraception (indicator 3.7.1); proportion of women aged 20-24 who were married or in a union before age 15 and age 18 (indicator 5.3.1); informed decisions regarding sexual and reproductive life (indicator 5.6.1)).

Below selected examples of findings from the most recent policy-relevant analyses based on GGP datasets are provided:

- Austria: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2015.00045.x>
- Poland: [The life of Poles: From leaving the parental home to retirement.](#)
- Moldova: [Summary of the Generations and Gender Survey.](#)
- Norway: [Exploring Norway's Fertility, Work, and Family Policy Trends.](#)
- UK: [Intending to remain childless: Are concerns about climate change and overpopulation the cause?.](#)

3.3 User community

The GGP serves a sizable and diverse user community with users coming from all over Europe and beyond. As of November 2025, GGP had over 6,000 registered users. Given similar infrastructures and current usage patterns, it is anticipated that an operational GGP-ERIC will support an active user community of 10,000 individuals who regularly access data through the GGP-ERIC website. This is expected to happen no later than 5 year after the establishment of GGP-ERIC.

The GGP user community comprises both senior and early-career researchers in academia, think-tanks, policy departments of ministries and more, highlighting the platform's utility across different stages of scientists' careers—from developing research programs and policy interventions to consolidating expertise.

Members of the GGP user community meet every two years at the GGP User Conferences. The GGP User Conference is organised by a GGP national node in cooperation with the Central Hub and has been hosted in a different country every time. In 2025, the GGP community convened for the 8th User Conference in Estonia.

3.4 European research infrastructure landscape

GGP has been a key player in the broader landscape of the European Research Area (ERA). GGP, together with other international social science research infrastructures (Growing Up in Digital Europe – GUIDE, the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe – SHARE-ERIC, and the European Social Survey – ESS-ERIC) that use survey data jointly, map citizens' lives from childhood to old age, provide key insights into different phases and transitions in individuals' lives, as well as the overarching attitudes and beliefs that people develop throughout their life.

Open-access data and published reports facilitated by these research infrastructures support evidence-informed policy and enable long-term thinking. In addition, these four research infrastructures provide tools for forward-looking policies related to social services, housing, health care and the functioning of democracy. The quality of GUIDE, GGP, SHARE and ESS is evidenced through their recognition by the ESFRI. GGP and Guide are included as “projects” in the ESFRI Roadmap 2021, while SHARE and ESS have long enjoyed 'landmark' status. In recent years, GUIDE, GGP, SHARE, and ESS have been working closely with the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA-ERIC) to ensure a high standard of data storage and availability to users.

3.5 Global research infrastructure landscape

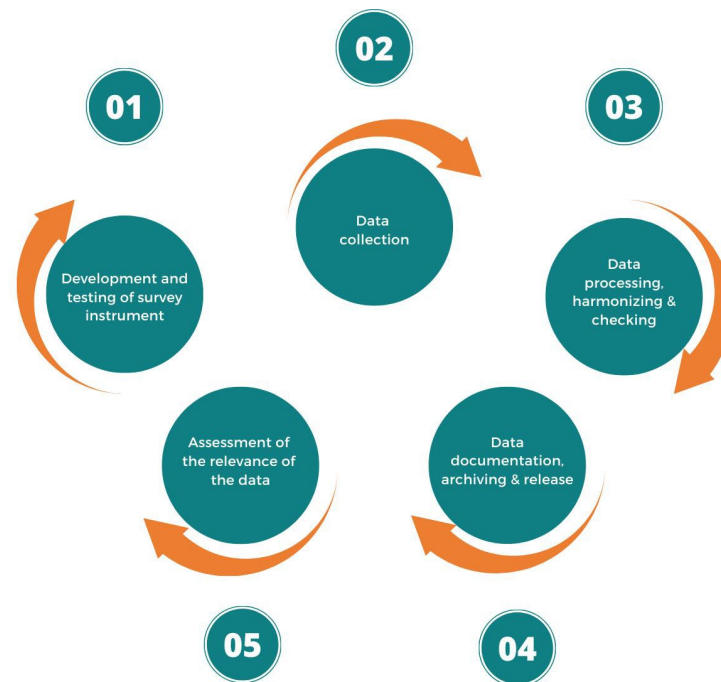
Internationally, the GGP is positioned as a distinctive research infrastructure, making it a unique asset not only for European research but also for global scientific effort. While the Demographic Health Survey (DHS), run by a consortium based in the United States, provides similar insights on fertility, it primarily focuses on low-income countries and prioritises topics covering health. It also lacks the longitudinal (panel) element critical for tracking changes over time. On a broader scale, IPUMS (also based in the USA) offers the world's largest database of individual-level population data, yet it is limited in both its time series and geographic scope, particularly in Europe, and cannot match the thematic depth of the GGS. As a result, GGP-

ERIC will stand as a globally unparalleled infrastructure for comprehensive, forward-looking research on demographic trends.

