



# Generations and Gender Programme Preparatory Phase Project (GGP-5D)

## BRIEF ABOUT THE SYNERGIES OF SOCIAL SCIENCES RIS

Work package 5: POSITIONING

Grant Agreement Number: 101079357

Project acronym: **GGP-5D**

Project full title: **The Generations and Gender Programme  
Preparatory Phase Project**

Due delivery date: 31 MARCH 2024

Actual delivery date: 29 MARCH 2024

Organization name of lead participant for this deliverable:  
Hungarian Demographic Research Institute

Dissemination level: Public



**Funded by  
the European Union**

## Document Control Sheet

Deliverable number:	D5.1
Deliverable responsible:	Zsuzsanna Makay
Work package:	5
Editor(s):	Anne Gauthier, Monika Mynarska, Vytenis Juozas Deimantas

Author (s)		
<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>E-mail</i>
Zsuzsanna Makay	HDRI	<a href="mailto:makay@demografia.hu">makay@demografia.hu</a>
Zsolt Spéder	HDRI	<a href="mailto:speder@demografia.hu">speder@demografia.hu</a>
Judit Monostori	HDRI	<a href="mailto:monostori@demografia.hu">monostori@demografia.hu</a>
Zsuzsanna Veroszta	HDRI	<a href="mailto:veroszta@demografia.hu">veroszta@demografia.hu</a>

Document Revision History			
<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Modifications Introduced</i>	
		<i>Modification reason</i>	<i>Modified by</i>
V1	04.03.2024		
V2	13.03.2024		Makay, Spéder
V3	25.03.2024		Makay, Spéder

## Key messages

- ✓ The GGP occupies a specific position in the landscape of social sciences RIs through its focus on population and family dynamics.
- ✓ The GGP is complementary to SHARE-ERIC (with its focus on older adults), GUIDE (with its focus on children), and ESS-ERIC (with its focus on values and attitudes).
- ✓ The relationship between the RIs is different in each country. Cooperation across the RIs is present concerning common methodological issues, especially at the headquarter level, and in countries where the programmes are being operated by the same institute or by closely related research teams.
- ✓ Cooperation is also present in countries where the RIs are encouraged to work together by the National Research Council or where a social sciences roadmap exists on the national level.
- ✓ Competition is present in several countries due to budget constraints and the need to apply for the same funding possibilities, and partly because the competitive nature that characterises research.
- ✓ The inclusion of GGP on the national roadmap is more difficult in countries where no open call is published and where the evaluation is not transparent enough.
- ✓ Establishing extensive and inclusive social research networks among research teams contributes to both cooperation among RIs and facilitates inclusion on the national roadmap.

## Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	5
1. <i>The landscape of survey-based social sciences RIs in Europe</i> ...	6
1.1. <i>The Generations and Gender Programme (GGP)</i> .....	7
1.2. <i>Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE-ERIC)</i> .....	8
1.3. <i>European Social Survey (ESS-ERIC)</i> .....	8
1.4. <i>Growing Up In Digital Europe (GUIDE)</i> .....	9
2. <i>Synergies of RIs</i> .....	10
2.1 <i>Life course coverage and multidisciplinary</i> .....	10
2.2 <i>Different stages of the RI projects</i> .....	11
2.3 <i>Methodological insights and challenges</i> .....	11
2.4 <i>Representation of social science RIs in selected GGP-5D countries</i> .....	12
2.5. <i>Cooperation at the international level</i> .....	13
2.6. <i>Cooperation among RIs at the national level</i> .....	15
2.7. <i>Overlapping and collaborative national research teams</i> .....	17
2.8. <i>Opportunities for further collaboration</i> .....	17
3. <i>National roadmap inclusion</i> .....	19
3.1 <i>The GGP on the National Roadmaps</i> .....	19
3.2 <i>Presence of other RIs on the National Roadmaps</i> .....	20
<i>Summary and future outlook</i> .....	21

## Introduction

There are currently four social science research infrastructures (RIs) on the ESFRI Roadmap: GGP (Generations and Gender Programme), GUIDE (Growing up in Digital Europe), SHARE-ERIC (Survey of Health and Retirement in Europe European Research Infrastructure Consortium) and ESS-ERIC (European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure Consortium). All four are survey-based (i.e. they collect survey data) and all four contribute key information on individual and societal changes in Europe. At the same time they bring distinct and complementary information to address important scientific and societal challenges.

