

# UN-GGIM: Europe Work Plan

## Introduction

The aim of UN-GGIM: Europe is to contribute to the more effective management and availability of geospatial information in Europe, the work of the Regional Committee is aligned to the global UN-GGIM programme. This work plan stems from the reviewed and renewed strategy of UN-GGIM: Europe (*insert link to strategy here*). The mission of UN-GGIM: Europe is to **maximise the use of geospatial information in Europe for a safer and more sustainable world**. And will be achieved *through identifying opportunities, understanding and solving common challenges across the Europe Region. By collaborating with partners to enhance the use of geospatial data and its integration with statistics to inform and drive action*. The three main strategic pillars of Sharing Knowledge, Raising Awareness and Strategic Leadership are the framework shaping the strategy and work plan.

The aims, focus and goals of each of these three strategic pillars are translated into a work plan, approved annually in the plenary meetings<sup>1</sup>, and put into practice by activities and tasks carried out by the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe, the UN-GGIM: Europe Secretariat, and Regional Working Groups.

The initial steer of the strategy stems from the Committee of Experts, the annual meeting highlights the global priorities which inform and shape the UN-GGIM: Europe strategy and work plan. The work plan is the blueprint that facilitates the collaboration of European Member States, European Institutions and observer bodies to work together to progress key priorities that are relevant to the region.

Sharing the European experiences gained through regional work with the global functional groups and reporting back annually to the Committee closes the circular process.



<sup>1</sup> Article 7 of the [Articles of UN-GGIM: Europe](#).



Therefore, this work plan needs to be viewed in conjunction with the UN-GGIM: Europe Strategy document and proposes five key priority area that meet the strategic alignment of the needs and requirements of Europe within the global programme of the Committee of Experts:

- Integrated Geospatial Information Framework
- Geodetic Reference Frames
- Data Integration
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Data Strategy and Policy

These key priority areas are translated into the main lines of work that the Regional Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe plans to focus on for the next three to five years starting from 2022.

The rationale and aims supporting the lines of work are outlined in this work plan and can be achieved by revising the aim and purpose of already existing regional working groups, by newly established working groups and through the definition of strategic project teams.

UN-GGIM: Europe already has a rolling work plan which was agreed and approved at the Seventh Regional Plenary Meeting in 2020. The current regional working groups are striving deliver on that work plan. This document presents the status of the activities of the previous work plan and proposed actions for its continuity when transitioning to this new work plan.

The Regional Committee promotes and encourages the collaboration between national mapping and cadastral authorities and national statistical institutes in the European Region, along with European Institutions and observer bodies. Members States and observers are therefore invited to express their interest and join the UN-GGIM: Europe activities.

## Establishing the main lines of work

This document provides a high-level outline of the lines of work that the Regional Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe aims to focus on for the next few years. It is not the intention of the Executive Committee to prepare and prescribe how the work should be carried out or identify the deliverables for each line of work, however the work plan is structured around five key areas of focus for Europe which reflects both regional and global priorities

The rationale and aims of the lines of work together with relevant resources and material are outlined below. The Regional Committee invites Members States and observers to express their interest in participating in the various lines of work outlined below and to collaborate together to deliver on these key regional priorities.



## IGIF

## Integrated Geospatial Information Framework - Europe

### Rationale

The Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) has quickly become the 'umbrella framework' for the activities of UN-GGIM. The recent Eleventh Session of UN-GGIM demonstrated how many of the existing frameworks and global expert and working groups are considering how they relate to the IGIF. The purpose for this line of work is to support the regional representatives on the High-level Group on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF), provide the views of the European Region as the IGIF matures, and to consider activities which will benefit members of UN-GGIM: Europe.

