

Tenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe

Report from Line of Work on SDG | 07/2022 – 11/2023

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the outcome and findings for months 07/2022 to 11/2023.

In spite of social distancing restrictions due to the Corona pandemic, 40 participants from the UN-GGIM: Europe Working Group on Data Integration got together for a productive virtual event on 20 June 2022. The meeting focused on adopting the new UN-GGIM: Europe work plan having five new Lines of Work in place.

- Line of Work on Data Integration (DI)
- Line of Work on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)
- Line of Work on Data Strategy and Policy (DS&P)
- Line of Work on Geodetic Reference Frame (GRF)
- Line of Work on Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF)

From the organisational point of view the former Working Group on Data Integration has been divided into two Lines of Work (LoW), Data integration and SDG. Germany is responsible and chairs the LoW Data Integration, co-chaired by Austria and Belgium. Portugal is responsible and chairs the LoW SDG, co-chaired by Germany.

In the new working phase 2022-2025 the main function of both LoW is to develop and promote activities on data integration, particularly with other information to address the SDGs. Both LoW function in 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 (EG ISGI) and projects from Eurostat. Both LoW provide a relevant context for establishing bridges between geospatial and statistical communities, functioning on request (if feasible) as 'Advisory Group' to contribute to global and regional data integration issues addressed by global and European geospatial data management initiatives, programmes and projects.

The main aim of the LoW SDG is 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, by building on the previous deliverables and focus on common problems and technical and methodological solutions.

The work also intends to further explore requirements and practices on the use and integration of Earth Observation data, maintaining a close articulation with the IAEG-SDG WG GI. Overall, the work will extend the set of indicators reviewed on previous deliverables according to member-states interest and by including other partners to ensure synergies and avoid duplication of work.

The expected outputs include:

- To compile and put together use cases and operational examples and produce concrete recommendations and guidelines on the calculation of SDG indicators
- To evaluate and assess the use of relevant national geospatial data as open data
- To provide national show cases for the presentation of relevant SDG indicators
- To promote the work of this WG with open webinars / guided discussion sessions on specific SDG indicators and/or cross-cutting methodological issues and solutions
- To support and promote capacity building and development initiatives on SDG indicators calculation

The Plenary is kindly asked to acknowledge the following call for action by the Line of Work on SDGs:

Call for action

- 1 The Plenary is kindly requested to approve the ongoing work of the Line of Work on SDG within the Work Plan 2022 – 2025
- 2 The Plenary is kindly requested to further promote the function of the Working Group as 'Advisory Group' to continuously contribute to global and regional data integration issues
- 3 The Line of Work on SDG is requested to evaluate and assess the issues and obstacles identified within the webinars (at the latest within the physical meeting in Lisbon in April 2024).



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1. General management issues

The Line of Work on SDG is chaired by Statistics Portugal. Currently, 20 European UN Member States comprising 25-30 National Mapping and Cadastral Authorities (NMCA) or National Statistical Institutes (NSI) are members of both Lines of Work. Eurostat as well as the Joint Research Centre (JRC) actively cooperates in the Working Group since the beginning in 2014. The European Environment Agency (EEA) joined the Working Group in 2017.