4. GGP's data life cycle and technical operations

In its operations, the GGP-ERIC will follow the structure of the five-phase data life cycle represented in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Five-phase data life cycle of the GGP-ERIC



Phase 1. Development and testing of the survey instrument: The work consists in developing (revising and testing) the questionnaire so that it is scientifically and methodologically robust and that it captures the key elements to address the mission of the GGP-ERIC. This work is led by the Questionnaire Task Force in collaboration with the Central Hub, and the Methods group.

Phase 2. Data collection: this consists in collecting the data using the instrument developed by the GGP-ERIC and the Technical Guidelines. This work is done by the national nodes in collaboration with the Central hub.

Phase 3. Data processing: This consists in the processing and harmonising the data into a common format and checking of its quality. This work is done by the Central Hub in collaboration with the institutional nodes.

Phase 4. Data documentation and release: This consists in the final stage of preparation of the datasets prior to their release to the users community. During this stage the data are made available through a common data portal and are also deposited in an official archive for long-term preservation.

Phase 5. **Assessment of the data:** This consists in evaluating the extent to which the data are ‘fit for purpose’, including the extent to which they help address the current and emerging scientific and societal challenges related to demographic changes. In return, this feeds back to the Phase 1 for revision (if needed) of the questionnaire.

4.1 Requirements for data collection

The GGP-ERIC technical setup and requirements for participation in the GGS data collection are defined in the [GGP Technical Guidelines](#). The document outlines the responsibilities and timetable regarding the implementation of the GGS at all stages of fieldwork. The Guidelines highlight the main fieldwork phases: planning, preparatory phase, fieldwork and reporting. The document was prepared (and will be updated if necessary) with inputs from national nodes and other experts in the field.

Before data collection or harmonisation commences, it is essential that the fieldwork arrangements are formalised. To do this the GGP **Service Agreement** needs to be signed. The Service Agreement defines the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the national implementation of the GGS. It explains the roles and responsibilities of the national nodes involved and those of the GGP-ERIC. It helps clarify who is responsible for what component of fieldwork and can be amended to reflect national contexts. Typically, the Service Agreement is signed by the GGP-ERIC and the partner focal point.

