Generations and Gender Programme

Generations and Gender Survey (GGS):

Towards a Better Understanding of Relationships and Processes in the Life Course

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Abstract

The Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) is one of the two pillars of the Generations and Gender Programme designed to improve understanding of demographic and social development and of the factors that influence these developments. This article describes how the theoretical perspectives applied in the survey, the survey design and the questionnaire are related to this objective.

The key features of the survey include panel design, multidisciplinarity, comparability, context-sensitivity, inter-generational and gender relationships. The survey applies the life course approach, focussing on the processes of childbearing**,** partnership dynamics**,** home leaving, and retiring. The selection of topics for data collection mainly follows the criterion of theoretically grounded relevance to explaining one or more of the mentioned processes. A large portion of the survey deals with economic aspects of life, such as economic activity, income, and economic well-being; a comparably large section is devoted to values and attitudes. Other domains covered by the survey include gender relationships, household composition and housing, residential mobility, social networks and private transfers, education, health, and public transfers. The third chapter of the article describes the motivations for their inclusion.

The GGS questionnaire is designed for a face-to-face interview. It includes the core that each participating country needs to implement in full, and four optional sub-modules on nationality and ethnicity, on previous partners, on intentions of breaking up, and on housing, respectively. The participating countries are encouraged to include also the optional sub-modules to facilitate comparative research on these topics.

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1. Introduction

In this article, we describe the theoretical background, goals, key features and instruments of the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) (United Nations 2005). The GGS is one of the two pillars of the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP), which is designed to help us improve our understanding of demographic and social development and of the factors that influence these developments. We describe how the applied theoretical perspectives, the survey design and the questionnaire are related to this objective. Although the GGS is a panel survey, we focus here on the first-wave questionnaire, while discussing features of the second-wave questionnaire only in general terms. This reflects the progress in survey development by the autumn of 2005. We also discuss the aspects of the overall survey design that have implications on the questionnaire.

This article has evolved in parallel with the conceptual development of the GGP and the questionnaire development of the GGS. It builds on a number of previously unpublished reports and on the executive summary of the Programme (Macura 2002).

1.1. Generations and Gender Programme (GGP)

Below-replacement fertility in almost all of Europe and lowest-low fertility in large parts of the continent, considerable childlessness, increasing age at family formation, increasing prevalence of non-marital partnerships and non-marital childbearing, decreasing stability of co-residential partnerships and the emergence of non-residential partnerships are among the important demographic developments that have many repercussions for contemporary developed societies and that concern contemporary policy-makers and social scientists. Notably, after several decades of low fertility most developed countries are entering a new demographic regime characterised by the population decline and by accelerating ageing of the population (Macura, MacDonald and Haug 2005). By studying the relationships between parents and children and the relationships between partners, we can capture the determinants of demographic choices at the individual level, thereby achieving a better understanding of the causal mechanisms that underlie demographic change. This knowledge, in turn, can build the basis for devising policies that respond to the demographic changes and population development in Europe.

The Generations and Gender Programme is a system of national Generations and Gender Surveys and contextual databases concerning European and some non-European countries. The main substantive goal of the GGP is to improve our understanding of demographic and social developments and of the factors that influence these developments, with a particular attention towards relationships between children and parents (*generations*) and relationships between partners (*gender*) (Macura 2002). The Programme focuses on the determinants of and on the crucial transitions in these relationships, marked by demographic events such as leaving parental home, birth of a child, formation and dissolution of a partnership, as well as by retirement, aging, and changes in the health status. It also focuses on the qualities of these relationships, such as satisfaction and closeness of ties. Of other life events, the GGP pays special attention to retirement because of its manifold implications for demographic change and on family relationships.

In each participating country, the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) is the main data-collection activity in the Programme, supplemented by the corresponding contextual database. The survey reflects the dominant view in empirical social science that the main route to improve our understanding of underlying causal processes is to analyze micro-level data. The Programme also takes into account that demographic behaviour is not only determined by characteristics of the individuals directly involved in it, but also by the various contexts in which they act. First, there is the macro level defined through national level policies, education systems, labour and housing markets, which all create opportunity structures that shape an individual's life course. Depending on the extent of decentralization of national policies and their implementation, regional and local conditions vary and can constitute an intermediate level. Social groups can be seen as another intermediate level, while household and partnership arrangements serve as relevant micro-level contexts. Moreover, factors located at different levels interact in shaping the relationship between genders and generations.

The GGP addresses the individual, partnership, and household levels of analysis through the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS), where individual respondents are interviewed to provide information on themselves as well as on their partners, children, parents, other household members, and to a lesser extent also on their social networks. The macro- (national) and meso-level (regional) data will be assembled in the GGP Contextual Database. Combining the survey and the contextual database is an important innovative step of the Programme. The principles and content of the contextual database have been documented by Neyer (2003) and Spielauer (2004a, 2004b). In this article, we focus on the survey and its questionnaire.

2. Organization and Key Features

2.1. Organization of survey development

In July 2000, the Population Activities Unit (PAU) of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) convened an international meeting that launched the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP). The meeting discussed four conceptual papers on research and data collection issues pertaining to children and adolescents, childbearing or working-age adults, older persons, and inter-generational relationship, respectively. Together, these conceptual papers mapped the field for programme development.

Following the meeting, the GGP Consortium was formed to unite the forces of Europe's largest demographic institutes and a few statistical offices to develop the Programme. The consortium is currently composed of the Population Activities Unit of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE PAU, coordinator), Statistics Canada, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, *Institut national d'études démographiques* (INED, France), the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI), the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR, Germany), the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and the Department of Demography at the University *"La Sapienza"* of Rome. The Consortium Board has been steering the Programme since 2000. The task of developing the core questionnaire for use in personal interviews in all the GGP countries was put forward as one of the most important operational

needs. Many scientists from several research institutes and universities have been involved in designing the survey and developing its instruments over the years. In fall 2001, the Consortium Board formed the GGP Questionnaire Development Group of scientists in its member institutions. When the group first convened in December 2001, it took as a starting point the draft modules developed by that time at the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR). By autumn 2002, the group prepared a first version of the questionnaire, which was reviewed by a number of experts. The MPIDR financed its testing in two pilot surveys in Great Britain and Russia, respectively. The revised version was endorsed by the meeting of the UN Informal Working Group on the GGP in February 2003 where a few areas for further development were pointed out. After some further revisions that followed the meeting's recommendations, the GGP Consortium Board approved the questionnaire in October 2003. The related manual was finalized by spring 2004. Questionnaire development is currently continuing with the development of the second-wave questionnaire.

2.2. Key features of survey design

Like previous pan-European surveys on social and demographic behaviour, the GGS aims at conducting nationally representative surveys using standard instruments that ensure the international comparability of data. Several new features distinguish the GGS from its predecessors. It integrates the prospective and retrospective approaches; it puts more emphasis on explaining demographic behaviour with information from other domains of life. It allows subjecting theories and approaches from several disciplines to a simultaneous empirical test. It explicitly takes into account the different societal levels on which the determinants of demographic behaviour operate, and it provides comparability with earlier programmes, and with the Fertility and Family Surveys (FFS) in particular. Furthermore, the distinguishing features of the GGS include addressing inter-generational relationships and taking a gender perspective.

2.2.1. Prospective view – panel design

The FFS, the predecessor of the GGS, made a major step forward at its time by collecting comparative retrospective information on event histories. A rich body of research on determinants of demographic behaviour has emerged based on these data. The GGS maintains and refines this approach based on the FFS experience; however, its main focus is prospective, i.e., respondents are followed in a panel study over several waves, of which the data collection in the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century is the first wave. Moreover, demographic decision-making processes are investigated with the explicit idea of grasping the determinants of prospective choices.

There is wide agreement among population scientists that the route towards better understanding of demographic behaviour is based on the life course approach. Under this approach one looks at family and fertility behaviour as processes that evolve interdependently with each other and with other processes in an individual's life course, and are also shaped by macro- and meso-level factors. While the FFS collected rich data on demographic behaviour, the scope of covariates that could be used to explain this behaviour could have been more satisfactory. To make causal inferences, the analyst needs data where the hypothesized *cause* is observed before the outcome in a person's lifetime. The variables that could most effectively be used for explaining a retrospective history of demographic events would then also need to be

measured retrospectively. Obtaining retrospective data is time-consuming and its level of detail needs to match the recall capability of respondents, which puts restrictions on the scope and level of detail of retrospective data. Even more importantly, it is commonly accepted among researchers that most subjective dimensions, including values and beliefs, cannot be measured retrospectively with any reliability because of posterior rationalization. Retrospective data would thus be an insufficient empirical source for addressing theories that link change in people's values and attitudes to demographic change. Other variables of great theoretical importance in explaining demographic behaviour, such as income and assets, living arrangements that are quickly changing and fuzzy and social networks, are also very difficult to measure reliably for the past, in the context of profound and rapid changes such as in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries in particular.