This Brief has two main aims. The first aim is to review the landscape of the social science RIs and to highlight how the four RIs together bring important empirical evidence to understand the dynamically changing societies and life course of individuals. The brief also summarize the synergies among the RIs including how the collaboration is taking place and to identify 'good practices' and challenges.

The second aim of this Brief is to share knowledge and experience regarding inclusion on the national roadmap. Such inclusion is becoming increasingly important for RIs, both to increase their visibility and political support, but also to secure funding for data collection (although inclusion on the roadmap and funding are often distinct processes). And while the RIs have often competed against each other for inclusion on national roadmaps, in recent years there have been successful cases of collaboration to gain joint entry on the national roadmap. In this Brief we give a summary of these conditions and identify successful strategies, as

well as difficulties that countries are facing when trying to get on the national roadmap.

The Brief is based on a written consultation (survey) and subsequent discussions. The survey was launched among GGP Consortium Board (CB) members in the first year of the GGP-5D project<sup>1</sup> concerning the above-mentioned topics. The aim was to gather information and country-level experiences about the collaboration with other social sciences RIs and the national roadmap inclusion and thus build a common knowledge base that could be shared and discussed with all CB members. 12 countries<sup>2</sup> filled out the questionnaire. Discussions among the representatives of the GGP-5D institutions helped to clarify major opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, experiences of the RIs at the European level are also taken into consideration. Consequently, common future strategies can be built based on the results of the consultation.

The Brief is structured as follows. First, we give a quick overview of the four social sciences RIs and summarize the synergies of RIs. Then we look at the national roadmap inclusion of the GGP.

## 1. The landscape of survey-based social sciences RIs in Europe

The GGP, GUIDE, SHARE-ERIC and ESS-ERIC are four survey-based RIs which, together, cover the whole life course of individuals, from childhood to older ages. GGP, GUIDE and SHARE-ERIC moreover use a longitudinal perspective to capture changes in individuals' life over time, while ESS captures essential snapshot information on the values

---

<sup>1</sup> The consultation was launched in April 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Czechia, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden.

and attitudes of societies.<sup>3</sup> Below we briefly summarize the four RIs before delving into their synergies.

## 1.1. The Generations and Gender Programme (GGP)

The Generations and Gender Programme (GGP) is a social science Research Infrastructure (RI) that provides harmonized, large-scale, longitudinal, cross-national panel data on individual life courses and family dynamics. Over time, the GGP follows respondents through relationships, marriages, parenthood, divorces, deaths and many of the opportunities and challenges that people face along the way. It then tracks the causes and consequences of these events at the individual and societal levels. The contextual database complements the survey data with regional and national level indicators to help increase our understanding of the role policy and other contextual factors play in individuals' and families' lives. These open-access data resources, curated by the GGP, are ideally suited to formulate scientifically informed and policy-relevant answers to key societal questions.

The Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) is the core component of the GGP. The first GGS round of data collection (GGS-I) took place between 2004 and 2012 and data was collected on over 200,000 individuals aged 18-79 from 19 countries. The large sample size, over 10 thousand on average per country, makes an essential analytic advantage of the GGS data.

Currently, the GGP is engaged in the second round of data collection (GGS-II) which mainly takes place online. GGS-II data are available for

---

<sup>3</sup> These four RIs also collaborate regularly with CESSDA (data archives). However for the purpose of this brief, we focus on the four survey-based RIs.

11 countries and data for 7 additional countries and territories will be made available during 2024.