4.2 The GGP-ERIC data

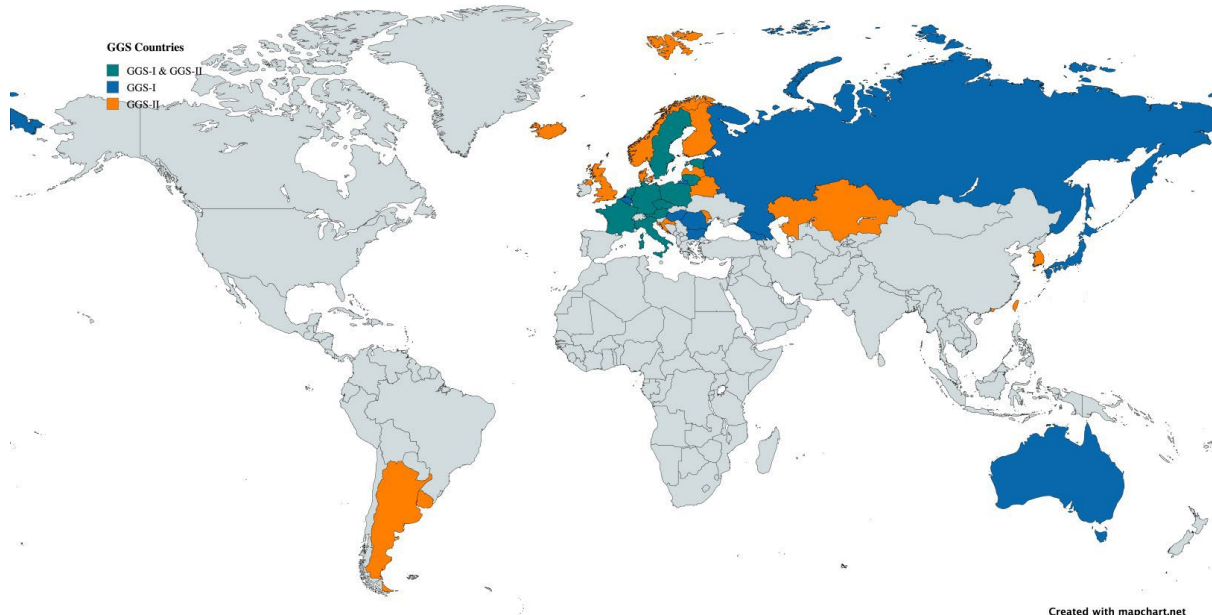
- *Generations and Gender Survey*

The GGS will be the main product of the GGP-ERIC. Inherited from the GGP, it is a cross-national panel survey on life-course and family dynamics of individuals aged 18-79 years. Its longitudinal design with 3-year intervals between waves (data are collected from the same respondents at different points in time), including both retrospective and prospective information, allows the GGS to track the experiences and changes that individuals go through in their personal lives (see Figure 4 for main topics covered in the GGS). The GGS uses a common digital version of the theory driven questionnaire (e.g., the Theory of Planned Behaviour) developed in collaboration with the GGP scientific community, programmed and provided centrally by the Central Hub. The selection of the themes included in the questionnaire follows theoretically grounded criteria, described by Vikat et al. (2007). The questionnaire undergoes regular revisions to update the content to address the most pressing scientific and societal challenges and improve the used measures. In addition, the questionnaire incorporates user suggested modules. Starting from 2023, the GGP increased user community engagement by having an open call for user suggested modules. This is something the GGP-ERIC will repeat at every follow-up wave.

As of 2025, the GGS consists of two rounds of data collected (see Figure 6 for geographical coverage). The first round (GGS-I) started in 2004 as a three-wave panel study with three-year time intervals (Fokkema et al., 2016). It has collected information from over 200,000 individuals in 19 countries and contributed to the social sciences as a unique longitudinal data resource on families and life course trajectories (Gauthier et al., 2018; Fadel et al., 2020). The second round (GGS-II) started in 2020 with a revised questionnaire, enhanced survey design, and refreshed samples (see [Gauthier et al. 2025](#)). As of 2025, GGS-II covers 24 countries and

territories, with data collection still ongoing (see Table 1). For more information on the most recent GGS round see [Gauthier et al. 2025](#).

Figure 6: Geographical coverage of GGS



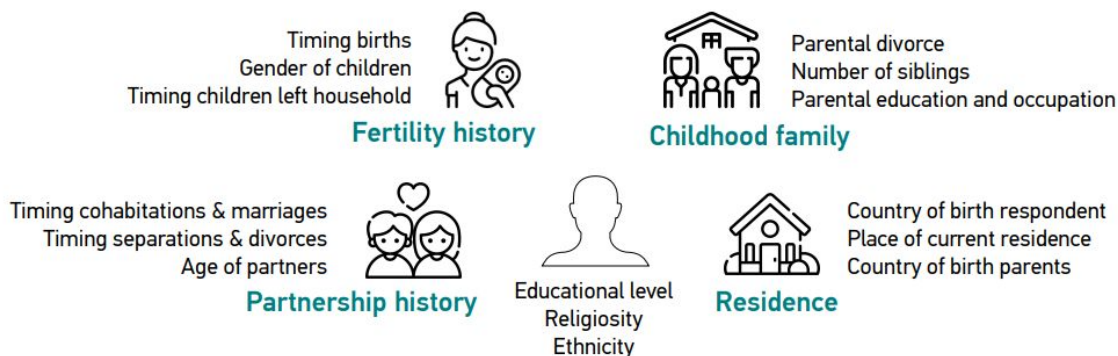
Although GGP-ERIC promotes the use of its key instrument, the GGS, it also collaborates with countries that have in place their own family or fertility survey. In such cases, the data should nonetheless be compatible with the GGS (and/or the Harmonized Histories (HH)), and the data should be harmonised following GGP standards and disseminated by the GGP-ERIC. In addition, the following requirements should be met: i. the survey should contain all the elements which allow to construct the HH dataset; ii. the survey should be a panel (with a follow-up survey or an administrative follow-up); iii. the survey should cover similar topics to the GGS and the country should make efforts to increase the comparability of the survey with the GGS core questionnaire.

- *Harmonized Histories (HH)*

The GGP-ERIC will continue producing and disseminating the HH datasets. The HH is an international comparative dataset, created through harmonising data from existing one common format. The aim of the HH is to facilitate cross-national research on topics related to transition to adulthood, family formation, and non-marital childbearing (see Figure 7). The dataset focuses on fertility and partnership histories, organised in a way that makes it well suited for event history analysis. In addition, it captures socio-economic status, place of residence, information on the childhood family (e.g., parental divorce, number of siblings), etc. Another key feature is its geographical coverage which exceeds beyond that of GGS countries since data from other countries through post-harmonisation has been added (see Table 1 for more details). Overall, the HH data product includes information of 35 different datasets from

26 countries covering a period from 1995 to 2023. The data have an average of 11,000 respondents per dataset.