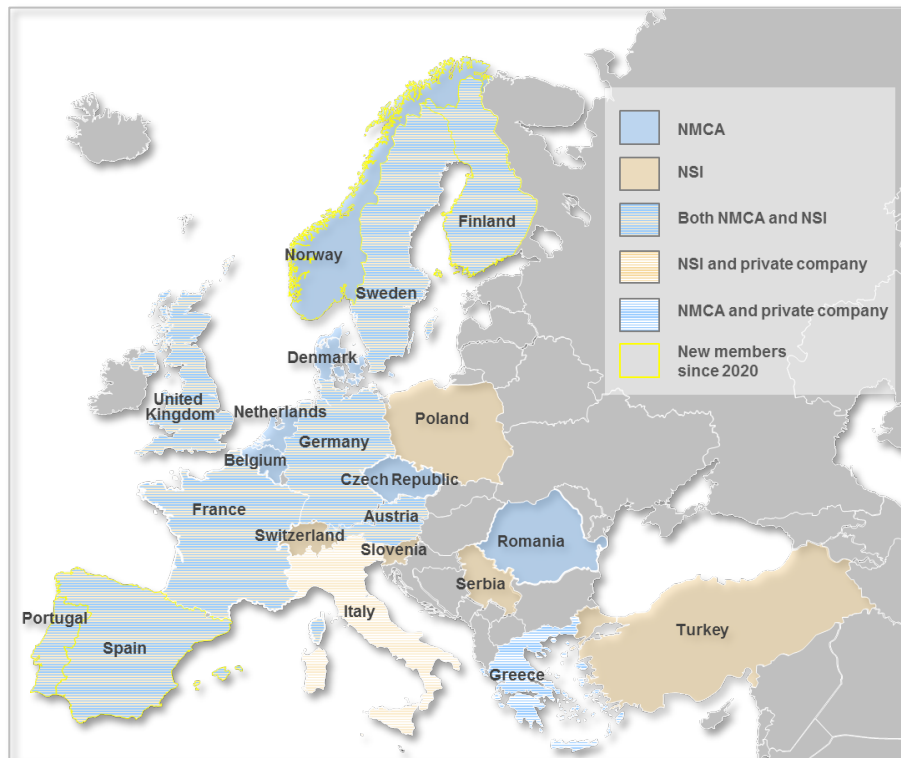


Figure 1: Current members of the UN-GGIM: Europe Working Group on Data Integration

Due to the Corona pandemic the current working phase 2022 - 2025 started virtually and, so far, all meetings have been conducted in virtual format. The first physical meeting of this current working phase will be held on 15-16 April 2024 at Statistics Portugal headquarters in Lisbon.



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2. Progress according to the new work plan 2022 – 2025

2.1. Line of Work on Sustainable Development Goals

NSI Portugal leads this Line of Work.

This new line of work on SDG will follow the defined Terms of Reference (ToR) and the main aim is 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, by building on the previous deliverables and focus on common problems and technical and methodological solutions.

SDG line of work also intends to further explore requirements and practices on the use and integration of Earth Observation data, maintaining a close articulation with IAEG-SDG WG GI. Overall, in this mandate, the focus will be on extending the set of indicators reviewed on previous work according to member-states interest and by including other partners to ensure synergies and avoid duplication of work.

The expected outputs include:

- To compile and put together use cases and operational examples and produce concrete recommendations and guidelines on the calculation of SDG indicators
- To evaluate and assess the use of relevant national geospatial data as open data
- To provide national show cases for the presentation of relevant SDG indicators
- To promote the work of this WG with open webinars / guided discussion sessions on specific SDG indicators and/or cross-cutting methodological issues and solutions
- To support and promote capacity building and development initiatives on SDG indicators calculation

The following webinar series have been planned and conducted. The underlying rationale translates a narrative thread focusing on previous findings, data sources and methods, data integration and policy needs. Each webinar was coordinated by a different institution and several institutions contribute to them, by giving a broad perspective of the subjects discussed. Each webinar has a concept note indicating the main content of the webinar and an evaluation report giving the main outcomes and findings.

The webinars are recorded, and all material is uploaded to the UN-GGIM: Europe's website.



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Setting the scene: Previous findings Sources Integration Policy needs				
#1	Showcasing the added value of geospatial and statistical data integration to compute SDG indicators	E-GEOS Statistics Sweden DG Regio EEA Statistics Portugal	25 April ✓	Francisco Vala (Statistics Portugal)
#2	Earth Observation and SDG: uses cases and workflows	EEA EuroGeo EuroGeographics	23 May ✓	Stefan Jensen & Jose Miguel Rubio (EEA)
#3	United Nations Geospatial Network Data Hub: One UN Geospatial Situation Room	UN Geospatial Network UNECE EFGS Eurostat	15 November ✓	Ekkehard Petri (Eurostat)
#4	Geospatial information for territorial policy support in the context of SDGs	JRC OECD DG REGIO	25 October ✓	Hugo Poelman & Joachim Maes (EC – DG REGIO)

The Plenary is kindly requested to approve the ongoing work of the Line of Work on SDG within the Work Plan 2022 – 2025. It is worth noting, that the new tasks of the Line of Work on SDG have been continuously cross-checked with the UN-GGIM: Europe Secretariat, other working groups, and ongoing activities (e.g., UNECE, GEO).