By taking the prospective view, the GGS essentially overcomes these difficulties. Two direct implications of the prospective view are the panel design of the survey and the inclusion of questions about expectations and intentions in the questionnaire.

Panel design allows explanation of the events and the status recorded at a second or later interview (panel wave) with the rich cross-sectional information collected in the first wave. It is possible to obtain a wide variety of relatively detailed characteristics about the respondent and his or her family at the time of interview, in any case a much richer collection of information than for any other time point. Following up these respondents enables the analyst to use all this information in explanations of family and demographic behaviour. The richness of this explanatory information allows incorporating many theoretical perspectives into the analysis.

The panel design also allows investigating consequences of demographic behaviour on various other domains of life. In such setup, the behaviour recorded between subsequent panel waves and the characteristics recorded in the first wave are used as explanatory variables in models that explain the events between the waves and the situation at the time of the latter wave. The panel design is thus fully consistent with the dynamic nature of the phenomena under study, namely, the parallel event processes in an individual's life course.

The GGS is planned with at least three panel waves with the interval of three years between any two waves. A three-year period between the panel waves is sufficient to observe many demographic events for statistical analysis; this period of time was also chosen to ensure that drop-out from panel follow-up will be kept at reasonably low levels.

2.2.2. Multidisciplinarity

Population scholars increasingly share the view that, when taken separately, single disciplinary perspectives are insufficient to explain family dynamics, fertility, and family relationships, and that it is unlikely that one all-encompassing theory to explain fertility and family behaviour in contemporary Europe can be developed. A clearer overall picture of family relationships would emerge by assembling results of analyses from several theoretical perspectives. A further important step is testing hypotheses of different theoretical origin within one analysis simultaneously. The GGS is designed for explanatory analyses of this kind.

The theoretical perspectives applied in the survey have been developed in demography, sociology, economics, psychology, epidemiology, and political science. However, while the

GGS is a multidisciplinary survey, demographic elements constitute the core of the survey and its main outcome variables.

2.2.3. Comparability

The causes and consequences of demographic change have many common features across contemporary industrialized societies. In parallel with the common features, there are also pertinent differences in long-term demographic development, in the ways these societies are organized, in their cultural characteristics and in the various policies relevant to the family relationships. All this has impact on the development of family relationships in the recent past, present and the future. Disentangling the causes of the differences in demographic reactions would bring us closer to understanding the overall regularities of the development of family relationships in developed countries.

This requires comparable data from many countries that represent a considerable variety of demographic, social, welfare, and cultural regimes. The GGS aims at international comparability by providing the survey design, common definitions, a standard questionnaire, and common instructions that each participating country should follow. The coordination by the UNECE aims to ensure that as many as possible of the countries of the UNECE region will participate. Other countries may join the venture on their own initiative.

Comparability with the FFS programme is also a significant consideration in the design of the GGS. The GGS collects retrospective information on partnerships and fertility (in the first wave), economic activity, education, and to a limited extent, migration (in subsequent waves). In most cases, the concepts and definitions are comparable between the GGS and the FFS.

The GGS aims to survey nationally representative samples of men and women between the ages of 18 and 79, who do not live in institutions. Scholars from different disciplines argue that in view of the important role that welfare states play in structuring people's lives today, the country level is the most appropriate one for which one should aim to make conclusions. Comparing countries is one of the most promising aspects of new analyses based on the GGS data, particularly in view of the possibility to combine these with contextual data. It is also advisable that the national surveys achieve representativeness at a regional level where this is practicable. However, only representativity on the national level is a requirement for participation in the Generations and Gender Programme.

To meet this requirement, the surveys should be based on appropriately designed probability samples of a sufficient size that cover the target population. The GGS sampling guidelines are given by Simard & Franklin (2005). Spielauer & Houle (2004) explored the relation between sample sizes and the statistical significance of parameter estimates in hazard regression models, which are often used to analyze demographic behaviour. They conclude that for the many of the contemplated event history analyses of demographic events to respondents in reproductive age, and for the analysis of events that take place between the panel waves in particular, a sample that includes less than 3000 women or less than 3000 men in the age range from 18 to 44 would not allow sufficient statistical power.

2.2.4. Context-sensitivity

A major innovation of the GGP is that its survey data will be combined with contextual databases providing information on the macro-level context within which the individuals and families live. The contextual databases will be compiled from existing national and international sources of both quantitative and qualitative aggregate-level information extending for a few decades backwards as the sources permit. Such data pertain to social and economic conditions, such as the labour and housing markets; to legal provisions, institutions, and policies, such as family legislation, benefits, and services; and to macro-level gender and intergenerational relationships, as shown, for example, by the participation of women in various life domains. Macro-level contextual variables at the national and possibly sub-national levels will be used along with the individual-level survey data as inputs into multi-level analyses. These variables will be used to explain variations in the principal family relationships within and across countries and over time.

The survey design takes into account that the collected data will be analyzed together with the contextual database. In addition to a respondent's current place of residence, the survey will document migration history to the extent that the retrospective and current individual level information can be linked to a broad context where it took place. While the questionnaire includes several questions on take-up and availability of certain benefits and services, several questions on a respondent's entitlement to could be left out because this information can be derived from the contextual database.

2.2.5. Addressing the second half of the life course: later mid life and old age

As a consequence of declining fertility and increasing life expectancy, people above age 50 make up an increasing share of the total population in advanced societies. From an individual's perspective, that phase of the life course includes important demographic and social transitions and they face challenges to which they need to adapt. This has implications for their families and networks, as well as for public policies. Three types of these changes should be highlighted in the context of the GGS (Molnár, 2004).

The first one is retirement. Independently of its type, retirement marks a status transition in both economic and social sense. Retirement is usually connected with a decrease in income, however the economic well-being of pensioner varies largely between European countries (Stanovnik et al 2000). The change in social status brought along with retirement may result in the loss of their raison d'être, which would new pensioners to adapt not only economically, but also mentally, by seeking new elements in their identities.

The second decisive process is transition to the "empty nest" phase of life. Around 50 years of age, many people are about to experience home-leaving of all of their children. The empty nest phase is certainly a promising household situation for enjoying freedom, independence and self-control of the life, a phase of "chosen biography" (Gierveld et al 2001). However, in the later phase of the life course, the death of the spouse (becoming widowed) could abruptly terminate this life in a couple relationship and require economic, social and psychological adaptation. In widowhood, a new situation also arises with respect to living arrangements. An individual could either continue living alone, find a new partner, move to one of the children, or move to an institution.

Finally, we mention the changes in health status with age as the third type of changes.

In order to describe, understand and explain these processes and other ageing related questions, the GGS sample is extended to include also people at age 50 to 79. The panel design will enable the capture of changes, causes and consequences of the changes, and interdependences among the mentioned processes. Household structure, material living conditions, economic activity, extent and quality of the support network, subjective health status and disability, intergenerational transfers, satisfaction with different life domains, loneliness and deprivation scale are characteristics and variables that will serve to describe and understand the later phases of the life course.

2.2.6. Gender aspect

Social science research regards gender as a socially and politically constructed concept that is a central organizing principle of all social relationships. This includes the relationships between women and men, the relationships between generations, the organization of families, networks of people, education, and work, as well as preferences and values. The gender approach of the GGP helps us to improve our understanding of demographic behaviour and the way in which differently gendered social systems influence it. The pertinent gender issues are incorporated in all modules of the GGS and include access to education and to employment, autonomy (economic independence, ability to make decision), and division of roles between men and women.

Until the recent past, fertility research has largely been dominated by analyses of data on women only. This is very well illustrated also by previous pan-European research programmes about family and fertility. The first programmes collected data from women only; the FFS, the immediate predecessor of the GGS, used considerably smaller samples of men than of women in most countries. Consequently, much less is known about the family and fertility careers of men than of women. Correspondingly, the ways in which various societal processes influence fertility and family relationships through the perceptions and considerations of men is investigated to a much lesser extent than similar aspects for women.

The GGS aims at considering both the female and the male perspectives. First, it plans to use stratified nationally representative samples that include approximately equal numbers of men and women. Second, it collects most of its data from a couple perspective. That is, the respondents provide a large amount of information also about their current partner, if they have one. Ideally, personal information should be obtained from the person it concerns, but for partners this was considered impracticable in the GGS. The practical difficulties and costs related to interviewing more than one person in the household and the difficulties related to the panel follow-up of partners after any split-up in particular have been considered larger than the potential gains of collecting information from partners directly. Data on the partners of the GGS respondents is thus limited to items where the respondent can be expected to report this reliably. Third, the gender issues are taken into account throughout the questionnaire in the form of appropriately designed response items (e.g. with separate answer categories for *"mother"* and *"father"* rather than the generic designation of *"parents"*), questions on values and attitudes related to gender and generations issues (e.g. parent-child obligations, gender roles) and questions on division of household tasks and on decision-making and budget sharing within

couples. All this allows the study of the system of gender relationships in a country and its link with demographic behaviour.

