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## Executive summary

The purpose of this document is to provide an interim report on the research using data from the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS). The GGS is the key element of the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP), a social research infrastructure involving more than 25 participating countries, including two data collection programmes of several waves, a central infrastructure hub, a research community and data collection resources in participating countries, and a user research community.

The GGP is a research infrastructure responding to the demographic challenges facing Europe at the turn of the 21st century. It was created by the need to understand the new demographic behaviours that emerged and spread at the turn of the century. Namely, the rise of cohabitation and out-of-wedlock births, the de-standardisation of becoming adult, the intensification of the conflict between family-life and employment, the transformation of gender relations, the expansion of complex family forms, the challenges of ageing as life stretches on, etc. The way in which it is implemented, naturally reflects the concurrent concepts and theories employed on interpreting new behaviours as well as the methodological apparatus then available. The research programme that started in 2000 has led to the development of two data collection programmes, the Generation and Gender Survey and the Contextual Database. This paper aims to provide some perspectives for assessing the position of the GGS.

## Table of Contents

1.	<i>The GGS concept and data collection programme .....</i>	<b>5</b>
2.	<i>Scientific achievements .....</i>	<b>13</b>
2.1.	<i>Selection of papers and data use .....</i>	<b>13</b>
3.	<i>Selected research results.....</i>	<b>14</b>
3.1.	<i>Fertility intentions .....</i>	<b>14</b>
3.2.	<i>Partnerships and divorce.....</i>	<b>17</b>
3.3.	<i>Labour market.....</i>	<b>19</b>
3.4.	<i>Changing gender roles.....</i>	<b>20</b>
3.5.	<i>Loneliness among the elderly.....</i>	<b>22</b>
3.6.	<i>Partnerships, parenthood and happiness.....</i>	<b>23</b>
4.	<i>Conclusion.....</i>	<b>25</b>
5.	<i>Bibliography.....</i>	<b>26</b>
6.	<i>Appendix.....</i>	<b>35</b>

## 1. The GGS concept and data collection programme

The main objective of the GGS is to improve the understanding of demographic and social changes and the factors behind them. The GGS is a micro-level survey that provides cross-national, longitudinal panel data on intergenerational and gender relations, family dynamics, individual life histories and socio-economic circumstances of people aged 18-79, as well as people's views, attitudes, values and intentions. The conceptual paper (Vikat et al., 2007) describes in detail the considerations that guided the design of the GGS survey programme, the concepts underlying the programme, and considerations regarding the creation of the main component of it, the questionnaire. Here we highlight the most important aspects of these.

The GGS aims to collect micro-data to *describe* demographic phenomena and to identify the *factors* influencing them. The *life-course* approach is a generally accepted framework for the systematic description of classical and novel features of demographic behaviour, as intended and unintended demographic events unfold along the life course (Bernardi et al., 2019; Elder, 1978). Besides, family dynamics, such as partnership formation and childbearing, are well understood through these events. They are also closely linked to changes in economic activity over the life course (schooling, employment). However, life course events do not take place in a vacuum, but in the context of the specific living conditions and social structures of the time, guided by the mental and cultural concepts prevailing in the area concerned.

The GGS focuses on factors associated with major life transition decisions such as starting work, leaving home, entering or leaving a union, having children and retiring. In order to understand conventional, innovative or possibly deviant phenomena and

processes, to identify potential explanatory factors and to gather information about them, it is essential to know the relevant concepts and to gather information that allows empirical testing of theoretical claims.

To reflect the essential needs of *economic approaches* in the study of fertility and the family, the GGS had to gather information on relevant economic aspects of life, such as economic activity, labour market conditions, income and well-being (Becker, 1960; Easterlin, 1978).

The relevance of *ideational approaches* (Lesthaeghe, 1995; 2012; Thornton & Philipov, 2008; Van De Kaa, 1987), which see value change as the driving force, can only be tested if we are informed about people's value orientations, attitudes and understandings, their individual perceptions of gender roles and the dominant views at the societal level. It is also necessary to measure the quality of relationships, conflicts between partners, and satisfaction with different aspects of life. Knowledge of educational attainment, occupational class position, and parental background is essential for implementing *sociological approaches* based on social stratification and heterogeneity in the society. The GGS attributes a prominent role to *gender relations* in fertility development and life course trajectories (Arpino et al., 2015; McDonald, 2000). Gender relations of course need to be analysed in their own right, but it is clear that knowledge of gender differences in occupation and earnings, the division of household labour, satisfaction with it and gender role differentiation is essential for understanding demographic phenomena. Finally, *social psychological approaches*, in our case the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), require knowledge about attitudes, norms, and actual enablers of action (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Klobas, 2013).