### Integrated Geospatial Information Framework

- [Part 1: Overarching Strategic Framework](#)
- [Part 2: Implementation Guide](#)

### Related UN-GGIM activities:

- [High-Level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework \(HLG-IGIF\)](#)
  - [Terms of Reference \(February 2021\)](#)

### Aim and expected outcome

Actively promote the IGIF as a tool and an evaluation system for Member States, especially those that already have national frameworks in place. Linked to this is how to contribute to the development and uptake of the IGIF.

Support Member States to develop their capabilities and build capacity in country especially enabling them to evaluate and assess the relevance of the IGIF.

Provide feedback and support the regional representatives on the HLG-IGIF.



## GRF

## Geodetic Reference Frames - Europe

### Rationale

Many Member States in the UN-GGIM: Europe Region have active geodetic programmes and projects at the national level. Many of these Member States are also active at the Global Level through UN-GGIM and other multilateral organisations. Yet, there is not an active Regional focused activity within the UN-GGIM: Europe Work plan. Attendees at the European Geodesy Forum held on 23 June 2021 articulated the need for the UN-GGIM: Europe region to contribute to the global efforts and it is important to consider, in this context, that the Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence will be established in Europe. This could be considered a 'light touch' activity which draws on the existing expertise within the region but does not overstretch existing resources.

### Related UN-GGIM activities:

- [Subcommittee on Geodesy](#)
  - [Terms of reference](#)
  - [Report](#) at the Eleventh Session of the Committee of experts
  - [Position Paper on Sustaining the Global Geodetic Reference Frame](#)
  - [Concept Paper on Establishing a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence](#)
- European Geodesy Forum - [Towards a sustainable Global Geodetic Reference Frame: European Contribution](#) 23 June 2021
- Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence will be established in Europe (Bonn, Germany)

### Aim and expected outcomes

Provide support and actions that further the aims of the Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence which will be established in Europe.

Align and support the UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy's priorities for the Global Geodetic Reference Frame, and to translate them into actions relevant for UN-GGIM: Europe.



## Data Integration

### Rationale

The topic of data integration is a central issue in the current European landscape focus on data strategy. Increasing data interoperability, standardization and quality are key points in this framework of moving towards data driven-innovation and evidence-based decisions and policies.

The recently launched New EU Space Programme, with its initiatives like Copernicus and Galileo, will continue to enhance the contribution of Earth Observation to Europe's digital and green transitions priority policies. Exploring these type of data sources and how they can be integrated with other data is a topic being addressed also within the European Statistical System (ESS) in the context of having a Memorandum on EO for official statistics which recognizes the potential of EO to develop timely official statistics on a wide range of topics and provide information at a more disaggregated level. Additionally, the ESS is also aiming to develop strategy on the integration of geospatial data and statistics with a view on fostering innovation and keep pace with relevant and emerging issues with a geospatial component and work is still underway on completing and providing guidance on the implementation on the European version of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF Europe). On the topic of EO it is also relevant benefit an deepen the context of articulation with the undergoing activities of the GEO group.

Within the European region, it is also important to recognize the opportunities for the development of location-based information, at the level of infrastructure and technological development for MS. Population and Housing Census, due to the financial investment they entail, have been leveraging the foundation of point-based data and the constitution of national spatial data infrastructures, which are key components to maximise the use of geospatial data.

### Related UN-GGIM activities:

- [Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information](#)
  - [Terms of Reference \(February 2019\)](#)
  - [Report](#) at the Eleventh Session of the Committee of experts
  - [Global Statistical Geospatial Framework](#)
  - [Current UN-GGIM: Europe WG on Data Integration deliverables](#)

### Aim and expected outcomes

This line of work aims to maintain the active contribution of UN-GGIM: Europe on data methods to enhance data integration and on showcasing the added value of integrating geospatial data with other data, and further exploring requirements and practices on the use and integration of Earth Observation data. This line of work could also explore ways to contribute and support activities promoting geospatial and statistical data integration, including reinforcing the involvement of the Earth Observation community.



## SDG

## Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable development will continue to mark the global agenda and, as 2030 approaches, measuring progress towards the SDGs will become increasingly relevant, both at regional and national levels, with geospatial data playing an important role to provide context and deliver data to operationalize indicators.