3. Survey Content

The GGS sets out to explain how and why people form and dissolve households and partnerships and have children. The survey also investigates how the family relationships function through their tangible aspects, such as monetary transfers between family members, emotional and practical support, and the satisfaction that individual family members derive from their relationships with other members. In this connection, *the family* is taken to extend beyond reproductive parents and their young children (the nuclear family). It covers relationships between adults (whether parents or not) and their own parents, or conversely between elderly people and their own adult children.

The GGS questionnaire is designed from a life course perspective: family and fertility behaviour are considered as processes that evolve interdependently with other processes in an individual's life course. It looks back into the respondent's life and documents the events related to the processes of interest, it looks at the situation at the time of the interview with a more powerful magnifying lens, and it addresses the respondent's expectations and intentions on future developments in the processes of interest with the assumption of re-interviewing in three years. The processes of **childbearing**, **partnership dynamics**, **home leaving, and retiring** receive ample attention as they are the *target processes* which the survey seeks to explain. The selection of other topics for data collection mainly follows the criterion of theoretically grounded relevance to explaining one or more of the target processes. In addition, the selection and design of particular questions and items was guided by the criteria of applicability in a panel follow-up or feasibility of asking retrospectively.

A large portion of the survey deals with economic aspects of life, such as economic activity, income, and economic well-being, reflecting the important role economic theories have played in the study of fertility and the family. A comparably large section is devoted to values and attitudes, a major force behind the family and fertility change in the second half of last century according to the second demographic transition theory (Lesthaeghe and van de Kaa, 1986; van de Kaa, 1987). Other domains covered by the survey include intergenerational relationships, gender relationships, household composition and housing, residential mobility, social networks and private transfers, education, health, and public transfers. The motivations for their inclusion are described below under the corresponding headings.

The GGS proceeds from the premise that the demographic aspects of an individual's life course are interwoven with the social and economic aspects. While the main purpose of the survey is to understand and explain demographic behaviour, it also allows investigating the reverse causal relationship, including the social consequences of demographic events. Studies on the consequences of union disruption or on entry into parenthood have shown that demographic changes in the life course affect the economic and emotional well-being of the persons involved. However, people also adjust to the new situation caused by demographic events, for example, by getting a job, changing house, working overtime, or reducing their working hours. The GGS allows us to investigate the consequences of demographic events on the respondent's or the

couple's subsequent life course situation. This will help us to understand the process of social inclusion, social exclusion, and changes in quality of life, which are highly relevant for policy-making in contemporary societies.

The first wave questionnaire collects retrospective information on partnerships, fertility, parental home, and home leaving. Full retrospective event histories on economic activity and education, and a partial history of residential relocation will be collected in the second wave. Ideally, it would have been desirable to collect all the retrospective information at the first wave. However, since the resulting interview length would have made the first wave survey too difficult to manage, it was necessary to postpone some of the retrospective data collection to the second wave. On each of these aspects, however, the questionnaire maintains the prospective focus, including a standard block of questions on intentions.

3.1. Parent-child relationships

3.1.1. Parent's perspective

A live birth definitely establishes a parent-child relationship in the biological sense even without the social aspects of parenthood. Analysis of fertility is usually preoccupied with the number of live births in relation to the number of women (fertility rates). More detailed individual-level investigations usually consider a woman's childbearing history, that is**,** the record of dates of her live births. Such record is obtained in the GGS for both men and women, providing a cornerstone for defining target variables as well as explanatory variables for many analyses. Following a usual practice in event history surveys, the GGS records dates to the month precision. Throughout this text, the word *date* refers to the time point of a certain event measured in the form of month and year.

A survey with a focus on parent-child relationships needs to conceptualize children more broadly than on the biological dimension only, to capture both biological and social parenthood. Firstly, it deals with adopted children in the same manner as with biological children, with an additional question on the date of joining the respondent. Secondly, step- and foster-children with whom one lives in the same household for at least some time also establish a parent-child relationship. The presence of step- or foster-children influences the time and material resource allocation of the household at any point of time, and through this, it affects the probability of having more children, the stability of the partnership, and other domains of life. After these children grow up and leave the parental home, they may be significant providers or receivers of various kinds of support just as well as biological and adopted children may. Hence, in addition to the biological and adopted children, the perspective is further extended to step- and foster-children since they also establish social parenthood.

In the case of adopted, step- and foster-children, the parent-child relationship starts when the child joins the household. With respect to all children, leaving the parental home marks an important transition in that particular parent-child relationship. The survey characterizes relationship between parents and their non-resident children through proximity, contact frequency, and respondent's satisfaction with his/her relationship to that child. Questions on providing and receiving help with childcare, with household work, emotionally, financially or in kind, allow to analyze further dimensions of the relationship between parents and children. The

parent's perspective also applies to the late phase of the life course, covering the relationship between elderly parents and their middle-aged children and possibly grandchildren, and in this way helping to understand the life circumstances of the elderly.

3.1.2. Child's perspective

The broad age range of the GGS respondents permits us to analyze parent-child relationships also through the child's perspective. Retrospectively, this is achieved through covering characteristics of the parental home in the questionnaire, including any record of parental union dissolution and any time of leaving the parental home. Research has shown that the environment and circumstances during early life help explain a respondent's own partnership formation and dissolution as well as childbearing behaviour. For example, living in a two-parent household in general and with both the biological parents in particular has several beneficial effects on the long term. As the respondents' age range begins at 18, the process of leaving parental home can also be analyzed through obtaining age-specific estimates of current co-residence with parents, and home-leaving intentions of those still living in the parental home.

In many societies, middle-aged children are frequently the main supporters of their old parents. The survey provides possibilities to investigate in which way such support is integrated into the life of a middle-aged person and the gendered aspects of these relationships. Obviously, not all middle-aged people need to support their parents - they may instead receive important support from them and the relationship may include various transfers in both directions. The survey covers these aspects as well.

3.2. Relationships between partners

3.2.1. Partnership formation and dissolution

Partnership is one aspect of living arrangements that has considerably changed over the recent decades. New living arrangements like non-marital cohabitation, stepfamilies, one-person households, single parenthood, and partners living apart from each other, the so-called LAT relationships, have become increasingly common. The GGS explicitly addresses the dimensions of partnering, coresidence, and legal marital status in its questionnaire.

All these dimensions are considered for determining the respondent's current partnership status, for which a partner is defined as a person with whom the respondent has an intimate relationship, regardless of whether they live together at the time of the interview and whether they are married or not. The questionnaire attempts to approach a partnership in a gender neutral way, that is, a same sex partner should be recorded in the same way as a partner of the opposite sex; however, the specifics of same sex partnerships cannot be addressed in a multipurpose survey like the GGS.

Retrospective data collection on partnerships that have ended is restricted to coresidential partnerships where the partners were married or lived in the same household for at least three months. The three-month period leaves most short casual relationships out of data collection and is consistent with the definition used in the FFS. Living twice with the same partner is treated as two different partnerships.

Determining the start and end of partnerships relies on the respondent's judgment on when he or she actually started to live in the same household with the partner. This is asked separately from the date of marriage, which may occur both later and earlier than the actual start of a partnership. In the same way, it is important to distinguish between actual split-up and divorce. The length of the time interval from actual splitting up to legal divorce varies between countries considerably, which is usually explained by differences in the corresponding legal regulations. This needs to be taken into account when analyzing union dissolution, and it emphasizes the importance of obtaining information on actual time points of start and end of partnerships.

By including the non-residential partnerships in questions pertaining to the time of the interview, the scope of the survey is extended to an important relatively new form of living arrangements, labelled *living apart together* (LAT). Research findings suggest that this is not only a living arrangement for young people, but increasingly also for people in middle or older age, and little is known about it. The survey allows to address the hypothesis that in many countries, LAT is no longer only a period of preparation for the formation of a more established kind of relationship, but it has become an independent kind of relationship in itself. For some couples, the labour market or different places of training/education may cause them to live apart from each other, while others prefer this living arrangement for personal reasons. Even legally married couples may spend part of their time in different dwellings or have completely different addresses. In Eastern and Central Europe, for instance, the housing market plays a decisive role and may induce couples to live apart from each other. Young people may have to stay with their parents longer than wanted. Sometimes they are married already but may still have to stay in their separate parental homes because no common dwelling is available. This living arrangement may also be chosen by people at higher ages who want to preserve a certain degree of autonomy from each other or may want to keep a widow's pension. Conversely, divorced persons may live in the same dwelling due to difficulties in finding other housing and/or for financial reasons; this may be particularly relevant for Eastern European countries. The survey allows investigation of these aspects.