It is well known that *cross-sectional analyses* are hardly suitable for testing causal relations, since they measure the phenomena to be

interpreted (dependent variables) and the explanatory (independent) factors at the same, given point in time. Although a cross-sectional analysis includes information on a number of time-invariant characteristics, and these should be considered as relevant explanatory factors, characteristics that vary over time may be both dependent and independent factors at the given point in time. It is no coincidence that *event history analyses* based on *biographical data* have become widespread in demographic analyses, as they provide one of the key criteria for demographic explanation (Bhrolcháin & Dyson, 2007), namely the 'time order', that 'the cause should precede the effect'. The timing of key events in a family's life course can be collected well using a cross-sectional data collection, since graduation, first job, marriage, childbirth, divorce, retirement, widowhood are events that are imprinted in people's memories. Life events are recorded in detail in the Fertility and Family Survey data collection, which is the predecessor of the GGS. Thus, the time of occurrence of a relationship and childbearing trajectories, school and work trajectories, and the time of moves are known. Using these data, and analysing them in international comparisons, a number of causal relationships have been identified (Macura et al., 2002).

Unfortunately, much of the information needed to test some conceptual approaches (e.g. the Second Demographic Transition Theory - SDT) that provide causal explanations cannot be collected retrospectively. Thus past changes in material circumstances, changes in attitudes, and beliefs about gender roles can not be collected. The *follow-up design* has been adopted as a distinctive feature of the GGS to reflect to this shortcoming. Indeed, a follow-up survey allows that the information collected during a given (first) wave of interview, the broad description of the situation of individuals, can be used as an explanatory factor for subsequent events or for the situation at the time of the next (second) wave. In this way, the '*time order*' *criterion of causality* can be applied to a wider range of potential explanatory

factors, allowing the testing of a number of previously untestable conceptual assumptions.

Causal analysis includes the analysis of the impact and consequences of (demographic) events that occurred between two successive waves of surveys. The GGS concept discusses this under the heading of the *social consequences of demographic events*. This is to draw attention to the fact that intentional and unintentional events, such as establishing cohabitation or becoming divorced, having children, being widowed, etc., have a wide range of consequences that affect many aspects of everyday life. They can lead to changes in material circumstances, housing conditions, making people poor or changing people's satisfaction and subjective well-being. Longitudinal data also provide insights into how the social context influences people's life course and whether its impact depends on the individual's social background, family or social networks.

The GGS complemented the follow-up study design with an *action theory* model. It is envisaged that this will provide insight into the decision making of certain demographic events. According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the preferred theory of action framework in GGS, intention is the most important determinant of behaviour/action (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Klobas, 2013). Attitudes, perceived norms and perceived behavioural controls shape intentions. In order to fit the TPB to the follow-up study, time-dependent intentions, intentions to act within three years are measured. This allows a detailed examination of conscious demographic behaviour and of demographic decision-making.

The name of the programme emphasises two aspects of the study of family relations. The GGS allows for a broader scope than ever before to examine the role of *gender relations* in demographic behaviour. Several criteria not included in the FFS have been added, such as the



division of household labour and satisfaction with gender roles. The GGS also has a niche in that it does not focus exclusively on women's views and circumstances regarding family relations, and is therefore suitable for interpreting men's family roles, such as fatherhood (in the FFS, male respondents were underrepresented in several countries). The fact that the GGS sample is representative across gender and that we have the same information about women and men and their partners opens up a wide range of possibilities for interpreting and studying gender relations. In addition to family relations, it is possible to study both men's and women's occupational careers, gender differences in earnings and other related topics.

There is a clear new emphasis on the *generational perspective*. The collection of information on the second stage of the life course and on intergenerational relations is a result of this. The GGS assumes that, in modern societies, generations are linked by many ties, with members of different generations interacting with each other and providing emotional and material support. Of particular importance is also the possibility to study the process of ageing over the life course, including gender differences. In determining the sample size, the fact that the GGS data collection covers *the entire adult population* is crucial to the generational perspective.