Figure 7: Topics covered in HH data



- *Contextual Database (CDB)*

The GGP-ERIC will continue maintaining a CDB that will cover the political, social and economic context in which people live. These contexts can strongly influence their life opportunities and life trajectories. Such contextual data are available in the GGP CDB and cover all countries included in the GGS collection, but also for a wider set of countries. The CDB focuses on a restricted set of indicators carefully chosen to provide relevant information for researchers and be easy to collect and run. The CDB tool allows researchers to download and visualize the key characteristics of countries. It can be used as a standalone database or in combination with the GGS data. For more information refer to the [Guide to the New Generations & Gender Contextual Database](#).

- *Historical survey data*

The GGP-ERIC will also hold and disseminate historical data sets such as the previous FFS. The GGP-ERIC will act as the custodian of the data and ensure its sustained dissemination and correct use.

In Table 1 below, we report the data that are currently part of the infrastructure archive. It includes data from the GGS, the previous FFS, which are available via the infrastructure, and HH. The GGP-ERIC will continue collecting the GGS in the future and, when relevant, incorporate other large-scale, nationally representative surveys and additional related administrative data sources from the EU and outside of it.

Table 1: Overview of the participating countries/territories in FFS, GGS-I, GGS-II, and HH.

		FFS (1990s)	GGS-I (2002-16)			GGS-II (2017-) ¹			HH
Regions	Countries & Territories		W1	W2	W3	W1	W2	W3	
EU member	Austria	√	√	√		√	(√)		√
States ² &	Belgium	√	√						√

associated	Bulgaria	√	√	√					√
countries	Croatia					√	(√)	(√)	√
	Czechia	√	√	√		√	(√)		√
	Denmark					√			√
	Estonia	√	√			√	√		√
	Finland	√				√			√
	France	√	√	√	√	√			√
	Germany	√	√	√		√			√
	Greece	√							
	Hungary	√	√	√	√				√
	Iceland					(√)			
	Italy	√	√	√		(√)			√
	Latvia	√				(√)			
	Lithuania	√	√	√		(√)			√
	Moldova					√	√		√
	Netherlands	√	√	√	√	√	(√)	(√)	√
	Norway	√	√			√	√		√
	Poland	√	√	√		(√)	(√)		√
	Portugal	√							
	Romania		√						√
	Slovenia	√							
	Spain	√							√
	Sweden	√	√	√	√	√			√
	Switzerland	√							√
	United Kingdom	√				√			√
Non-EU	Argentina ³					√			
	Australia		√	√					
	Belarus					√			√
	Canada	√							√
	Georgia		√	√					√
	Hong Kong SAR					√	(√)		
	Japan		√						
	Kazakhstan					√			√
	New Zealand	√							
	Russia		√	√					√
	Taiwan					√			
	USA	√							√
	Uruguay					√			√

Where W refers to the different waves of the panel survey; √ indicates existence of a specific data set, while (√) indicated the expected participation in data collection.

Notes: 1- Since most countries/territories carried out the wave 1 of GGS-II in 2020-23, most of them have not yet secured the funding for the future waves; 2-The EU countries for which there are no data in our collection are:

Cyprus, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta and Slovakia; 3- Buenos Aires only. 4- List of Associated countries and territories (association with Horizon Europe) that have never participated in the FFS, GGS, or Harmonized Histories: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Israel, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Tunisia, Ukraine.

- *Other data*

The GGP-ERIC will encourage countries to **make use of other sources of data** (e.g., register data) if available and if relevant. This could be to enhance the survey data (e.g., additional variables not covered in the GGS), to do a register-based follow-up of the GGS, or to link the survey data to another source. Ideally, the data from the other sources should be made available to all GGP-ERIC users. However, some countries may have restrictions regarding access. If so, information as to how to access the data should be clearly specified. For more information see the [GGP Technical Guidelines](#).

4.3 GGP data access and FAIRness

Access to the data held by the GGP-ERIC will be possible via two channels (currently in place as part of the GGP). First, anybody, including members of the public, will be able to browse the data online freely. This can be done via the GGP [Colectica](#) platform. Second, micro-data (e.g., GGS, HH, FFS files) will be available only to registered and verified users. The registration and verification process is outlined in the [GGP User Space](#). After verification, a researcher will obtain access to the micro-data through the user account and can download the data file(s). Access to the GGS, HH, and FFS files is provided through the GGP User Space.