3.2.2. Gender perspective

In addition to the fact that formation and dissolution of partnerships are among the main demographic events on which the GGS focuses, most important life decisions, decisions on having children in particular, are made on a couple level. The GGS is designed from the perspective of interviewing only one respondent per household. The couple perspective is implemented through questions to about the respondent's current and previous partners.

The couple approach is also maintained in collecting information about children and fertility. This enables researchers to analyse the individual and shared elements underlying childbearing decisions and outcomes. After an individual forms a partnership, his or her further life course largely depends on the decisions that the partners take jointly. Most theoretical perspectives acknowledge that the combined characteristics of both partners shape their propensity to have children (Thomson 1997), to separate, or to change place of residence. The partner's life situation also has an influence on decisions about job change and on the timing of

retirement. Hence, partnership is an appropriate level of analysis for many empirical investigations of demographic behaviour.

It is therefore a task of utmost importance for the project to assess the gender system that prevails in each of the countries under study and the specific gender contract of each respondent, as well as the links between these and demographic behaviour. The important gender aspects, all of which the GGS addresses, include access to and control of resources (education, employment, the possession of durable goods, the ability to dispose freely of earnings and possessions), autonomy (ability to take decisions, economic independence), power (in decision-making), and roles.

The gender system is undergoing change: In Western Europe women have more access to and control of resources (increasing access to education, including the highest levels, increasing employment, earnings and freedom to spend the earnings as they wish, they possess durable goods and are free to do what they want with them), they have more decision-making power, formerly strictly gendered tasks are less rigidly assigned and are often swapped, shared or delegated to others. In the former socialist countries, the transition to market economy has brought along a decrease in women's labour-force participation from the high levels that prevailed before the transition. Though at a slower pace, men's position and role in society and in the family has also undergone changes. Men are more frequently finding themselves in a situation in which they are no longer the sole provider or in which unemployment makes them dependent on the income of others (their partner or their parents). In addition, they are more often confronted with situations of greater parity or with demands to engage in household work and care.

The couple approach and the modules on the division of household and caring tasks, on income, resources, on decision making, on satisfaction with the partner's collaboration, on disagreement and violence in the partnership provide an opportunity to study the relationship between gender differences, changing gender roles and their impact on demographic behaviour. The aspects mentioned serve to assess the gender system both as an object of study and as an explanatory variable of demographic change. As in other modules, these issues can also be studied for same-sex partnerships.

3.3. Complex partnership and fertility histories, stepfamilies

Increasing rates of union dissolution and of re-partnering have changed the context in which childbearing decisions are made. A sizable share of families face their childbearing decisions in the context of a stepfamily or in the context where one or both of the partners have responsibilities and emotional ties towards children who live elsewhere, usually in the family of the other parent. As research on stepfamily fertility has shown, both partners' individual fertility histories matter for their shared fertility choices (Thomson et al. 2002). Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish shared children (for whom the current couple are biological mother and father) and stepchildren. In many countries, survey data only include a number of out-of-union children. In such cases, one does not know whether these are actually the children with the partners with whom the respondent has formed a union later. Relying only on the timing of unions and births would be insufficient for establishing the other parent of the child and understand the role this child has for further life decisions of the parents (Prskawetz et al. 2003).

The questionnaire distinguishes the respondent's children with his or her current partner from children he or she has with any previous partner. The block of questions on the partner's pre-union children maintains the couple perspective in this domain, completing the information on any pre-union children for the current couple (the respondent and his or her partner). To the extent the optional sub-module on children of previous partners is implemented in a national survey, analyses of stepfamily fertility can also be carried out using retrospective event histories.

3.4. Contraception and infertility treatment

Improved ability to control reproduction has been held out as one of the main pre-conditions that paved the way for the demographic changes summarized in the notion of the second demographic transition. Theoretical considerations on childbearing in developed countries assume that individuals and couples are in a position to plan the number of children and the timing of their birth. This largely holds in the western world. There is also evidence that individuals and couples in the former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe are now better in control of their reproduction than they were during socialism, and this must have contributed to the demographic changes in these countries. However, the high cost of certain types of contraceptive in many countries, and the differential access to medical care may cause considerable inequalities in access to such methods. The high (and in some countries very high) abortion rates suggest that the number of unintended and mistimed conceptions and births remains considerable. The questionnaire takes this into account by identifying current contraceptive use or, if the respondent or his current partner is pregnant, the intendedness of the current pregnancy and contraception practice just before it occurred.

Delayed fertility has become a universal phenomenon throughout Europe, as more women than before tend to start childbearing close to the upper limit of the fertile life span when their fecundity may be reduced. In such context, it is important to focus on proceptive activities related to special actions towards having children such as infertility treatment. The spread, quality, cost, and access to infertility treatment vary considerably across countries, which can play a role in differentials in late fertility. Many hypotheses about future developments in period fertility bring to the forefront the issues of postponement of births and the ability to realize the wish for ultimate family size at a late stage of the reproductive span. The extent to which the increase in late fertility (in the woman's late thirties and beyond) can really compensate for the postponed births depends, among other factors, also on medically assisted conceptions, which is why the GGS devotes considerable attention to these issues. Through its panel design, the GGS can obtain information on time to pregnancy**,** which is an important measure of fecundity.

Together, the questionnaire modules on contraception and infertility treatment allow treatment of the degree to which a couple or a single respondent would want to have another child as a continuum, with a couple who does not want (more) children and uses effective modern contraception, at the one end, and a couple who intends to have a child and seeks help if there are health-related difficulties in realizing the childbearing plans, at the other end.

3.5. Household

The survey identifies the structure of the respondent's household, a social and economic unit of major importance in contemporary societies. While the survey treats the partnership as

the main decision-making unit in demographic choices, the other members of the household constitute the immediate context that influences these decisions. Characteristics like economic well-being and housing conditions mainly pertain to the whole household. Presence of other household members in addition to the nuclear family (a couple with or without children) may constitute either an additional resource, for example, as a provide of childcare or household work or add to the responsibilities, for example, through a need for care. From the perspective of older people and population ageing in general, the issue of living alone or in a household with other persons becomes a particularly important determinant of well-being.

Individuals are tied into one household through economic ties, such as common provision for essentials of living, and through sharing a housing unit. The UN recommendations for censuses distinguish the housekeeping unit concept that considers the possibility that several households (housekeeping units) occupy one housing unit, and the household-dwelling concept that considers all people whose usual place of residence is in the same housing unit forming one household (UNECE & Eurostat 1998). Practices of using these concepts vary between countries.

Following the usual practice in sample surveys, the GGS assumes that most persons have no difficulty in stating the members of their household and asks the respondents simply to name members of his or her household. However, difficulties may arise for determining the status of a number of special categories, such as students who live in a school or university residence, persons who live at a different place during the working week and return at weekends and lodgers who have hired part of the housing-unit for their exclusive use. If the respondent hesitates about whether to include a certain person among the household members or not, the following definition is read out:

> *A household consists of persons who live in the same dwelling-unit for at least four days in a normal week over a period of at least three months. In addition to them, there are dependent children with joint custody, and others who mainly live in the same dwelling-unit, but study or work at non-daily commuting distances or are temporarily in hospital, jail, or military service. Visitors whose main place of residence is somewhere else do not belong to the household. Babies less than three months old belong to the household.*

The GGS identifies the composition of the respondent's household in each panel wave. This allows researchers to analyze the influence of household context on demographic behaviour as well as to analyze household dynamics.

3.6. Housing

According to the Maslovian theory of the hierarchy of needs, housing need belongs to the most basic ones. It should be taken into account in analyzing social processes, demographic behaviour and the related decision-making. Since demographic events alter the composition of a household, housing needs to be considered when making choices. For leaving parental home and starting a partnership, the availability of suitable housing is a direct pre-condition, it is also an important consideration in a couple's decision to have a child or another child.

The consequences of housing shortage and inadequacy of housing markets in southern, central and Eastern Europe are that young people may have to stay with their parents longer than they would want to, and couples, including couples with children, often live together with the

parents of one of the partners (Saraceno, Olagnero, 2004). In case of separation and divorce, the role of housing situation could be crucial as well. In countries with rigid and inflexible housing market, the partners may have to continue living together in the same flat or house after divorce. Comparative surveys reveal substantial variation in the type of housing and in the quality of housing conditions across European countries, with a large overall difference between western countries, on the one hand, and eastern and southern European countries, on the other hand (Domanski et al 2004).