The size of the sample was defined by three considerations. . On the one hand, it was important to have enough demographic events between the two waves of data collection. On the other hand it was important not to have too much time between two waves of data collection. For this reason, the three-year time window was preferred. Finally, the study of intergenerational relations required a sample covering the entire adult population, aged 18-75. These three criteria required a quite large sample size. *Large samples covering the whole population and including the collection of retrospective data* allows to follow behavioural changes over more than half a century in

Western and Eastern Europe. The large sample sizes make it is possible to analyse the family relations of *minority groups* such as migrants, Roma or disabled populations.

*Comparison* has a long tradition in population studies. It has certainly been stimulated by the fact that the key events, processes (dependent variables) of population are the same and are not just functionally identical. Births and deaths, marriages, divorces and widowhoods, and migrations are more or less identical phenomena in developed societies. Of course, we may doubt that marriage has the same meaning everywhere, and we know that cohabitation does not (Heuveline & Timberlake, 2004). We can also be sure that many well-known and widely used explanatory factors, such as the level of education, labour market activity, retirement, do not have the same meaning in European societies, not to mention attitudes, values and subjective wellbeing. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, a comparative perspective is essential in research aimed at understanding general actions and phenomena. Population studies can therefore consider itself lucky in being able to carry out its analyses in an international context. This makes it possible to distinguish between general and specific processes and phenomena. It is therefore natural that the GGS started as an international comparison, and although many country analyses have been and will be published, it is common to interpret phenomena in comparative way.

Individual measures are also *context sensitive*. The individual data from the GGS can be combined with measures at different (meso, macro) levels, depending on the research question. One of the arguments for creating a contextual database was to combine CDB data with GGS data in order to better understand individual behaviour. In addition, longitudinal data provide insights into how the social context influences people's life course and whether its impact

depends on an individual's social background, family or social networks.

The GGS data form the backbone of the Harmonized Histories, an international comparative dataset on family life trajectories, created by harmonizing data from existing surveys into a common format (Brienna Perelli-Harris, 2010) (Perelli-Harris et al. 2010, Koops et al. 2022, Schumann et al. 2024). The dataset focuses on fertility and partnership histories, organised in a way that makes it well suited for event history analysis and comparative research. It also includes information on socio-economic status, place of residence, and childhood family background. It is a valuable resource for comparative research and builds on the values that GGS has brought to the scholarly landscape.

A certain advantage of the comprehensive cross-country data collection has subsequently emerged. To the best of our knowledge, the GGS is the only database that allows the analysis of *family relations after the turn of the millennium*. Finally, the participation of the *countries outside Europe* makes it possible to compare phenomena in Europe with those in other continents (e.g. Asia).

At the end of the second decade of the century, the GGP launched a new round of survey data collection (GGS-II) with an *updated and renewed methodology* and refreshed samples to ensure that social scientists and policy makers have access to the highest quality data possible (Gauthier et al. 2024, manuscript). A new baseline questionnaire was published, providing both comparability and continuity with the previous round of the GGS-I, while introducing new questions and innovations (GGS Data Brief, 2020). The questionnaire programme has also been restructured responding to the needs of online data collection (CAWI). The renewed data collection programme covers a range of information that responds to

actual concern of policymakers. It includes information on economic uncertainty, the digitalisation of the life course, mobility and migration, the Sustainable Development Goals and much more. Countries are also allowed to add a small set of preferred questions to their surveys. It is recommended that these questions are included in a single (short) module rather than spread across the questionnaire to minimise country variation and post-harmonisation. To achieve this, it was essential to reduce the amount of information collected in the GGS-I. For example, the information collected on household members living with the respondent was reduced and the variables explaining the formulation of intentions based on TPB theory were dropped. For more details on the specifics of the GGS, see the concept paper (Vikat et al., 2007). For a more recent account see (Fadel, 2020; Gauthier et al., 2018) (GGG Data Brief, 2024).