## 1.2. Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE-ERIC)

SHARE-ERIC (Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe European Research Infrastructure Consortium) is the largest European research infrastructure for studying the health, living conditions, economic situations, family and social embeddedness and well-being of individuals in later life. It gives a cross-national panel database from 2004 with representative samples of European individuals aged 50+. From 11 countries at the beginning, the project now involves 28 countries, covering all continental EU countries and in addition Switzerland and Israel. To date, 140,000 respondents have answered the survey questions and 530,000 interviews and nine waves of data collection have been conducted.

Since its inception, SHARE-ERIC has had a dual aim: to provide the scientific community with an analytical tool to study different aspects of ageing and to provide decision-makers with adequate information. It is for the former purpose that the data is available free of charge to the scientific research community. This explains the outstanding number of publications using SHARE-ERIC data.

## 1.3. European Social Survey (ESS-ERIC)

The European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ESS-ERIC) is a pan-European research infrastructure providing freely accessible data for academics, policymakers, civil



society and the wider public about people' views and evaluation of major societal conditions.

The work of the ESS-ERIC includes organising a survey every two years measuring social attitudes and behaviour; utilising and developing the highest standards in cross-national research; providing direct and virtual training programmes; and supporting free access to its growing data and documentation archive.

Launched in 2001, the first round of surveys was conducted in 2002 and gathered results from 22 countries. Since its inception, 36 countries have taken part in the ESS.

The ESS continues to build a huge amount of freely accessible data measuring the behaviour and social attitudes of Europeans.

Over 350,000 face-to-face interviews have been completed since 2002 and there are over 100,000 registered users of the data. The data is available to download completely free of charge from anywhere in the world.

## 1.4. Growing Up In Digital Europe (GUIDE)

GUIDE aims to provide high-quality longitudinal data on children and young people, that can be compared across countries. Data from GUIDE will be essential for understanding how children's well-being develops in response to children's experiences of growing up in different European countries. The greater understanding of child wellbeing has the potential to revolutionize how policymakers, practitioners, and researchers approach the challenges faced by the younger generation and develop targeted evidence-based practices that prioritize the wellbeing of children and youth, resulting in improved mental health, education, and overall quality of life.

Preparatory work (GUIDEPREP project) has been taking place since 2022 to ready the Research Infrastructure for the full-scale piloting of the GUIDE in 2026 and the first full wave of data collection in 2027. Once operational, GUIDE will collect data about individual children growing up in Europe until those children are aged 24 years old, in approximately 2053. GUIDE will be an accelerated cohort survey including a sample of new-born infants as well as a sample of school-age children (age 8). Both cohorts will be surveyed using a common questionnaire and data collection methodology at regular intervals.

## 2. Synergies of RIs

Below we summarize the key complementarities and synergies of the four RIs along various dimensions.

### 2.1 Life course coverage and multidisciplinary

GGP, SHARE-ERIC and GUIDE focus on different parts of the life-course and contribute thus in different ways to our understanding of social problems in dynamic societies. GUIDE follows the development of children until young adulthood and focuses on child wellbeing, mental health and education of children and youth. GGP analyses young adulthood and mid-life focusing on demographic events such as partnership formation, leaving parental home, marriage, childbirth, partnership breakdown and divorce, labour market changes, etc. GGP also focuses on inter-generational and gender relations between people expressed in care arrangements and the organization of paid and unpaid work. It forms a complementary “bridge” between GUIDE and SHARE-ERIC since SHARE-ERIC focuses on individuals aged 50+ and the different aspects of people’s health and social relationships. Thus the three RIs complement each other covering together the complete life course of individuals from birth to death. They all use a

follow-up methodology that enables researchers to answer the most relevant societal questions. They are complemented by ESS-ERIC which gives a background frame to the analysis by measuring social attitudes and behaviour towards questions that are in the centre of interest of the other RIs, such as family, household circumstances, work and wellbeing, immigration, ageing and social inequalities. The four RIs have in common their multidisciplinary approach: together they cover the fields of demography, economics, sociology, psychology, child development, family studies, health care, and political sciences and provide decision-makers with adequate information on social questions.