After privatisation in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe, ownership has become more and more dominant while the availability of rental and municipal housing has decreased and in some countries marginalized. Obviously, buying accommodation needs considerable resources and financial arrangements, which contributes to the fact that housing has become more stratified than before.

Together with the contextual database, the GGS allows researchers to investigate these and other aspects and to estimate the impact of housing conditions on demographic processes.

3.7. Economic activity, income and wealth

According to some scholars, economic factors play an increasing role in explaining demographic choices, family relations and gender issues (Joshi and David, 2002). Crucial life events, such as leaving parental home, forming a family and having a child, may be conditioned by employment status and income. The information on employment, earnings and assets is usually available in labour force or economic surveys, but is lacking (or only very partially available) in demographic surveys, especially in those that allow international comparison. One of the main contributions of the GGS is the introduction of a large set of economic covariates. The significant part devoted to economic factors in the questionnaire fits in with the development of micro-economic theory models and the need to answer current demographic questions.

Micro-economic theory models have guided much of research on fertility and family dynamics for about half a century. The New home economics has largely focused on the impact of economic factors, i.e. professional status, wages, non-labour income or job characteristics, on mating and marriage, divorce, fertility, raising and investing in children (Becker, 1991, Hotz et al, 1996, Weiss, 1997). More recently, the economics of bargaining (collective models) and intra-household resource allocations focuses on the power to negotiate between household's members (Lundberg and Pollak, 1996; Chiappori et al, 2002). Detailed information on professional status and resources is then necessary for all household members. Since incomes are one of the best expressions of the bargaining power, the survey gathers information on both partners' incomes.

In the last decade, huge transformations have affected the labour market in Western and Eastern countries. Today, especially in periods of economic crisis and in countries in transition, men's activity trajectories are less "linear" than they used to be. Since the 1990s, Central and Eastern European women's careers are less continuous. In Western Europe, the rates of women leaving the employed workforce and the length of their career interruptions have declined whereas part time work has increased. The survey allows investigating the extent to which

family dynamics is affected by unemployment, insecure jobs and by development of flexible work schedule. Theories link uncertainty with postponement of irreversible long-term commitments. If we assume a responsible view on parenthood as an irreversible commitment for some 15-20 years, an increase in economic uncertainty would then lead to postponement of parenthood in anticipation of better times (Hobcraft Kiernan 1995). Particularly in transition circumstances, uncertainty penetrated to many spheres of life and influenced people in all economic and social strata. Its effect on aggregate fertility could therefore be substantial. However, another theoretical approach looks at parenthood as a major way of uncertainty reduction, particularly among those people who see their labour market prospects as weak. The link from uncertainty to family formation and childbearing may thus be reciprocal. Moreover, as family life and working life are interrelated (Drew et al., 1998), there is a need to analyze simultaneously how employment status affects family development as well as vice versa, namely whether fertility acts upon labour market activities.

In spite of noteworthy progresses in the qualification levels of the positions women occupy, inequalities between men and women persist everywhere on the labour market. Women endure wage inequalities, professional segregation, over-average unemployment and below average job security. There exists a direct link between the division of work in the home and that on the labour market. Women occupy a specific position on the labour market, which has come about mainly due to absence related to maternity and the division of work within the household. Confronted with these inequalities, women elaborate different strategies that touch both their professional investments as well as family events (Hakim, 2000). These strategies depend on their individual educational background, their career paths and their job characteristics, but also on their partner's employment characteristics. Hence, information on economic activity and job characteristics is gathered for both partners in the questionnaire.

In all Central and Eastern European countries, the transition of the 1990s was accompanied by a considerable decline in the economic well-being of households and an increase in the number of families whose economic well-being is close to or below subsistence level. Decline of real or relative income combined with the rise of the direct cost of childrearing has been the dominant explanation for the fertility drop. One would expect such families to be even more inclined to postpone childbearing in the hope of better times and to adjust their childbearing plans downwards. Income is not always a reliable indicator of poverty, because it fails to identify households experiencing distinctive levels of deprivation (Ringen 1988). Hence, some questions on deprivation and subjective evaluation of economic well-being are included in the GGS. The standard against which one compares one's own living standard is believed to have risen considerably, and the gap between economic aspirations and actual material conditions thus widened for most people, not only for those whose absolute income decreased. According to economic theory of relative income proposed by Easterlin (1982), the increased gap between achievable and aspired well-being decreases the probability of forming a family and having another child.

3.8. Education

Education is a key variable in any social survey as it affects behaviour, attitudes, and values of persons in multiple ways. It is also a determining factor in the development of human

capital. The GGS collects data on three crucial dimensions of education: enrolment, level and orientation.

During the time when an individual is enrolled in education, his or her general situation usually does not favour starting a family. In many societies, there are also normative expectations of not entering marriage and having children while in education. Indeed, the incompatibility of enrolment in education with entry into parenthood seems to be a universal finding in studies that have used enrolment as a time-varying covariate (e.g., Blossfeld & Huinink 1991, Liefbroer & Corijn 1999). On the macro level, the expansion of education among women has been seen as an important factor contributing towards a rising average age at entry into parenthood.

Education systems vary with respect to the standardisation of people's education careers. In some countries, notably the former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, most people are enrolled in education continuously up to achieving their aspired level and rarely return to full-time enrolment after they have left education. In others, notably Sweden, flexibility is much greater and people frequently return to take more education at later stages in life. A more flexible educational system can be expected to counteract declining fertility because in such a system childbearing need not be seen as a block to further education.

Increasing levels of education for women have been suggested as a major factor behind declining fertility rates. The argument links educational level with demographic behaviour via economic considerations, assuming that higher education leads to a higher wage and therefore to a greater opportunity cost of childbearing. The thinking has been dominated by the theory of New Home Economics (Becker 1993). The extent to which the assumptions of that theory are met, and the assumption of incompatibility between childrearing and employment in particular, varies significantly between societies. However, the two main behavioural mechanisms suggested by economic theory, namely the 'income effect' (higher income providing better opportunities to cover the direct cost of children) and the 'price effect' (the opportunity cost of childrearing) need to be taken into account in analyses of demographic behaviour. Education is an important measurable component in an individual's earning potential.

Over recent decades, education of women has expanded more than that of men. In many developed countries, there are somewhat more women than men in higher educational categories, in other countries there are only small gender differences. Notably large gender differences in demographic behaviour exist by type of education, however (Hoem, Neyer, Andersson 2005). In part, this has the background that women tend to crowd into types of education that lead to economically less rewarding jobs, and this is linked to socio-economic differences between men and women. To understand the link between education and demographic behaviour, and the gender aspect in these relationships, it is important to also take into account the horizontal differentiation of the educational system (the field, line or type of education) because the choice on this dimension is also part of what determines a person's environment during her formative years and subsequently her further life course. While the choice of education has a decisive impact on a person's future employment, it also has an influence on family formation and childbearing behaviour.

Another link between education and demographic behaviour is defined by the differences in life strategies and the related values and attitudes of people at different levels and orientations of education. Education influences the way people perceive the surrounding society and the considerations they have when they make demographic choices. In this manner, an expansion of education will influence demographic behaviour through a shift in the value distribution in society.

Education is also an important component of the human capital that more largely consists of all abilities and knowledge, either innate or acquired at school, on the job or elsewhere. The measurement of all these aspects would not be feasible in a survey like GGS, but it can at least help the analyst towards deeper insight on certain dimensions. The first-wave questionnaire records the respondent's highest attained level of education at interview, the time when it was attained, and its main subject matter, current enrolment, and intentions for enrolment within the next three years. This is on the low side for extended analyses of long-term changes in the impact of education on demographic behaviour, so the possibility to include more information on an individual's education career in the second-wave questionnaire is under investigation.

3.9. Health

The justification for including a small set of questions on health in the GGS questionnaire is twofold. On one hand, health status is highly predictive for the need for care and as a consequence, for intergenerational transfers. On the other hand, health may interfere with the occurrence of life events that are under the scope of the GGS and in particular with union formation and fertility. Those with a severe disease or disability are more likely to remain single and childless. Conversely, the protective effect of marriage or having a partner on health and well-being is well documented. Having children is also associated with a better health status (Blaxter, 1990). In this study, the most disadvantageous effect, especially on psychosocial health, was found for lone mothers.

It is widely recognized that health is multidimensional and results from a combination of factors. As such, measuring health is difficult. There is a large body of literature that discusses the validity and limitations of different health measures. Health interview surveys usually are usually restricted to the three following dimensions: self-reported health, self-reported morbidity (presence of a disease), and restrictions in daily activities.

There is of course a strong correlation between these three dimensions. For example, self-reported health has proven to be predictive of disability and death (Mossey & Shapiro 1982). But the three dimensions do not fully overlap. Disabled people may rate their health as very good and have no chronic illness. The question on morbidity is known to underestimate the prevalence of health problems among the elderly that are better caught by the question on restrictions of activities: elderly often regard limitations in their daily activities as a normal part of growing old, not as evidence of illness or disability.