The GGP-ERIC also complies with the FAIR data principles:

- *Findable*: The data collected and processed by the GGP-ERIC is catalogued and archived at the Netherlands Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS) which is part of CESSDA-ERIC. The GGS is documented using the Data and Documentation Initiative (DDI) standards to ensure high-quality, searchable metadata. In addition, the GGP-ERIC identifies, digitises, harmonises, and processes historical survey data on fertility and family dynamics, and catalogues this data to increase its visibility and use.
- *Accessibility*: GGP-ERIC data is freely available to the entire research community. In addition, the GGP-ERIC regularly hosts researchers within the Central Hub and provides them with analytical support and access to source data.
- *Interoperability*: The GGP-ERIC collects data using international standards and classifications such as ISCED, ISCO, and ISO standards which make the data comparable with other international data providers. The GGP-ERIC also collaborates with the UNECE and the UNFPA in ensuring that the definitions utilised within the GGP-ERIC are in compliance with the SDGs and can be used for monitoring of key indicators.
- *Reusability*: The GGP-ERIC requires that all users publishing using the GGP-ERIC data, clearly cite the GGP DOI and version of the dataset used. Users are also encouraged to publish their workflow using an appropriate software such as STATA or R syntax or a Python workbook.

4.4 Other related activities and services

The GGP-ERIC will provide a number of other services and conduct additional activities to achieve its main objective. These include:

- As part of the **standard fieldwork services**, the Central Hub will cooperate with partners in countries, document the translation process of the GGS questionnaire, code the questionnaire and launch the data collection. During the fieldwork, the Central Hub will monitor closely fieldwork operations, allowing for identifying potential issues. After the fieldwork, it will prepare the national data for comparative use.
- In contexts where there is a lack of quantitative, demographic and analytical knowledge to utilize the data to its full potential, the GGP-ERIC will address the need by providing **training and guidelines** to partners, users and visitors to the Central Hub.
- As part of the activities, the GGP-ERIC will offer support in answering user queries related to data access, methodology, and similar questions. The Central Hub will maintain a responsive helpdesk, provide detailed documentation, and facilitate direct communication with experts to ensure users can effectively utilize GGP data.
- The GGP-ERIC will provide standard assistance with GGP **dissemination materials**. This will allow national teams to make use of any pre-existing GGP-ERIC dissemination material or artwork for promotional purposes. The standard package can be extended and adapted to national contexts.

4.5 Ethics and GDPR compliance

As the GGP-ERIC will function as a distributor rather than an owner of GGS, HH, FFS or other data, it is essential to uphold the rights of the original data owners and adhere to any constraints they have set on data usage as defined in the **GGP Data Agreement**. The Data Agreement establishes the responsibilities regarding data management, archiving, dissemination, and use of the GGP microdata. The Data Agreement is signed between the GGP-ERIC and the data providers. It covers the fieldwork process as well as the data provision to researchers through a registration process. The Data Agreement also regulates relevant data protection issues and outlines the requirements for potential users who wish to apply for data use in its **Terms of Acceptable Usage**. The Terms of Acceptable Usage stipulate the conditions under which the data can be used, namely statistical research, ensuring the Generation Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and national legislation is respected with a particular attention not to disclose information on individual participants.

In order to adhere to the Data Agreement and the Terms of Acceptable Usage, the GGP-ERIC will continue maintaining a robust micro-data access and authentication framework for data users. This framework will ensure both easy and streamlined access for users and the protection of legitimate rights and privacy of data subjects. Researchers willing to access and download GGP micro-data sets, will be required to first fill in a request and then to sign a document adhering to the GGP-ERIC Terms of Acceptable Usage.

To support ethical functioning of the GGP-ERIC, the GGP Ethics Board will be established by the General Assembly following the GGP-ERIC Statutes. The Ethics Board will offer advice on request of the GGP General Assembly and may be consulted by the Director, and the Central Hub on all scientifically and technologically relevant matters. The GGP Ethics Board provides advice on issues related to ethics in the research program of the GGP-ERIC for ethical concerns and reports to the General Assembly and Director.

5. ERIC requirements and GGP

5.1 Necessity

The GGP-ERIC is the only cross-national, global, and longitudinal source of individual-level data on partnerships, family formation, fertility decisions, and intergenerational relationships. There is no equivalent of the GGP-ERIC anywhere in the world and it is a unique asset to the European research capacity. Its closest equivalent is the DHS run by a consortium in the USA which is mainly targeted at low-income countries and does not include a prospective (panel) longitudinal element. Internationally, IPUMS (also in the USA) provides the world's largest database of individual-level population data, comprising microdata samples from census records, as well as data from surveys. Yet, its data have a limited number of points in time, geographical coverage of Europe, and thematic restrictions for research in comparison to the GGS. At the European level, the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) survey aims to collect cross-sectional and longitudinal data, however its focus falls on income, poverty, social exclusion, and living condition rather than population and family dynamics.