## 2.2 Different stages of the RI projects

The four RIs are in different stages of their way towards a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). ESS-ERIC and SHARE-ERIC have already accomplished this phase while GGP and GUIDE are in a preparatory phase. GGP is preparing its implementation as an ERIC with the GGP-5D project while GUIDE is involved in the GUIDEPREP project.

## 2.3 Methodological insights and challenges

All four RIs collect data through surveys with individuals. In this field of research, the gold standard used to be collecting data via an interviewer, who would sit down with the respondent to go through the whole questionnaire (i.e. face-to-face mode). However, this mode of data collection has been facing major challenges in the recent decade including rapidly declining response rates (i.e. people refusing to respond to survey and refuse to let an interviewer come to their home) and the drastic increase in the cost. At the same time, increasing internet penetration and increasing digital skills among

population have opened up new avenues, i.e. self-completed web based surveys.

All four RIs have now done a partial or total switch to such web based surveys, including ESS-ERIC and GGP taking a major lead in assessing the feasibility of such mode of data collection and sharing best practices. Such methodological exchanges have taken place in workshops and conferences (e.g. the European Survey Research Association (ESRA)) but also through webinars (both ESS-ERIC and GGP have been holding such webinars open to all). But while the transition to web based surveys is a very positive development (in rendering the RIs more flexible to react to sudden societal events, and to reduce costs), its implementation continues to bring challenges including access to sampling frame, the representativity of the data collected, the response rates, and the reach of people with no access to internet or with low levels of digital skills and/or literacy. Web based surveys also challenge data collection when it comes to make physical tests, as in the case of SHARE-ERIC which for this reason continues to collect data face-to-face.

All four RIs have been trying to secure external funding to address these common challenges.

## 2.4 Representation of social science RIs in selected GGP-5D countries

The relevance of the question of collaboration on the national level is demonstrated by the fact that in almost all selected GGP-5D countries at least one other RI is present. In five countries SHARE-ERIC, ESS-ERIC and Guide<sup>4</sup> are present with GGP, while in six countries SHARE-ERIC, ESS-ERIC and GGP are present. In Norway, ESS-ERIC and GUIDE are present (Table 1).

---

<sup>4</sup> Countries involved in GUIDEPREP <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101078945>

*Table 1: Presence of social sciences RIs in selected GGP-5D countries*

ESS-ERIC, GGP AND GUIDE ARE PRESENT	ESS-ERIC, GGP AND SHARE-ERIC ARE PRESENT	ESS-ERIC, GGP AND GUIDE ARE PRESENT
Estonia	Czechia	Norway
France	Lithuania	
Germany	Netherlands	
Hungary	Poland	
Italy	Sweden	
Croatia		

## 2.5. Cooperation at the international level

The GGP as well as other RIs in the field, including the ESS-ERIC, GUIDE, and SHARE-ERIC, have cooperated in a setting of various Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe funded projects. Specifically, in Synergies for Europe’s Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences (SERISS), a project that aimed to equip Europe’s social science data infrastructures to play a major role in addressing the key societal challenges facing Europe today and ensure that national and European policymaking is built on a solid base of the highest-quality socio-economic evidence. In SERISS, the GGP was a project partner together with other leading European RIs in the social sciences – the ESS-ERIC, SHARE-ERIC, Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA-ERIC). The project aimed to exploit potential synergies and overcome existing fragmentation across infrastructures in order to enhance the key role played by these infrastructures, which form the bedrock of empirical social science in Europe. The project finished in 2019.

In Social Sciences & Humanities Open Cloud (SSHOC), a project funded by the EU framework programme Horizon 2020 uniting 20 partner organisations and their 27 associates in developing the social sciences and humanities area of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), the GGP partnered with the ESS-ERIC, SHARE-ERIC, CESSDA-ERIC as well as other RIs in Europe. During the 40-month lifespan of the project, (from January 2019 to April 2022) SSHOC worked to transform the social sciences and humanities data landscape with its disciplinary silos and separate facilities into an integrated, cloud-based network of interconnected data infrastructures.