It has been clear that since the beginning the various countries of the world (and of course the different countries of Europe) were at different stages of sustainable development and of their ability to track and implement the indicator framework for the monitoring of the 17 SDGs, the COVID-19 pandemic brought additional challenges, aggravating, and potentially delaying, the progress towards achieving the SDGs.

The contribution of geospatial information and its integration with statistical information plays, in this context, a relevant role, as highlighted by the recent publication of the 'SDG Geospatial roadmap', which consists of a practical guide to support Member States to improve the application of geospatial information and Earth observations for the production and dissemination of indicators. The recently launched 'SDG Data Alliance' also aims to leverage the use of geospatial information by assisting countries in maximising the use the potential of geospatial information to support the SDGs, other global development agendas, and their national priorities.

Within the context of the IAEG-SDG, it is important to highlight the request addressed to its WG on Geospatial Information (GI) to provide guidance to the statistical community (including the SDGs Custodian Agencies) on approaches to the review and validation of data emanating from the use of Earth observations. Other initiatives have been showcasing the added value of EO for SDG, as the one developed by GEO group (EO4SDG) and at the European programmes, such as the Copernicus, have also shed light on the potential of satellite imagery data to address environment related topics.

### Related UN-GGIM activities:

- Geospatial Information for Sustainable Development
  - [Report](#) at the Eleventh Session of the Committee of experts
  - [The SDGs Geospatial roadmap](#)

### Aim and expected outcomes

This line of work aims to maintain the active contribution of UN-GGIM: Europe on showcasing the added value of integrating geospatial data with other data to address SDG indicators, further exploring requirements and practices on the use and integration of Earth Observation data, maintaining a close articulation with the IAEG-SDG WG GI.



## Data Strategy and Policy

### Rationale

The [European strategy for data](#) adopted in early 2021 has the ambition of a ‘society empowered by data’, anchoring data as the basis for better decision making. Policies and legislations that support [open public sector data](#), [common data spaces](#), [data governance](#), the ethical use of [artificial intelligence](#), and concepts towards a geospatially enabled ‘knowledge infrastructure’ have an impact on data integration and its provision throughout the region. While the European Union is a subset of the region covered by UN-GGIM: Europe, its data policies and legislation have a broader regional impact.

Large volumes of data are produced daily from multiple data sources based on different types of devices and technologies. How information is collected, managed, stored, used and reused in an efficient, transparent and accessible way are critical issues that need to be addressed strategically in order to maximise the value of geospatial data to produce meaningful and location-based relevant information.

### Related UN-GGIM activities:

- IGIF Strategic pathways on:
  - Policy and Legal [English](#) | [Appendices](#)
  - Data [English](#) | [Appendices](#)
    - Standards [English](#) | [Appendices](#)
- [Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management](#)

### Aim and expected outcomes

To contribute to the development of relevant policy and data strategies regarding the management and use of geospatial data to maximise its value in addressing the challenges of a green, sustainable and digital Europe.

Understand the linkages of European policy with the IGIF



## Putting the lines of work into practice

UN-GGIM: Europe is already engaged in a delivering the current work plan which was approved by its members at the seventh plenary meeting in 2021. The tasks and outcomes already embarked on by the relevant working groups will be concluded and delivered.