In the landscape of European research infrastructures, the GGP-ERIC fills in a gap from a life course perspective. With its focus on young adults and the childrearing years, GGP collects and disseminates data on an important age group that other research infrastructures do not cover. Substantively, it is positioned alongside SHARE-ERIC with its focus on the older ages, and the emerging birth cohort study GUIDE with its focus on children and adolescents. Moreover, the GGP-ERIC aims at addressing societal challenges related to population and family dynamics, and is thus complementary to SHARE-ERIC's expertise on health and ageing, and GUIDE's on children's well-being. The GGP-ERIC fundamentally differs from the ESS-ERIC, the latter being a cross-sectional study focused on societal norms and attitudes. For more information see the brief on [Complementary research infrastructures for future-proof social policy GUIDE, GGP, SHARE and ESS](#).

5.2 Strengthening the ERA

The GGP-ERIC enhances the ERA in several dimensions.

5.2.1 Synergies and collaboration with other research infrastructures

In the context of the ongoing strategic discussion on consolidating the European Research Area (ERA) and ERIC landscape - aimed at avoiding duplication, increasing efficiency, and strengthening complementarities - the GGP-ERIC actively deepens its links with other relevant ESFRI Landmarks and ERICs. The GGP-ERIC collaborates with SHARE-ERIC, GUIDE-ERIC and ESS-ERIC in order to support each other's scientific research agendas and advance the field of survey research. These collaborations have been demonstrated through joint participation in EU-funded cluster projects such as SERISS (Synergies for Europe's Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences, 2017–2019) and SSHOC (The Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud, 2019–2022), as well as through ongoing partnerships in Infra4NextGen (2024–2028) and SoGreen (Social Aspects of the Green Transition, 2025–2027). The GGP-ERIC data are catalogued and compliant with CESSDA-ERIC standards.

Methodologically, the GGP-ERIC collaborates with SHARE-ERIC, GUIDE-ERIC, and ESS-ERIC as well as other infrastructures, to improve survey quality, to coordinate work on metadata standards, survey operations, and digital tools supporting data collection across research infrastructure boundaries. They also participate in a joint working group in which the heads of the respective survey methodology units regularly meet to discuss methodological challenges and share solutions to issues common across all major European survey projects. In

addition, the infrastructures co-organize joint sessions at major methodological conferences such as ESRA (European Survey Research Association) and CSDI (Comparative Survey Design and Implementation).

Beyond these formal collaborations, the GGP-ERIC is committed to exploring further opportunities for integration and consolidation with other ESFRIs and ERICs in its domain, strengthening the overall coherence, efficiency, and scientific impact of the European social science research infrastructure landscape.

5.2.2 Relationship with EOSC

In alignment with key priorities of the European Research Area (ERA), the GGP-ERIC is strengthening its relationship with the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), ensuring that its services and practices contribute to the broader European landscape for open and FAIR data. This includes ongoing work to ensure the interoperability of its metadata and documentation standards, to explore integration pathways for its data catalogue within EOSC services, and to assess the compliance of its planned Authentication and Authorization Infrastructure (AAI) with the EOSC Federation AAI.

5.2.3 Tradition of strong participation from EU new member states

The GGP-ERIC also contributes to the ERA by increasing research capacity and mobility in new EU Member States. The GGP-ERIC has a long history in these new member states, with data collection even predating EU accession in some of them (including Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Romania, which all participated in the FFS and in the first round of the GGS). The prominent role of new member states continues to this day including in the current governance structure of the GGP. This includes the Hungarian Demographic Research Institute in Budapest, as a founding member of the GGP and current Chair of the Council of Partners, the Warsaw School of Economics, as previous Chair of the Council of Partners, and the University of Zagreb which has helped in the development of fieldwork procedures.

5.2.4 European lead and global reach

The GGP-ERIC also places Europe at the centre of data collection efforts in the field of demography. The new round of data collection encompasses a more global range of countries than before with data collection having been or being conducted in Argentina, Hong Kong, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Uruguay. This illustrates the leading role that the European demographic community is playing in this field and its ability to attract collaborations within the ERA from leading scholars across the globe. The GGP-ERIC also works closely with the UNFPA on having already (or aiming to) delivered the GGS in European countries that fall within the European Neighbourhood Policy such as Moldova and Western Balkan countries, acting as an excellent example of scientific diplomacy. The GGP-ERIC brings open and cross-nationally comparable demographic data into the ERA and exports principles of open science, international collaboration, scientific diplomacy, and standards of excellence beyond EU borders.