The GGP is also a partner of the COORDINATE project. This Horizon 2020 project aims to mobilise the community of researchers and organisations that will drive forwards the coordinated development of comparative birth cohort panel and associated survey research in Europe which focus on children's wellbeing. The infrastructural community network brought together by COORDINATE will promote the harmonisation of and improve access to international survey data, in particular panel survey data, in the study of children and young people's wellbeing as they grow up. The project also supports elements of the preparatory phase GUIDE. The project will finish in 2025.

The recently launched Horizon Europe project Infra4NextGen – a four-year project set to begin on 1 March 2024 – will re-purpose and customise existing research services to support the five themes of the NextGenerationEU programme. The project is co-ordinated by the ESS-ERIC and includes CESSDA-ERIC, the GGP and the European Values Study (EVS) at its core. NextGenerationEU aims for Europe 'to build a greener, more digital and more resilient future' with a focus on five key areas: Make it Green; Make it Digital; Make it Healthy; Make it Strong; and Make it Equal. In each of the five areas, partners will initially produce an inventory of relevant items already fielded on cross-national surveys, including Eurobarometer, European Quality of

Life Survey, the ESS, the GGS, the EVS, and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP).

## 2.6. Cooperation among RIs at the national level

While there has been much collaboration among the four RIs at the international level (headquarters) in the recent years, collaboration at the national level is a relatively new development. In several cases, such collaboration was encouraged by funders: the idea here being precisely to play on the synergies across RIs.

There are currently four such examples:

- Italy: Since September 2022 the Italian GGP team has participated with SHARE-ERIC and GUIDE to the FOSSR - *Fostering Open Science in Social Science Research* project coordinated by the National Council of Research. The aim has been to create an Italian Open Science Cloud for social sciences (such as European Open Science Cloud EOOSC) with the aim to provide innovative tools and services for the analysis of social and economic data from different systems. The utilisation of cloud computing infrastructure will facilitate the seamless integration and provisioning of services geared towards storing, analysing, querying, retrieving, and sharing extensive arrays of social science data, all aligned with a standardised data model. The mix of these tools and services with open science practices will help to increase the visibility and impact of social science research in Italy.
- France: In some countries a separate national roadmap exists for social sciences RIs and this motivates cooperation. This is the case of France where there is a very large infrastructure

called Progedo, aimed at developing data culture in the humanities and social sciences. The aim is to build a national repository of data with adequate data protection and open data access. Involved are research institutes and universities and different scientific events are regularly organised to help data collection and data analysis.

- Poland: in Poland SHARE-ERIC and GGP were both entered into the Polish national roadmap under an umbrella RI: Polish Research Infrastructure for Longitudinal Studies. SHARE-ERIC and GGP are hosted in the same academic institution in Poland, and their national teams overlap and closely collaborate, e.g. on data analysis and publications. The umbrella RI aimed at building on the existing collaboration and developing further synergies: sharing experiences and developing best practises related to budgeting, methodology, panel data analysis etc., organizing joint workshops or events). The Polish Ministry of Science strongly encouraged collaboration between different RIs and such joint encounter was very positively evaluated – yet, the inclusion of additional academic partners / other institutes was also strongly recommended.
- Netherlands: Cooperation may also be promoted by the National Research Councils like in the Netherlands. The Dutch Research Council (NWO) promotes a cooperative environment in which RIs are encouraged to work together. This can be illustrated by the establishment of *Open Data Infrastructure for Social Science and Economic Innovations* (ODISSEI)

While these four cases represent successful examples of collaboration, in some countries such collaborations have not yet been considered, or are more difficult to create, since the social sciences RIs receive funding from the same sources, they apply for to



the same funding opportunities. This may lead to competition, especially in countries which have restricted resources allocated to social science research and where special financial support for RIs is missing. Thus, there is competition for funding among the different RIs in several countries. They may cooperate otherwise (e.g. on methodological issues) or work independently without any contact. Answers from several Eastern European partners emphasised these dimensions of the relationship between GGP and the other RIs (Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania).