A brief overview of the state of play of activities of the three UN-GGIM: Europe Regional Working Groups and a consideration of how the strategic lines of work set up by this work plan can be continued by the regional working groups follows:

Status of current Working Groups	Proposed actions
<p><a href="#">Working Group on Core Data</a></p> <p>This Working Group has been active since 2014 and is focused on increasing data interoperability and harmonisation by proposing core geospatial data which meets essential user needs. The group has delivered on its task to identify the users and their needs and requirements for core data. The group is finalising proposed recommendations of content of the core data themes is preparing a document about promoting core data implementation.</p>	<p>The Working Group on Core Data will conclude and provide all deliverables outlined in the Work Plan 2020 - 2023.</p>
<p><a href="#">Working Group on Data Integration</a></p> <p>This Working Group has been active since 2014 and has maintained a close interaction with the IAEG-SDG Working Group on Geospatial Information (WG GI), as well as with the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information and the GEOSTAT project from Eurostat. The Working Group has also been a relevant context for establishing bridges between geospatial and statistical communities. The Working Group is on track to accomplishing its work plan and associated deliverables by the beginning of 2022.</p>	<p>The Working Group on Data Integration will provide all deliverables outlined in the Work Plan 2020 – 2023. An assessment on refreshed the terms of reference in accordance with the lines of work identified in this work plan will be carried out.</p>
<p><a href="#">Geodetic Reference Frames - Europe</a></p> <p>This Working Group was established in 2016 and has been inactive for almost two years. Sub-Committee on Geodesy (SCoG) has offered to assist in the re-establishment of the Regional Working Group.</p>	<p>Reactivate the Working Group taking into consideration the need to avoid duplication and overlap of the GRF-Europe Group and existing geodesy-related initiatives and entities in Europe yet progress of the work plan and roadmap of the SCoG and support the Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence.</p>





In order to establish and implement the lines of work identified by this work plan various forums for the collaboration are envisaged. Regional activity, interaction, sharing of experiences and good practices, aiming to mobilise and engage the participation of technical representatives of the entities representing the Member States and observers, are proposed. Two ways of activating the work are outlined below, other ways of working can be considered and implemented (example: Communities of Interest) if these are deemed more appropriate for delivering the lines of work:

- **Regional Working Groups**
- **Project Teams**

**Regional Working Groups** (Article 8 of the Articles of UN-GGIM: Europe) can be established to accomplish one or more specific goals of UN-GGIM: Europe. They have been operating based on defined Terms of Reference (ToR), the nomination of a Chair, which can appoint coordinators for key activities within the work programme, and reports to the Working Group Chair. The Working Group's ToR, outcomes and deliverables are to be approved by the Regional Executive Committee and activities are expected to be developed over an extended period of time encompassing a wide participation of Member States and observers.

**Project Teams** can be put into practice to deal with strategic and targeted actions, not being directly addressed by the Regional Working Groups, and that are relevant for activating and deploying UN-GGIM: Europe strategy and lines of work. Project teams are expected to function for a shorter and more limited period of time under the scope of a mandate defining the time frame, activities and expected outcomes to be achieved. A coordinator, responsible for operationalizing the mandate, would be appointed for each project team, reporting to the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe. The Regional Secretariat is expected to participate in the project team activities providing support and management.

## Governance

It has to be stressed that the lines of work are not siloed, there is significant overlap and interaction between the lines of work.

The overarching role of the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe towards the activation and implementation of the work plan is to provide guidance and oversight. In addition, it is the task of the Regional Executive Committee to assume an overarching role ensuring synergies and communications, both vertically and horizontally, between and across working groups, project teams and other regional fora.

The Regional Secretariat supports the Regional Executive Committee in the exercise of its function and assistance in the overall achievement of activities of UN-GGIM: Europe work plan. While also actively communicating the UN-GGIM: Europe activities and achievements to all relevant stakeholders across multiple channels.

## Action proposal and next steps

The work plan is presented to the Members of UN-GGIM: Europe for their consideration and discussion. Member States and observers are encouraged to express their interest in participating in the lines of work.



The detailed methods of working (whether in Regional Working Groups or Project Teams), leadership, terms of reference, outcomes, delivers and outcomes will be agreed and presented to the Regional Executive Committee by the 31 January 2022, to be finally presented at the next UN-GGIM: Europe Plenary Meeting.

The Executive Committee proposes that it be given the mandate to implement this Work Plan and to decide on how best to coordinate the regional work on the different topic areas and lines of work.