The GGS-I covers 19 countries, with mainly in Europe, but data was also collected in Australia and Japan. From 2024 onwards, GGS-II will cover 24 countries. The second round of the GGS immediately adopted a more global perspective, focusing not only on the countries that participated in GGS-I, but also extending to countries outside Europe. This includes new countries in Europe (e.g., Croatia, Finland, United Kingdom), and an expansion to East Asia (e.g., Hong Kong SAR, South Korea, Taiwan), Central Asia (e.g., Kazakhstan), and Latin America (e.g., Argentina (Buenos Aires), Uruguay).

The Harmonized Histories dataset currently includes 36 surveys from 26 different countries (both within and outside Europe) and over 400 thousand respondents. The data come mainly from the subsequent rounds and waves of the GGS, accompanied by national surveys on families, fertility or households, conducted between 1995 and 2018. The dataset has been used in dozens of scientific publications on different facets of family trajectories and family life in a comparative perspective.

## 2. Scientific achievements

### 2.1. Selection of papers and data use

This section is based on publications using GGS data as published on the official GGP website on 20 March 2024. More than 1,000 papers were listed there, which had to be reduced significantly due to language restrictions, as many publications were written in the national language of the researchers. Only studies written in English are referred here. In addition, we only included studies that had undergone a peer-review process and appeared in peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes published by reputable publishers. This resulted in a database of almost six hundred (583) articles which, although very simplified, gives an idea of the topics that have been analysed using the GGS data (see Table 1 in the in Appendices).<sup>1</sup> Note that a single analysis can be divided into several domains, but in this report we have grouped the publications according to one domain. (The final publication will include the relationship of specific studies to multiple domains).

Most of the analyses, a quarter of the papers, relate to fertility. The majority of these studies used the well-known and well-established event history analysis, as this approach using retrospective data could be applied after the first wave of data collection. The proportion of articles analysing the formation of fertility intentions and the realisation of intentions using the first two waves is quite high. They account for a fifth of all fertility analyses. Similarly high, accounting for more than a tenth of the publications, are the analyses of the transformation of partnerships (the spread of cohabitation, LAT relationships, the transformation of cohabitation into marriage, remarriage after divorce, etc.). Although their number is small, important results can be found in the analyses of key events of the

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<sup>1</sup> Eszter Katics, Adrienn Kniesz, Luca Werner, PhD students at the Doctoral School of Demography and Sociology at the University of Pécs participated in the creation of the database.

transition to adulthood in the process of growing up, their timing and sequence. Although there is a wide range of studies on key life course events (having a child, changing partnership, re-entering the labour market), analyses from study to work, getting the first job, are rare. The proportion of analyses dealing with gender relations and the division of labour within the family is very high, accounting for almost a tenth of all studies. Fewer analyses focus on the second half of the life course, but a tenth of the analyses can clearly be classified as such. These analyses provide important insights into the health, anxiety and loneliness of the ageing population. Grandparenthood and intergenerational relationships are clearly present in the analyses. The data would provide even more opportunities to study the living conditions (e.g. deprivation, poverty), social status and social mobility of the middle-aged. Finally, analyses of the GGS data could also better contribute to current debates on subjective well-being.

As the very most of the data collections of GGG-II first wave took place in 2021-22 and the process of scientific publications takes time, the outline of scientific contributions is basically limited to the data use GGS-I.<sup>2</sup>

Below we highlight some of the key contributions and some of the more general findings and lessons. The topics and the research they cover are by no means exhaustive. Rather, the purpose of this paper is to highlight research opportunities and selected findings; a more systematic analysis is underway but awaited.

## 3. Selected research results

### 3.1. Fertility intentions

A key motivation for the GGS design was to understand plans and intentions for life course events and to measure their realisation in

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<sup>2</sup> The data collections 2017-2020 (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova) are based on a preliminary version of the GGS-II questionnaire and are therefore considered as GGS-I data collections (Gauthier et al., 2023).

subsequent waves. This promised to provide more information on individual decisions (related to relationships, fertility, labour market) (Liefbroer et al., 2015). The questions were timed to coincide with the waves of data collection planned in three years of time. The analysis of the formation of intentions and the analysis of the realisation of intentions expanded in the area of fertility analysis and includes 30 publications, representing more than one fifth of all fertility analyses. Their evaluation would require a separate analysis; the aspects mentioned here are intended to give a non-exhaustive overview.