## 2.7. Overlapping and collaborative national research teams

RIs cooperate more often in countries where they are run by the same research institutes (e.g. Poland, France). There is no country however where *all* RIs are residing at the same institute and run by the same team. In Poland for example, GGP and SHARE are coordinated by the Warsaw School of Economics, and the teams working on these projects overlap. ESS is however based elsewhere, and better cooperation has just been initiated. In Estonia, SHARE and GGP are based in the same research unit and cooperate closely.

Only very few countries collaborate without the overlap of research teams, Germany is an example of this, but even there individual researchers have good interpersonal contacts in the different projects which helps cooperation

## 2.8. Opportunities for further collaboration

Cooperation on survey methodology is present in several countries. Methodological workshops are organised together to discuss new survey modes in several countries. Sharing experience about

fieldwork technics, panel maintenance would be essential in relation to the follow up data collections. It would be also a joint interest to standardise background factors, and discuss about the exchange some key variables of the mentioned surveys. Only some countries have gone so far as to consider drawing a common sample, which may be a future step for cooperation.

Cooperation on data collection methodology could go far behind the elaboration of common survey tools. Indeed, a core component of survey data collection is the questionnaire. A good questionnaire is essential to successful data collection. The formulation of the different questions, the length of the questionnaire, the topics addressed and the type of responses which can be given (e.g. open-ended answers or not) all contribute to the success of data collection. Thus collaboration may include exchange on these issues since all the RIs are facing these challenges and all have to deal with updating their existing questionnaires from time to time. Experience related to questionnaire testing and pilot surveys is another track of collaboration.

Dissemination activities can also be harmonized which is the case in some countries. Common media campaigns could raise the awareness of the importance of social surveys in the countries and contribute to higher participation in the surveys.

The four RIs could organise workshops or conferences to share results and the outcomes of data analysis since there is an important complementarity of topics in the different surveys. Joint statistical workshops for young students and work on teaching datasets could be another track of collaboration.

### 3. National roadmap inclusion

#### 3.1 The GGP on the National Roadmaps

There are currently six countries (out of 12) where GGP is on the national roadmap, while approval has been given to one additional country (Table 2).

Countries which are not on the roadmap are in divers situations. In Czechia for example, roadmap inclusion of the GGP was approved in 2021, but due to budgetary constraints, the update of the roadmap was postponed and newly accepted RIs didn't receive funding.

In most countries, an open call had been launched for national roadmap inclusion, but this was not the case everywhere. Some countries only got to know through informal channels that the call had been opened and the communication with stakeholders was not straightforward either.

After their application, most countries didn't receive a written evaluation, and this regardless of the outcome of their application

*Table 2: Countries where the GGP is on the national roadmap*

Estonia
France
Germany
Netherlands
Poland
Sweden

## 3.2 Presence of other RIs on the National Roadmaps

SHARE-ERIC and ESS-ERIC are on the national roadmap in all GGP countries except for Estonia where this is not the case because of the absence of SHARE-ERIC, and Norway where neither of the other two RIs is on the roadmap.

## Summary and future outlook

- The presence of all four social sciences RIs is a key element in Europe since they together provide scientists and policy-makers with valid and reliable scientific data and thus contribute to our understanding of pressing societal challenges.
- The continued data collection is elementary to identify the causes and mechanism social problems and to give scientifically founded answers to them.
- There is a wide window of opportunities for extending cooperation among the RI's. Existing shared methodological tools can be expanded, new activities (sharing fieldwork experiences, teaching, joint seminars, information of the public) could be implemented.
- Closer collaboration would benefit to both RIs and research funders but also to researchers who may be more open to work on different datasets and methodological collaboration may even more increase the quality of survey data.
- Extended funding for social sciences RIs is required to promote cooperation among them.
- To encourage cooperation among RIs, national research councils may promote a cooperative environment and establish a consortium of RIs on population topics.
- It would be advantageous to update of the national roadmaps and open the calls by using more effective and new forms of information channels and sharpening and clearing up criteria for national roadmap inclusion.