From the first evaluation and assessment reports the following issues have been identified to be further elaborated and tackled:

- Integration of statistical and geospatial information bring potentialities to compute, analyze, and monitor SDG indicators.
- Geospatial information has a relevant role on SDG indicators computation. Using geospatial data sources allows a greater territorial disaggregation that can support informed monitoring and decision making.
- There are geospatial datasets available at global, European, and national level. Needs of comparability and spatial disaggregation underlies the decision of which dataset should be used and a trade-off between comparability and accuracy (both spatial and thematic) should always be taken into account.
- Data availability in Europe is good at this point and it's improving but it's important to continue the discussion of a concise authoritative set of pan-European datasets.
- It is important to continue the promotion of open, machine-readable data.
- Methodological guides provide a clear description of SDG indicators computation.
- EO data has become an essential part of the SDG data methodology and is increasingly used to innovate the way SDGs are monitored and to fill input data gaps to compute SDG indicators.
- Technically, the further usage of EO data is possible and beneficial but in practice often limited by resource constraints.



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- More usage of EO shall be explored as the availability is growing strongly. This can trigger the request for guidance on further environmental SDG indicators.
- Member Countries increase the availability of authoritative data which has to be taken up.
- Despite all these opportunities, resource constraints relating to budget, people's knowledge and lacking digitalization in institutions exist and have to be addressed.

As a next step, the Line of Work on SDG plans to evaluate and assess the issues and obstacles identified within the webinars. At the latest a substantial and intensive discussion will take place within the physical meeting in Lisbon in April 2024. This will include the reference to the work plan as well as to the global UN-GGIM activities.

3. Related Activities of the WG supporting the work plan 2022 – 2025

According to the Work Plan the WG continues to contribute to following activities.

3.1. Contribution to the global IAEG SDG WG GI

Two Working Group members (Denmark, Italy) are represented in the IAEG SDG WG GI and do regularly provide updates on the current work. At the last virtual meeting of the Working Group on 30 March 2022, one member of the IAEG SDG WG GI gave a presentation about the current status of the global working group.

The Plenary is kindly requested to further promote the function of the Working Group as 'Advisory Group' to continuously contribute to global and regional data integration issues addressed by the IAEG SDG WG GI.

3.2. Support of European coordination activities

This consultancy and advice comprise the support of European coordination activities towards the implementation of the UN-GGIM Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) and other geospatial activities by the European Commission (mainly Eurostat ones).

Particularly, a regular exchange on activities between the EC unit responsible for EuroGEO and the UN-GGIM: Europe Executive Committee / Secretariat seems to be key. An easy way might be to continue to participate at and provide information through workshops, conferences, and plenary sessions. A good start has already been done.

It includes the participation and presentation at European conferences, workshops:

Conferences	Dates
Working Group on Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information and Joint UN-GGIM: Europe – ESS – UNECE Meeting on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, Luxembourg	06-07 March 2023
Geospatial World Forum 2023, Rotterdam	02-05 May 2023



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9th Joint UN-GGIM: Europe - ESS - UNECE Meeting and Workshop on Integrating Statistical and Geospatial Data, Belgrade	03-05 October 2023
INSPIRE Conference 2023, Brussels	28-29 November 2023
Working Group on Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information and Joint UN-GGIM: Europe – ESS – UNECE Meeting on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, Luxembourg	12-13 March 2024
Geospatial World Forum 2024, Rotterdam	13-16 May 2024

4. Attachments

- All documents of the webinars (concept note, presentations, evaluation reports of both Lines of Work) are uploaded to the UN-GGIM: Europe Website: <https://un-ggim-europe.org/working-groups/working-group-data-integration/>

5. Call for action

For the time being a strategical input/vision for the next 10 years cannot be provided without having a closer discussion with other members of the Line of Work. The next physical meeting is planned in April 2024 in Lisbon. This meeting shall provide outcome and findings to derive a strategical vision.

The Plenary is kindly asked to acknowledge the following call for action by the Line of Work on SDG:

- | # | Call for action |
|---|--|
| 1 | The Plenary is kindly requested to approve the work of the Working Group |
| 2 | The Plenary is kindly requested to further promote the function of the Working Group as 'Advisory Group' to continuously contribute to global and regional data integration issues addressed by global and European activities |
| 3 | The Line of Work on SDG is requested to evaluate and assess the issues and obstacles identified within the webinars (at the latest within the physical meeting in Lisbon in April 2024). |