Research on intentions is based on GGS Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which considers the formation of intentions as a result of attitudes, norms and barriers to action (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Klobas, 2013). Methodological studies have clearly concluded that the theory attributing the formation of intentions to attitudinal norms and perceptions of barriers is the correct one (Billari, 2009; Klobas, 2010). Analyses have shown that fertility intentions are the best indicator of future childbearing behaviour. However, the results showing the role of social status characteristics (e.g. educational attainment, occupational status, religiosity) in the realisation of intentions indirectly challenge the theory, as social differences and world views are already reflected in the formation of intentions (Deimantas, 2023; Mencarini et al., 2015).

The success of achieving an intention depends largely on the time horizon of the intention, whether someone wants to have a child today, next year, in three years or much later. The shorter the time span, the greater the chance of fulfilment because the longer the time span, the greater the chance that circumstances and intentions will change (Dommermuth et al., 2015). The different demographic and social situations allow for a different degree of realisation of their intentions (Kuhnt & Trappe, 2016; Régnier-Loilier et al., 2011). It is clear that those in a partnership are more likely to fulfil their fertility intentions than those in a LAT or living alone. It is important to note that those who are middle-aged in terms of fertility, just over 30, are more likely to fulfil their intentions than those over 30, confirming the ticking of the 'biological clock' (Kapitány & Spéder, 2012). According

to the 'social clock', older people were expected to be more likely to fulfil their intentions, as they have no time to delay. However, in almost all countries, younger people are more likely to become pregnant.

The many mixed results in terms of educational attainment and labour market status suggest that the national social context and welfare benefits may play an important role in translating intentions into reality (Kuhnt & Trappe, 2016; Pailhé & Régnier-Loilier, 2017). The country analyses also suggest that many attitudinal perceptions affect subjective norms in Germany and optimism in Hungary. There has long been a lack of evidence on whether the division of labour within the family affects fertility intentions. Based on gender equality theory, it was assumed that couples with a more equal division of labour (DoL) in the household would have more intentions. Riederer and colleagues were able to show an interesting result in this respect (Riederer et al., 2019). According to their analysis, spouses' satisfaction with the division of labour, relationship satisfaction and parity should be taken into account to detect the DoL effect. They conclude that the division of labour in the household is not as important a factor in interpreting the intention to consummate.

Comparative research based on individual panel data has found significant country-level differences in the realisation of short-term fertility intentions, especially between Western and Eastern European countries (Bradurashvili et al., 2011; Riederer & Buber-Ennsner, 2020; Spéder & Kapitány, 2014). Taking into account the differences between Western and Eastern European countries and dividing the countries into two corresponding groups provides an opportunity to identify contextual factors that shape urban-rural differences in realisation, with higher realisation rates in rural areas (Riederer & Buber-Ennsner, 2019). Specific contextual factors related to urban-rural differences are clearly related to realisation; higher female employment and higher childcare provision both support higher realisation but also contribute to greater abandonment of intentions. Other cross-country comparisons tend to blur the East-West differences. On the one hand, such differences are sometimes small



or even negligible - e.g. when comparing the capitals of Austria and Hungary (Riederer & Buber-Ennser, 2018). On the other hand, certain differences can also be identified between individual Western European countries (Switzerland has a lower realisation rate than the Netherlands) and between different Eastern European countries (Bulgaria and Russia have lower realisation rates than Hungary) (Spéder & Kapitány, 2015). It remains for future research to clarify which macro-social characteristics are involved in the cross-country differences.

### 3.2. Partnerships and divorce

The formation of a stable partnership occurs later and later in life, cohabitation is increasingly replacing marriage and marriage rates are falling in most European countries. Changes in partnership patterns have been driven by the postponement of marriage in most countries and research suggests that marriage is becoming more selective with individuals with higher educational level being more likely to marry than cohabit and have lower rates of union dissolution (Kalmijn, 2013; Perelli-Harris & Lyons-Amos, 2015). Parental socio-economic status also matters when it comes to partnership choices and timing since higher parental SES is related to later marriage of children (Brons et al., 2021).

Long-term trends in marital instability are closely linked to the wider societal changes associated with modernisation, globalization, individualisation. Divorce rates in recent decades have been sensitive to societal and economic changes, with countries' individual historical, socio-economic and political contexts playing a role in shaping these trends (Ana Fostik & Ciganda, 2023; Harkonen et al., 2021; Salvini & Vignoli, 2011).

