

Eleventh Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe

Report from Line of Work on SDG | 12/2023 – 05/2024

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the outcomes and findings for months 12/2023 to 05/2024.

From the organisational point of view the former Working Group on Data Integration is 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.

The first physical meeting of this current working phase was conducted jointly for the Line of Work on Data Integration and SDG on 15-16 April 2024 at Statistics Portugal in Lisbon to evaluate the outcomes of the webinar series, find gaps and requirements of both Lines of Work and to strengthen the link to other active groups. 31 participants, including newbies from Armenia and India and three new observer organisations (UN-GGIM Academic Network, EARSC, OECD) have been present.

The following results are recorded:

- a. Evaluate previous recommendations from the reports since 2014, identify obstacles and prepare/communicate them in a new/simpler way for political decision-makers.
- b. Examine and evaluate the current “GEOS grants 2024 - Invitation to call for proposals SMP-ESS-2024-GEOS-IBA — Geospatial Statistics” from Eurostat as a potential opportunity for a specific project application to analyse specific SDG indicators
- c. Determine specific SDG indicators in which the EC (DG REGIO), the EEA or OECD have particular interest in.

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 adopt the decisions (tasks) being made within the Line of Work on SDG at the physical meeting in Lisbon in April for the remaining working period.
- 3 The Plenary is kindly requested to monitor and assess the global activities continuously and advise the Line of Work “SDG” on how to contribute to global SDG issues addressed.



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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, DG REGIO, the European Environment Agency (EEA) as well as the Joint Research Centre (JRC) actively cooperate in both Lines of Work “Data Integration” and “SDG”.

The first physical meeting of this current working phase was held jointly with the Line of Work “Data Integration” on 15-16 April 2024 at Statistics Portugal headquarters in Lisbon. 31 participants, including newbies from Armenia and India and three new observer organisations (UN-GGIM Academic Network, EARSC, OECD) have been present. The lead of the Line of Work on IGIF participated and presented issues and tasks, too.

The Lisbon meeting was structured in two main blocks: an overviewing block where institutions from global (UN EG-ISGI, IAEG SDG WG GI and UN-GGIM Climate Resilience WG) and European (LoW on IGIF, EEA, EARSC and UN-GGIM Academic Network) level gave insights on their activities, outcomes and challenges related with SDGs; and breakout sessions to reflect and discuss issues that worth to be tackled by both Lines of Work until the end of the mandate.

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

2.1. Line of Work on Sustainable Development Goals

In 2023, the following four webinar series were 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 had a concept note indicating the main content of the webinar and an evaluation report giving the main outcomes and findings.

The webinars were recorded, and all the material was uploaded to the UN-GGIM: Europe’s website.

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)

Figure 1: Conducted webinars within the Line of Work on SDG in 2023



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The main outcomes of the webinars on SDGs can be summarized as follows:

- Need of a **concise authoritative set** of pan-European datasets.
- **Complementarity** between authoritative data and non-conventional data.
- **Reinforcement of promotion** of open, machine-readable data (standards and interoperability).
- **Geospatial situation rooms** are a **promising concept** to pull data from different sources together.
- The implementation of geospatial situation rooms relies on the availability of harmonized data respecting technical and semantic standards.
- **Emergency situations** can also support regular decision taking and policy making.
- Geospatial and statistical offices should consider the requirements for **disaster and crisis management** when releasing data (e.g. by respecting standards and improving timeliness and frequency of data releases).
- Usage of **EO data** is often **limited** by resource constraints (budget, human skills, lack of digitalization) of institutions and/or countries.
- **More usage of EO** shall be explored; this request for guidance on further environmental SDG indicators.
- The **importance of using harmonized concepts and classifications** of geospatial data for policies with territorial relevance was highlighted.

In Lisbon the Line of Work members discussed the outcomes and findings of the webinars which were highlighted within four main topics – data sources and methods, technical and methodological aspects, public policies need and domains to be addressed.

The participants agreed upon the following tasks:

- a. Evaluate previous recommendations from the reports since 2014, identify obstacles and prepare/communicate them in a new/simpler way for political decision-makers.
- b. Examine and evaluate the current “GEOS grants 2024 - Invitation to call for proposals SMP-ESS-2024-GEOS-IBA — Geospatial Statistics” from Eurostat as a potential opportunity for a specific project application to analyse specific SDG indicators.
- c. Determine specific SDG indicators in which the EC (DG REGIO), the EEA or OECD have particular interest in.

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 cross-checked with the UN-GGIM: Europe Secretariat, other working groups, and ongoing activities (e.g., UNECE, GEO).

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

According to the Work Plan the Line of Work continues to contribute to following activities.

3.1. Contribution to the global IAEG SDG WG GI

Two Lines of Work members (Denmark, Italy) are represented in the IAEG SDG WG GI and do regularly provide updates on the current work. At the meeting in Lisbon one member of the IAEG SDG WG GI gave a presentation about the current status of the global working group.

Recently, the SDG Data Alliance has strengthened the cooperation with UN-GGIM bodies and groups addressing SDG issues. The Plenary is kindly requested to monitor and assess the global activities continuously and advise the Line of Work “SDG” on how to contribute to global SDG issues addressed.



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3.2. Support of international coordination activities

Members of OECD, EARSC and the UN-GGIM: Academic Network have been invited to the Lisbon meeting and gave overview presentations about their work. Members of UNECE have been invited but unfortunately could not participate.

Particularly, a regular exchange on activities between the EC 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.

The support of international activities includes the participation and presentation at European conferences, workshops:

Conferences	Dates
EFGS Conference 2024, Ljubljana	10-12 December 2024

4. Attachments

- All documents of the webinars of both Lines of Work are uploaded to the UN-GGIM: Europe Website: <https://un-ggim-europe.org/un-ggim-europe-webinar-series/>

5. Call for action

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