The WHO definition of health suggests that a good measurement of health also includes aspects of well-being. Well-being is the expression of feeling well in combination with physical and mental health. Even the healthiest persons may feel bad for shorter or longer periods due to

collapsing personal relationships (divorce, widowhood, death of a child or friend), due to bad experiences in one's professional career (discharge, downward job mobility, sexual harassment, discrimination) or other events which have a major impact on their life (retirement, institutionalization). Various scales that cover a wide range of "feelings" have been designed for that purpose of which loneliness and depression are the most common ones. Therefore the GGS also includes these scales (see Section 0).

3.10. Personal networks

A central topic for the GGS is relationships within families and between generations and how these relationships determine demographic behaviour. It is not sufficient to assume that these relationships are simply existent. One has to consider their characteristics and their structure to understand their impact on individual decision-making and behaviour. Family members and kin are not only central authorities in individuals' primary socialization. Together with the individuals' own families and his or her partner's relatives they make up a central part of their daily interpersonal interactions. Therefore, family members and kin are important factors in individuals' social environments that are influential throughout their whole life.

This significance rests on the fact that personal relationships matter for the two general dimensions of individuals' decision-making and behaviour (Burt 1982): for the subjective perceptions of the values of different courses of action and for the resources that are available to pursue desired goals. Communication and structures of personal influence shape individuals' knowledge and perceptions of the costs and benefits of alternative activities. Exchange relationships of goods and services give access to network members' means and therefore matter for individuals' pools of resources. Family members and kin are of central importance for both dimensions. By being a substantive part of an individual's peer group, they are important communication partners and create structures of interpersonal influence. Furthermore, being connected via exchange relationships of generalized reciprocity, they create a flexible and motivational structure to provide family members and kin with social support and assistance (Nye 1979).

The first, subjective, aspect is considered in the GGS questionnaire by addressing behavioural expectations, which are part of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen 1991, see section 3.14 for more information about this theory). Within the contexts of leaving the parental home, partnership formation, fertility, and retirement, respondents are asked what they think other people expect from them. For example, whether their friends think that they should start living together with a partner or whether a respondent's partner expects that he or she should retire. These questions do not measure objective structures of interpersonal influence, but subjective perceptions of the costs and benefits and of normative pressures provided by the groups of family members, kin, or friends. Additional questions ask about the costs and benefits for the respondent if she or he would leave the parental home, form a partnership, have a(nother) child or retire. This allows us to evaluate the subjective perceptions of costs and benefits in relation to the normative pressure and (in the second wave) to the demographic outcome.

The second aspect is covered by interpersonal transfers of particular goods and services. Drawing on the method of name-generating and name-interpreting questions (Fisher 1982), the questionnaire collects information about individual network partners from whom respondents

received monetary transfers and/or that provided emotional support or personal care during the last twelve months. Monetary transfers may improve or stabilize individuals' economic situation and may therefore influence demographic behaviours in a significant way (Bühler and Philipov forthcoming). Further information on this topic is given by questions about additional working activities by the respondent and his or her partner, which are often based on informal relationships and economic networks. Receiving emotional support is an important factor in overcoming stressful situations and positively influences individuals' physical health. Receiving personal care is a significant determinant of increasing health and longevity of older people.

The questionnaire also addresses in detail institutional and personal childcare arrangements. The value of resources provided by network partners depends on the offers from alternative sources of resources such as markets or institutional regulations. Questions about institutional and personal child care arrangements therefore give information about an important factor of reproductive decision-making: how much are individuals able to utilize these kinds of child care, how much are institutional arrangements able to satisfy individuals' demands for child care, and how much are they able to compensate insufficient institutional offers by child care provided by members of their personal networks.

The questionnaire addresses transfers of resources in both directions, giving and receiving, i.e. how much network partners provided monetary transfers, emotional support, personal care, and child care to the respondent as well as how much he or she gave these resources to his or her network partners. Considering transfers in both directions give information on respondents' social capital and intergenerational transfers. Individual social capital rests on exchange relationships of direct or generalized reciprocity (Astone et al. 1999). Therefore, people have to spread resources in their social environments to create and maintain structures of interpersonal exchange and to get access to the resources of their network partners in future. Thus, the questions about transfers also provide information about the patterns of intergenerational transfers. However, social capital has an explicit prospective character (Bourdieu 1985). People decide for particular behaviours on the resources they expect to receive due to experienced transfers in the past and probable transfers in future. The questionnaire covers only the part of social capital that rests on experienced transfers.

Questions about transfers in both directions provide insights into whether these transfers are primarily characterized by wealth flows from the older to the younger generation or whether the older generation also benefits from their children by receiving care or emotional and monetary support from them.

3.11. Welfare state

European welfare states differ considerably in the extent and way in which they support childbearing and childrearing, marriage, partnership, care of children and care of the elderly. Demographers often argue that differences in the total fertility rate between countries may be attributable to different family policies. Similarly, differences in the living conditions of the elderly seem to correspond to different welfare-state policies regarding employment, care, and pension rights. The GGS will allow these questions to be tackled since information on public transfers such as parental leave, family allowances, retirement pensions, unemployment benefits, social assistance and on public and private care services for children and the elderly are included

in the questionnaire. Moreover, the GGP Contextual Database will furnish additional information on welfare-state policies, which allows us to better assess the individual situation of the respondent in the context of the welfare state.

Welfare states, social, and family policies are changing over time. In particular, the collapse of state socialism in Central and Eastern Europe brought about massive changes in the social and family policies of these countries. The comprehensive support for families was reduced to minimal support in some domains, while new policies, such as unemployment insurance, were introduced. Social and family policies in Western European countries have also undergone considerable change during the past two decades, with a tendency to partial familialisation of care. The reduction of public support puts more strain on families to provide welfare and this in turn has an impact on the demographic behaviour of women and men. The GGS allows us to assess to what extent respondents can make use of public support and to what extent they rely on the family network to provide for basic needs and care. This allows us to better evaluate the impact that welfare-state policies have on fertility development.

3.12. Subjective well-being

Since the end of the 'golden age' of economic growth there has been a growing dissatisfaction with measuring and indicating development, welfare and good life by economic indicators (Zapf, 1999). A lot of work was done to develop indicators measuring the quality aspects of life, incorporating not only what people have, but also how they are living and how they feel. Allardt (1971, 1993) provided an early conceptualisation of an alternative concept defining three main dimensions of welfare: 'having', 'being' and 'loving'. This was followed by attempts of many others to conceptualise and measure individual well-being, including subjective evaluation of different life domains and life in general, and interrelating objective conditions (income, labour market, housing, measured health status by experts, social contact and support, etc.) and their subjective evaluation (satisfaction with the domains). The dominant conclusions were that, (1) although objective conditions do influence subjective perception they are far from determining these perceptions (Buhlman, 1996); (2) and the more developed and affluent a society is the weaker the relation between objective and subjective indicators of the same domains. In addition, for some social and demographic processes or events, negative associations are not unlikely. Negative economic consequences of the birth of a first child, for instance, might be counterbalanced by 'gains' of becoming a parent and being loved.

Subjective evaluation of living conditions needs to be included in research that aims at a better understanding of demographic choices. The effect of perceived conditions may be larger than that of the objectively measured conditions, while the two are obviously not independent of each other. Since Easterlin (1978) presented his fertility theory of relative income, analyses of fertility and family dynamics had frequently included subjective evaluations of economic status, well-being and living conditions. In addition, more recent studies on explaining residential moving behaviour also focus on subjective housing conditions such as perceived housing cost and the feeling of an unsafe neighbourhood (e.g., Fokkema 1996).

Many elements of subjective well-being influence demographic behaviour. For instance, there have been many studies on the relationship between partnership quality and union dynamics (e.g., Bumpass & Sweet, 1995, Johnson et al 1986; Lewis & Spanier 1979); feeling of

loneliness has been revealed as one of the push factors of the move from a private household to an institution.

Subjective well-being could also be seen as an outcome of interwoven social and demographic processes. There is an increasing awareness of the need to apply the life course perspective in research on the causal factors underlying subjective well-being. Well-being in later stages of life does not only depend on current socio-economic and demographic conditions (e.g. material assets, health status, social participation, social support network) and recent stressful events (e.g. the loss of the partner, the sudden worsening of the partner's health, financial problems, family or social network weakening, retirement, a change of the residential neighbourhood or institutionalization). Life course experiences from the more distant past also play a key role. Analysis of the effect of deviations from socially expected life course on the quality of life at an older age has the potential to reveal important aspects of these relationships. Examples of such deviations include non-expected events (non-marital cohabitation, early parenthood, unemployment for men and continuous employment for women, occupational disability, divorce, early widowhood) as well as non-occurrence of expected events (not finishing school, staying on with parents, remaining single, remaining childless).