The risk of marital dissolution has increased over time, particularly among younger cohorts and those with lower levels of education, suggesting a gradual democratisation of divorce. These trends seem to have reversed in the latest decade (Rotz, 2016; Zahl-Olsen, 2023),

a novelty with the potential to be investigated by the new round of GGS data collection.

An intergenerational transmission of divorce was observed, with a higher risk of separation for individuals whose parents had divorced (Salvini & Vignoli, 2011). The experience of separation also leads to higher rates of cohabitation and lower rates of marriage, and data for 16 countries suggest that the children of divorce have been at the forefront of the second demographic transition, with an increase in cohabitation and a decline in marriage (Harkonen et al., 2021).

The increase in cohabiting parenting has also contributed to overall family instability, with union instability reducing cumulative fertility, although repartnering after separation may have mitigated this effect. Nevertheless, these findings highlight the importance of stable relationships during the reproductive years (Ana Fostik & Ciganda, 2023; Thomson et al., 2019).

While the risk of parental separation has increased in several countries, the impact on children varies considerably according to their socio-economic background and the wider social context. Children from separated families, especially those from less educated backgrounds, tend to face more severe negative consequences, such as reduced chances of attaining tertiary education, with this effect being more pronounced in recent cohorts and in countries with higher divorce rates. In addition, parental separation also appears to influence children's future partnership behaviour (F. Bernardi & Radl, 2014; Zilincikova et al., 2023).

While women with higher education initially led the trend in rising divorce rates, women with lower education are now even more likely to separate. The link with the labour market is less clear, with results suggesting that women's employment facilitates marital dissolution in some countries, such as Italy and Poland, but not in others (Germany and Hungary). This suggests that women's employment is less likely to be associated with divorce in countries where access to divorce is easier and in countries with more generous financial support for families and single mothers, which in turn makes them less dependent on the market (Vignoli et al., 2018).

The chances of repartnering after divorce are also highly dependent on the social context, mostly shaped by gender norms, parenthood and educational status. Analyses including Eastern European and Balkan countries have shown important gender differences in traditional contexts, where parenthood reduces the chances of repartnering for women but not for men (Maslauskaitė & Baublytė, 2016).

### 3.3. Labour market

With the increasing participation of women in the labour market, research on the relationship between the labour market positions and demographic behaviour has gained in importance. Some of the most frequently investigated research questions include the impact of labour market position on fertility, attitudes towards parental employment, work-life balance, and the relationship between participation and labour market or family policies. Theories examined include the theory of planned behaviour (Gauthier et al., 2016), preference theory, microeconomic theory (De Wachter et al., 2016) or the relative resource perspective (Kitterød & Lappegard, 2012a). The GGS data are rich in international comparisons drawing attention to the persistent East-West divide in social norms and the importance attached to women's labour market participation at the European level. In the first group of countries, stay-at-home mothers are more likely to realise their labour market intentions, while in the second group, mothers are more likely to remain outside the labour market (Anne Gauthier & Bartova, 2016). Differences between these countries are also visible when it comes to attitudes towards parental employment, with Eastern European countries still having more traditional attitudes (Isabella Buber-Ennser & Panova, 2015). In Western countries (France, Germany, Italy), labour market participation has a negative effect on childbearing, especially among younger cohorts, although recent family policy measures may mitigate this effect. In post-socialist countries (Bulgaria, Czech

Republic, Georgia, Lithuania), there is greater heterogeneity and more important differences between countries (Tomatis & Impicciatore, 2023).

Research highlights the need for policies to facilitate mothers' participation in the labour market. This includes labour market policies, but also family policies with access to childcare, which is particularly important for sustaining maternal employment, especially for highly educated mothers (De Wachter et al., 2016). Moreover, countries with strong family policy support have lower educational inequalities in maternal employment. The GGS data have also allowed the study of the impact of parental leave reforms on the employment of mothers after childbirth in countries belonging to different welfare regimes (Makay, 2023).

GGS has been used to conduct research on economic uncertainty and its impact on demographic behaviour. The topic of the effect of unemployment and of uncertain work histories on fertility has shown that there is no simple causal relation; some systematic variation by welfare state regime is however discernable (Ciganda, 2015; Kreyenfeld et al., 2012; Pailhé & Régnier-Loilier, 2017).