5.2.5 Broader societal impact

The GGP-ERIC has also collaborated with key international associations in the field, namely the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), the European Association for Population Studies (EAPS) and the Latin American Population Association (ALAP) organising workshops and regional meetings.

5.3 Effective access

The GGP-ERIC is a distributed research infrastructure with digital access to data being the primary mode of access. Based on comparable infrastructures and existing usage, it is expected that an operational GGP-ERIC would have an active user community of 10,000 who regularly access the data via the GGP-ERIC website.

The data that are held online can be accessed by anyone who has signed the GGP Terms of Acceptable Usage and has been verified as a bona fide researcher by the GGP-ERIC. The GGP Terms of Acceptable Usage limits the use of data to research purposes and prohibits the use of the data in commercial activity. They also specify that the data must not be shared or re-distributed and that best practices must be followed to ensure only authorized access to the data must be followed. Users are required to properly cite the GGP in all publications and presentations that utilise the data. These terms and conditions are enforced by the Central Hub and the UNECE in Geneva.

We plan to make the access to the GGP-ERIC data portal to be supported by an Authentication and Authorization Infrastructure (AAI). Work is underway to ensure that the AAI is compliant with EOSC Federation AAI requirements, thereby contributing to secure, interoperable, and streamlined access across the broader EOSC ecosystem. Data security remains a central component of the GGP-ERIC's operations, with technical and organizational safeguards applied to protect sensitive information and ensure compliance with European data protection standards.

The GGP-ERIC also promotes open access to research outputs generated using GGP data, encouraging users to make publications openly available and to follow FAIR data principles wherever possible.

Approximately 250 researchers per quarter download data from the GGP website. To support access the GGP provides fully documented data through its Online Codebook which runs on Colectica and uses a DDI framework. In addition, there is a Frequently Asked Question section for users on the GGP website and researchers may submit queries to the GGP mailbox, which is manned by data experts based at the Central Hub.

5.4 Mobility

Data infrastructures like GGP-ERIC eliminate the need for researchers to be physically mobile. Instead, GGP-ERIC excels in enabling virtual mobility, allowing researchers to access and work with various data sets remotely. This fosters seamless collaboration among colleagues worldwide, all working with the same data and tools. Additionally, this virtual mobility is complemented by opportunities for physical mobility. Users of GGP-ERIC data and services can visit the Central Hub and its institutional nodes to deepen their understanding of the data and benefit from the expertise of professionals at these institutions.

Users wishing to conduct a visit to the Central Hub or institutional nodes must submit a written request to the Director who evaluates applications for scientific excellence and relevance. Successful applicants are provided with a desk, computer and access to all GGP data held at NIDI or an institutional node for the duration of their stay. The GGP does not currently cover travel or subsistence costs of visitors.

5.5 Dissemination

In GGP-ERIC, dissemination is one of the main goals of the GGP-ERIC data and knowledge-sharing infrastructure. The data, sourced from the GGS and other comparable surveys, have been harmonized into GGP format to support cross-national analysis. These datasets are available free of charge via a single access point on the GGP-ERIC website. Scientists can download individual (micro) data upon registration, while the public and other users can browse all data online through a web interface. GGP-ERIC serves as a research facilitator and strongly advocates for free access to research data following the principles of FAIR and open science.

6. GGP-ERIC quality and risk management strategy

6.1 Key performance indicators and evaluation

In order to track how well the GGP-ERIC achieves its goals, a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are developed and monitored. GGP-ERIC will adapt the approach outlined by the ESFRI Working Group Report “Monitoring of Research Infrastructures Performance” (2019). The ESFRI Working Group proposed a list of nine objectives and 21 KPIs relevant to these objectives, which are most commonly shared or found of the highest relevance by the Ris across Europe. Following ESFRI recommendations, GGP-ERIC builds on these suggestions, but adjusting them to its own specific needs following the RACER criteria.

This ensures that the KPIs designed for GGP-ERIC (Table 2) are:

- **Relevant** for the strategic goals and objectives of the research infrastructure;
- **Accepted** by the research infrastructure’s stakeholders (researchers, funders, etc.);
- **Credible**, that is based on reliable and trustworthy data, unambiguous, and easy to interpret;
- **Easy to monitor**;
- **Robust**, that is resistant to manipulation and reflect a true picture of the research infrastructure 's performance.