Including life course experiences also increases our knowledge of differences in well-being of males and females and offers a better basis for a policy oriented towards reduction of social inequalities. Gender differentials in quality of life at older age largely depend on the way family formation and economic activity were conciliated during primary adulthood. The current generation of the elderly and those who will reach old age in the near future lived this period in conditions that were different from today with specific gender division of in-home and out-home activities (man breadwinner, woman housewife) and their present conditions and relationships are deeply influenced by this past. Awareness of such a lagged effect is fundamental for the efficiency of public policies aimed at reducing social inequalities.

For measuring subjective well-being we employed well-established measures. Satisfaction with life in general is measured by the 11-grade scale (Veenhoven 1996); the quality of marriage with extracted and shortened version of some formerly used scales (satisfaction, disagreements, attitude toward divorce). Finally, a shortened version of the loneliness-scale, developed by De Jong Gierveld (De Jong Gierveld & Kamphuis 1985) and a shortened version of the depression-scale, both used in several studies (e.g., Jong Gierveld & Havens 2004, Tilburg et al 2004), were included in the GGS.

3.13. Values

Changing attitudes, norms, and values play a prominent role in explanations of current fertility patterns and developments as well as for other aspects of family dynamics. Such subjective dimensions may also be important for an understanding of gender issues in a family as well as for insights concerning the relationships between family members from different generations. The link between values and demographic behaviour is one of the central explanatory threads in explaining the demographic trends in the Western countries since the mid-1960s, for which Lesthaeghe and van de Kaa (1986; see also van de Kaa, 1987) coined the term *Second Demographic Transition.* For such reasons, the GGS collects rather extensive information on attitudes, norms, and values.

The interplay between family and fertility behaviour on the one hand and value orientations on the other has recently been reviewed by Lesthaeghe and Moors (2002). An attitude is targeted towards a concrete object, person, institution, or event. By contrast, a value is *"an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence"* (Rokeach 1973). Through its panel design, the GGS allows researchers to address this complex interplay.

The GGS includes dimensions of a value system that either pertain directly to intergenerational and gender relations or that have proven to be important in the literature on demographic behaviour. Based on experiences from existing surveys the following dimensions were included.

Religiousness and secularization. The central role of this dimension in explaining demographic behaviour is emphasized in several approaches that aim to explain demographic change, including that of the Second Demographic Transition (see e.g. Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 2004).

Marriage, children, general family orientation, public morality. Literature suggests that values on intergenerational relationships and on the role of public versus kinship support vary substantially across societies, which is likely to explain differentials in demographic behaviour. As suggested in the works by Reher (2000), Micheli (2000), and Dalla Zuanna (2001), family orientation and family ties have considerable impact on demographic behaviour, which need further investigation.

Materialism and postmaterialism. The rationale for applying this dimension rests on the work of Inglehart (1977), who in turn draws on Maslow's previous work. It has been applied to explaining demographic behaviour in the framework of the Second Demographic Transition approach.

Confidence, locus of control, trust, worries. This dimension addresses changes related to the societal transition in Central and Eastern Europe, the increase in social anomie (or alienation) and disorderliness in particular, which is believed to be linked with demographic behaviour (Philipov 2001). People react to these changes by developing diverse coping strategies, such as mobilizing social contacts. The focus is on the respondent’s confidence and trust in public- and private-sector institutions.

Generations. In the spirit of the whole GGP enterprise, “generation” is studied also from the subjective point of view. For this purpose, a set of items addresses values and attitudes concerning age structuring and the relationships between generations.

Gender. Similarly to “generation”, “gender” is studied also from a subjective perspective. A set of items aims at capturing values and attitudes embedded in the gender system, specifically those concerning the characteristics of partners and the roles assigned to men and women in a society.

In the selection of questionnaire items, we rely on several existing surveys, such as the European/World Values Surveys and the Population Policy Acceptance surveys, to secure

comparability with previous studies. These questions have also already been tested and found useful in the study of demographic behaviour.

3.14. The prospective view: Intentions in competing domains

One of the principal aims of the GGS is to explain how and why individuals and couples take such important decisions as those related to household and partnership formation and dissolution, childbearing and retirement. Explanatory approaches should aim at disentangling decision-making processes leading to such choices. This is also crucial for policy design, as the design of policies that can ease and/or influence certain choices depends on such policies effectively affecting demographic decision-making. The prospective view of the GGS is adopted in two ways. First, the panel design that guides survey design and the preparation of the questionnaire, and allows to explain behaviour as it is observed between subsequent waves. Second, intentions are used as proximate determinants of behaviour in order to capture the main feature of the decision-making process during the time choices are made.

The prospective focus also marks a novelty with respect to traditional comparative demographic surveys. Questions on intentions serve as the main source of outcome variables in analyses based on data from the first wave only. When data from second and subsequent panel waves become available, it will be possible to study to what extent people's intentions were realized and the circumstances that prevented them to be realized. To make this possible, information on the same subjective dimensions should be obtained in the second and later panel waves. This would also enable analysts to study changes in intentions and their correspondence with accumulating life experience. Let us focus on intentions and on the guidelines that inspired the preparation of the questionnaire in a prospective framework.

The GGS collects information on intentions about a series of key demographic choices in the near future. The time horizon for intentions is designed in order to ensure consistency with the length between two panel waves: intentions concern a three-year interval starting from the first wave. Moreover, intentions concerning demographic choices such as childbearing may change over time (Schoen et al., 1999). For this reason, the specification adopted by the GGS concerns a specific event (e.g. having or not having a child) and a specific time frame (the length between waves). The importance of focusing on a reference time window when collecting data on intentions regarding demographic behaviour has been underlined by Miller and Pasta (1995). Other authors have argued for the need to be parity-specific when studying fertility intentions (e.g. Yamaguchi and Ferguson, 1985; Monnier, 1987). In addition, the importance of evaluating the degree of certainty of intentions has also been stressed (Thomson and Brandreth, 1995). On most of the key topics of interest, the GGS collects information on intentions and occasionally on expectations for the future.

Among the fields that closely aim at studying decision-making processes, applied social psychology puts behavioural intentions as the main focus of explanation. More specifically, the aim is to explain the process that leads to the formation of a certain intention, and then on the subsequent correspondence—or lack of correspondence—between intentions and behaviour. The theory of "reasoned action", developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) provides a particularly fruitful view of the intention-formation process. The prospective part of the GGS is inspired, although not fully based, on the most recent version of this theory, developed by Ajzen (1988;

1991): the "Theory of Planned Behaviour". A consistent set of questions on intentions concerning several choices is developed, in order to allow analyzing such choices as interdependent and competing processes in the life course. Furthermore, since most of the theoretical explanations assume that the behaviour reflects individuals' or couples' informed decisions, the observed events include unintended births that may blur findings on a theoretically expected link between a determinant and fertility, while we do not have this problem when analyzing intentions.

There are already some applications of the theory of planned behaviour to demographic behaviour using panel data. Schoen et al. (1999) present a discussion of the importance of the theory of planned behaviour in the study of childbearing intentions, while Miller and Pasta (1994) specify the importance of timing in the study of the correspondence between intentions and behaviour within the same approach. Miller and Pasta (1994) apply this theory on child timing, Liefbroer and de Jong Gierveld (1993) on cohabitation, Baanders (1998) and Billari and Liefbroer (2005) on leaving home, Abrams et al. (1999) on migration decisions. Work that can be related to this approach is being conducted using several panels in the US (in the Detroit area for instance, see Barber et al. 2000).

According to the theory of planned behaviour, intentions on a specific behaviour are formed with the contribution of three sets of factors. The first set comprises *attitudes* towards the behaviour—i.e. statements regarding the plausibility that the behaviour would provoke a series of consequences, together with the relative evaluation of the positive or negative weight attached to these consequences. The second set comprises *subjective norms*, which are determined by normative beliefs—i.e. the perception that one individual has concerning the approval, or disapproval, of a certain behaviour by relevant others. The third set comprises *perceived behavioural control*—i.e. the perception of constraints and/or opportunities that exist concerning the specific behaviour. The relative weight of these three sets may depend on the type of decision to be taken (Ajzen, 1988; 1991) and on the context in which the intention is formed. The GGS constitutes the first international comparative effort to use such a framework, and this is expected to give considerable added value in the explanation of difference between and within countries.