Research on men's situation shows that their unstable work histories delay the first child and increases the likelihood of remaining childless. For women, the effects of instability are more complex and strongly dependent on attitudes to gender roles. The findings suggest that family policy measures should also support labour market stability, especially for young workers (Ciganda, 2015).

### 3.4. Changing gender roles

As a result of structural economic change, the expansion of the service sector and the feminist movement, women's opportunities for education and participation in the workforce have increased. As a result, the amount of time they spend on domestic work has decreased, which has been greatly facilitated by technological advances. At the same time, gender roles and expectations have

changed significantly. Men's involvement in the family, their participation in housework and parental tasks has increased, but not as much as expected.

The question of gender relations is a core component of the GGS and is intended to monitor the evolving changes in gender relations. The data have made it possible to examine the four main theories derived from Becker's human capital theory and several other recent theories on the role of social norms in gender relations. A significant number of cross-country comparative studies have been published, covering a wide range of gender issues (Lappegård T., 2021; Neyer et al., 2013).

Research examining the impact of gender ideology, cultural norms and structural factors on the division of household tasks has concluded that gender ideology has a significant impact on the division of labour in the home, although the extent of the impact varies across countries. In countries where women contribute a greater share of household income, unequal division of housework is less prevalent, meaning that the effects of economic dependency and gender ideology vary across countries and should be interpreted within the specific social context (Aassve et al., 2014; Berulava & Chikava, 2011).

The division of labour in the household is primarily explained by gender role expectations rooted in traditional behaviour. The explicit influence of cultural norms is minimal, but these norms are consistent with gender roles. Habits serve as the primary mechanism guiding the gendered division of tasks, and this is true regardless of institutional arrangements.

Other studies on the relationship between the welfare state and gender roles have examined how the welfare state, its policies and religiosity as a structural factor affect gender roles and their evolution. Welfare state policies can have a significant impact on gender equality. Reducing gender inequalities, together with institutional changes, in particular the expansion of childcare facilities, can contribute to higher fertility rates. In addition, the wage penalty for

motherhood is lower in countries with greater gender equality (Hofäcker et al., 2013; Neyer & Rieck, 2009).

Overall, the findings contribute to an understanding of the dynamics of the division of household tasks in the light of gender differences, women's labour market participation, men's roles within the family and changes in family events. They also highlight the impact of traditional values and cultural norms and can contribute to the further development of gender equality policies (Kitterød & Lappegard, 2012b; Régnier-Loilier, 2015).

### 3.5. Loneliness among the elderly

The inclusion of the shortened Jong-Giervald Loneliness Scale in the GGS questionnaire programme has given impetus to international comparative research on loneliness in old age (Hansen & Slagsvold, 2016). Analyses that look at differences within a given society or make comparisons that include individual factors consistently find that age, partnership status, gender, education level, income status and health status influence loneliness.

When compared internationally, the GGS data clearly show that loneliness is higher in Central Eastern European countries than in Western European countries (de Jong Gierveld, 2009), although the proportion of very old people, among whom loneliness rates are very high, is higher in Western European countries. Analysing people aged 60-80 from 11 European countries, Hansen and colleagues conclude that poor living conditions and low living standards play a decisive role in the disadvantage of Eastern Europe. Indeed, when they include the variable of 'financial satisfaction' in their analysis, it turns out that there is no longer any meaningful difference between Eastern and Western European societies (Hansen & Slagsvold, 2016). This gives some cause for optimism, but we cannot be sure that the number of lonely people will decrease as the financial situation improves.

The special feature of Gierveld's comparison is that she was able to take the distance of children and grandchildren from the elderly into account. If children do not live very far away and meet their elderly parents relatively often (at least once a week), this clearly reduces loneliness.

Gender differences were also found. Living with or without a partner is a strong determinant of loneliness and the lack of living with a partner cannot be compensated for by living with children. It is well known that women have a higher life expectancy than men, so it is believed that they are the main embodiment of loneliness. However, research has shown that they have a larger network of friends, that children tend to stay in contact with them after divorce, and that overall, men who live alone are lonelier than women who live alone (Korinek, 2013).