As the KPIs are designed to monitor the performance of a research infrastructure with regard to progress towards its objectives and targets, they should be regularly monitored. This allows to systematically assess the growth of research infrastructure and identify areas for improvement. For each indicator, the baseline value will be established and it will be monitored yearly (unless stated otherwise). Detail information on methods of computing each indicator (information sheet) will be developed as a separate guideline. The KPIs will be introduced gradually in 2025-2027, so all listed indicators will be monitored and reported when GGP-ERIC is in the implementation phase.

Table 2: Overview of Objectives and KPIs relevant for GGP-ERIC

Objective	KPIs	Brief description on GGP-ERIC application
Enabling scientific excellence	1. Number of user requests for access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of registered users• Number of submitted data applications• Number of visits to the online data browser (Colectica)

	2. Number of users served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of data agreement signed • Number of data downloads
	3. Number of publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of GGP-based peer-reviewed publications</i>
	4. Percentage of top (10%) cited publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Percentage of GGP-based peer-reviewed publications that belong to the top 10% most frequently cited in the field</i>
Delivery of education and training	5. Number of master and PhD students using the research infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of submitted data applications from Master's and PhD students</i>
	6. Training of people who are not research infrastructure staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of master and PhD students visiting or performing internship at GGP Central Hub or nodes</i>
Enhancing collaboration in Europe	7. Number of members of the research infrastructure from ESFRI countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of ESFRI Members, Observers and Collaborating partners in the GGP Consortium • Number of ESFRI countries attending the Council of Partners
Facilitating international cooperation	8. Number of non-ESFRI members of the RI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of non-ESFRI Members, Observers and Collaborating partners in the GGP Consortium • Number of non-ESFRI countries attending the Council of Partners
Outreach to the public	9. Engagement achieved by direct contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of subscribers of the GGP Newsletter • Number of GGP-Connect webinars • Number of attendees at the GGP-Connect webinars (live + views) • Number of attendees at the GGP User Conferences (at each biennial conference)
	10. Outreach via the research infrastructure's own web and social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GGP-ERIC webpage – number of visits</i> • <i>Number of posts by GGP-ERIC on social media</i> • <i>Number of followers on social media</i>
Optimising data use	11. Number of publicly available data sets used externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of data files available on GGP User portal • Number of indicators and years available in the GGP Contextual Database
Provision of scientific advice	12. Participation by research infrastructure's in policy related activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of invitations / contributions (working notes, joint reports, participation in policy-related events etc.)</i>
	13. Citations in policy related publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of citations</i>
Optimising management	14. Revenues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GGP-ERIC central budget • Financial and in-kind contributions by the GGP-ERIC members

6.2 Risk management plan

As GGP transitions to ERIC status, it requires a new risk management strategy. The risks are interrelated and dynamic, however, this overview highlights major risks and categorizes them

for clarity. Key risk areas including scientific and research risks, political influences, financial uncertainties, and organizational challenges have been identified. Each risk category has been evaluated for its potential impact and likelihood, forming the basis for our prioritized mitigation strategies.

Key risk areas

- **Scientific and research risks:** The legitimacy of the GGP-ERIC depends on maintaining the relevance and quality of its data to meet the research community's evolving needs. Regular assessments, informed by ongoing dialogues with researchers and the user community, are vital for ensuring data integrity and supporting the infrastructure's scientific goals. The likelihood of encountering data relevance or quality issues is assessed as low, given GGP-ERIC's robust assessment processes.
- **Political risks:** The transition to ERIC status introduces more dependence on political support, making the GGP-ERIC vulnerable to changes in political priorities among member countries. Active engagement with governmental bodies and continuous advocacy of the GGP-ERIC's value are essential to secure consistent support. The GGP-ERIC must also be adaptable to policy changes (at the EU and national level) . The likelihood of significant political interference is assessed as low to moderate.
- **Financial risks:** Financial stability faces challenges from fluctuations in membership and service fees, fundamental to funding GGP-ERIC. The likelihood of financial instability is judged as moderate, necessitating diverse income strategies and financial reserves. Strategies include diversifying income streams, calibrating membership fees to match the economic capacities of the GGP-ERIC Members, and creating financial reserves for managing short-term instabilities.
- **Internal and technical risks:** With new governance structures, GGP-ERIC must optimise management and compliance across its distributed research infrastructure. This involves refining organisational structures, bolstering data security to protect sensitive information, and updating technological infrastructure. Continuous governance reviews and technological updates are important to prevent inefficiencies and bolster resilience. The likelihood of internal inefficiencies and technological challenges is considered low to moderate.

The risk management strategy prepares GGP-ERIC to address key challenges through proactive measures and continuous adaptation.

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