### 3.6. Partnerships, parenthood and happiness

Among the studies that have examined how certain life events affect happiness and subjective well-being (SWB), becoming a parent and changing partnership forms are of particular interest. The prominent concept in this area, set-point theory, suggests that individuals have a baseline level of happiness that is largely determined by personality traits and genetic factors. This implies that having a child may not have a lasting effect on an individual's overall happiness (Headey & Wearing, 1989). The research results are mixed, but some of it challenges the prominent concept. Aassve and colleagues found that the direct relationship between happiness and childbearing is modest (Aassve, Barbuscia, et al., 2014). Alternatively, looking at six European countries, Kohler concludes that in the context of low fertility, the predicted happiness from having a (further) child is generally positive, but diminishes with the number of children an individual already has, with important variation across countries. Entering parenthood is perceived as increasing subjective well-being, especially when the first child is born in the late twenties and early thirties (Kohler, 2016).

Germany stands out as the country where entering parenthood and having a second child is associated with the smallest gains in adult happiness. On the contrary, Radó's study found that parenthood in Hungary has a long-lasting positive effect on SWB, not only during parental leave but also long after. The arrival of both the first and second child permanently increases SWB, with women benefiting in both the short and long term, whereas men benefit mainly in the short term (Radó, 2019).

Focusing on the second half of the life course, Hansen and Slagsvold sought to address the limitations of the well-being paradox and found that, contrary to what the literature suggests, changes in SWB are not uniform across age (Hansen & Slagsvold, 2012). SWB is stable or increases to young old age, on average up to about 70 years of age. "Loss of health and partner are the main causes of declining well-being in older age." (p.187) In terms of gender, the results are similar for men and women. When disability in old age is taken into account, life satisfaction declines from the first to the second data collection within five years only among those who became disabled between the two waves (Nicolaisen, 2020).

Baranowska-Rataj examined how cohabitation among young people in Poland, where cohabitation is not widely accepted, affects their satisfaction with their relationship with their parents. Those who chose to cohabit tended to rate their level of satisfaction with parental relationships slightly lower than their married counterparts. The level of satisfaction with the parental relationship was found to be determined not only by the characteristics of the young adults, but also by the characteristics of the parents (Baranowska-Rataj, 2013). The findings suggest that the demographic changes associated with union formation patterns in modern societies may lead to a deterioration in the quality of intergenerational relationships, especially in countries where cohabitation is becoming more common as a living arrangement but has not yet been fully accepted as a union type on a par with marriage.



## 4. Conclusion

This report demonstrates the strength and the uniqueness of the Generations and Gender Programme and the Generations and Gender Survey. Indeed, the scientific achievements of the GGS, together with the Contextual Database and the Harmonized Histories stands out with the plurality of the demographic and sociological topics treated by the scientific papers and the quality of the research done using this data. Not all topics could be enumerated in this report; several others, with important social relevance had to be omitted but will be part of a more scientific-based paper to be published.

The new round of GGS-II is a continuation of the work achieved and will make it possible to test the achieved scientific results on a renewed sample in the actual social context, and in new countries.

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## 6. Appendix

Table 1. Published papers using the GGS, distribution

<b>Topics (main)</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Rate (%)</b>	<b>Rate (%)</b>
Transitions to adulthood	11	11	1,9	1,9
Partnership	73	87	12,5	14,9
Repartnering	14	0	2,4	0,0
Divorce	21	21	3,6	3,6
Fertility	129	168	22,1	28,8
Intentions	30	0	5,1	0,0
Contraceptives	9	0	1,5	0,0
Generations, ageing	0	55	0,0	9,4
Generations	24	0	4,1	0,0
Health	14	0	2,4	0,0
Ageing	17	0	2,9	0,0
Family	23	23	3,9	3,9
Gender	36	53	6,2	9,1
Division of labour	17	0	2,9	0,0
Labour market	36	36	6,2	6,2
Life course	11	11	1,9	1,9
Income, stratification	22	22	3,8	3,8
Subjective well-being	12	12	2,1	2,1
Methods, techniques, GGS	56	56	9,6	9,6
Policy effects	14	14	2,4	2,4
Other	8	14	1,4	2,4
Fatherhood	5	0	0,9	0,0
Migrants	1	0	0,2	0,0
All	583	583	100,0	100,0