This approach is also strictly linked to the one discussed in Section 3.16. While the GGS does not collect information on subjective dimensions referred to an individual's past history, retrospective information gathered in other parts of the questionnaire can be used to explain attitudes, beliefs, norms, and values (and perhaps intentions) at the time of the interview. The information that we require on subjective dimensions refers to the situation at the time of the interview. In some cases, the amount of information explicitly depends on the status of the respondent. For instance, the survey does not include questions about attitudes to leaving home among respondents who do not live with their parents.

Subjective dimensions may be proximate determinants of demographic behaviour. In practice, this means that they may concern general value orientations on the one hand, or may be more directly tied to a specific demographic choice. The first, more purpose-directed approach is targeted at revealing how attitudes, behavioural control and norms influence demographic behaviour in different contexts (perhaps via intentions). For instance, it addresses how the intention to have a child in the next three years is shaped by the individual's perception of costs

and benefits of having a child, by norms perceived by members of the respondent's network, and by how the respondent sees his or her ability to control childbearing. In this approach, one also asks how such intentions materialize in true childbearing. The determinant of intentions, however, can be studied also from different perspectives, for instance to compare the weight of economic and cultural factors affecting demographic decision-making. In this sense, the GGS sees that the economic and cultural perspectives on the explanation of demographic behaviour are complementary rather than mutually exclusive and that "interdisciplinary soccer games" are not necessary (Lesthaeghe, 1998). A joint perspective constitutes an improvement to our knowledge on how childbearing decisions are taken.

The second perspective relies on value orientations, seen as more distant determinants of demographic behaviour (Section 3.16). It tries to address questions like whether career oriented individuals postpone childbearing, and whether people who put a high value on intergenerational ties have a lower fertility, in response to recent argumentations for including subjective proximate determinants of demographic behaviour in any new demographic comparative survey (Hobcraft 2000).

4. Organization of the Questionnaire

The GGS is a face-to-face survey where the interviewers record the answers. The model questionnaire was initially developed for use as a paper questionnaire, however, interviews with the use of laptop computers (CAPI) are recommended. Computer assisted interview would allow to deal more easily with the sometimes complex routing and skip conditions with less effort from the interviewer and thereby enhance the flow of the interview.

The GGS Questionnaire for Wave 1 consists of the *core* questionnaire that each participating country needs to implement in full, and four *optional sub-modules* dealing with topics that are not critically important for all countries. The optional sub-modules are A – Nationality and Ethnicity, B – Previous Partners, C – Intentions of Breaking up, and D – Housing. Each country is recommended to include these standard optional sub-modules to facilitate comparative research on these topics. The four modules do not form an integrated package, and using only some of them would not pose any significant problem other than not obtaining the information gathered in the dropped modules. The included modules should be implemented fully, without dropping or altering questions.

The core questionnaire is organized into 13 numbered sections. A section may include several sub-sections with unnumbered headings meant for orientation only. The ordering and organization of the sections aims at optimizing the flow of the interview and avoiding unnecessary jumps from one topic to another. Some concepts and topics may be scattered over several sections. Below, we first describe the topics in the order they are in the questionnaire, continuing with issues that cut across several topics. The text below does not aim at mentioning all the items or questions included in the questionnaire.

4.1. Flow by topic

The questionnaire starts with a section that collects basic information on the respondent and on the respondent's **household**. The respondent has to list all members of his/her household,

mention their relationship to him/her, whether they live temporarily elsewhere, their sex, month and year of birth, economic activity, and disability. The respondent's own sex, month and year of birth, economic activity, and disability are also collected. All this information is recorded in the **household grid**, which will be used for reference on many occasions later in the questionnaire to determine the questions that apply to the particular respondent. The first questions on household membership are particularly important, because they establish whether the respondent has a partner with whom he or she lives together, and the age configuration of the children who live with him/her in the same household. For the respondent's non-biological children who live in the household, the month and year when they joined the household is recorded in the household grid.

The section continues with four items of information on the **dwelling-unit** (number of rooms, time since occupation by the respondent, ownership status, and satisfaction). More details are included in the optional sub-module on housing. Five questions on **education**, which ask about when and in which field the highest level of education was obtained, whether the respondent is currently in education or intends to return to education, are placed after the block on the dwelling-unit, completing the collection of the respondent's and his/her household's basic characteristics before proceeding to the detailed sections on children and partners.

In all, the questions on basic facts about **children** are distributed between three locations to enhance remembering information on different kinds of children. First, basic characteristics about co-resident children are collected in the Household section alongside with the other household members. Second, information on non-resident children, that is, children who do not live in the same household with the respondent, is collected in a child history table in the *Children* section. Further retrospective questions on children are placed in the sub-section on previous partnerships, namely, the questions on the children those previous partners may have had before partnering with the respondent. The respondent is most likely to recall this information when the she speaks about the partner with whom these children appeared in his/her life. Such design also helps to distinguish between different kinds of children and to establish links between partners and children. Additionally, questions on current and future childbearing plans are included in Section 6 *Fertility*.

The Questionnaire Section 2 *Children* begins with the topic of **childcare.** The questions address the division of child related tasks in the household, between the parents in particular, and map the use of institutional and non-institutional help from outside the household. Like other question blocks on receiving care, this is also accompanied with a block on the care the respondent may provide to others. In addition to the primary utility that these questions have in analyzing the various facets of childcare, these questions also form an important element in analyzing the characteristics of the partnership and in describing the network of people who interact with the respondent and his or her household in receiving and providing various types of help.

The information collected on **non-resident children** covers all the elements collected for co-resident children, but also includes the date of leaving home (or death) of the respondent's children, and the questions on proximity, contact frequency, and respondent's satisfaction with his/her relationship to that child. They constitute a standard set of items collected for each parent-child and partner relationship where the parties do not live together.

The table of non-resident children is followed by a table that collects the same information on **stepchildren**. The separation of these two tables is motivated by the fact that the respondent may have a very different relationship to those children than to his or her own children. If this relationship is very loose, he or she may not count them at all in a more general question on all children, and a more specific focus on these children is expected to enhance reporting. The part on children concludes with questions on **grandchildren**: their number, date of birth of youngest and oldest, the respondent's participation in taking care of them, and the existence of any great-grandchildren.

Basic data on the **current partner** and any **previous partners**, on the intentions of single respondents to form a partnership, and on the alimony payments is collected in Section 3 *Partnerships*. Whether there is a **co-resident partner**, that is a partner who lives in the same household with the respondent, is determined at the beginning of the interview and is available on the Household Grid. If there is no such partner, the question on the existence of a **non-resident partner** is asked. In other sections of the questionnaire, questions about the partner are asked regardless of whether the respondent lives with him or her in the same household or not. The only exception is that those with a non-resident partner skip questions on the couple's decision-making about household related matters since these questions do not apply to them. The questionnaire also identifies same sex partners, about whom the same information is collected as about partners of the opposite sex.

The basic data collected in this section about the current partner include date of start of partnership, date of marriage, if any, place of birth, and level and subject of highest attained education. Date of birth, current activity and disability of a co-resident partner are already in the Household Grid. In this section, questions to elicit this information are asked only if the partner is non-resident. In addition, from those who live with a non-resident partner, questions are asked about the wantedness and reasons for such living arrangement, proximity, and meeting frequency.

The **partnership history** table is designed to collect information on each previous partner with whom the respondent has lived together for at least three months. Through the definition of living together, only co-residential partnerships are considered. The table identifies the basic facts about each partnership: dates of start and end, way of ending (break-up or partner's death), dates of marriage and divorce, and the partner's date of birth. The core questionnaire also asks the number of children a previous partner had from his or her earlier unions, and if the respondent had common children with that partner, about their placement after the break-up of the union. The gender aspect is deepened with the question on whether the respondent or the partner initiated the legal divorce proceeding. The optional sub-module on previous partners elicits more information on previous partners (highest level of education, and their children from earlier unions (sex, age of youngest of them, frequency of contact with the respondent or with the other parent depending on with whom the child remained after parental split-up).

Questions on **alimony** and **maintenance payments** are placed in the section on partners. They follow immediately after the table of previous partnerships. Asking about alimony

and maintenance payments immediately after the questions about partners facilitates recalling the information on alimony and maintenance payments.

Section 4 *Household Organization and Partnership Quality* goes into more detail about the current partnership and household. The aims of this section are to capture the **division of household work** between the partners, their **decision-making** practice, and relative power in this, and a subjective assessment of the stability and **quality of the partnership**. The questions on the division of household tasks are asked also from respondents who do not have partners allow comparing with those in a partnership, by asking also the relative contribution to selected key household tasks by other household members and people from outside the household. In this way, it contributes to the description of the social network surrounding the respondent. Questions on household tasks and decision-making are designed in the same manner as those on child related tasks asked in connection with children in Section 2.

Questions on the subjective assessment of the **quality of current partnership** begin with a general question on satisfaction with the relationship and continue with question batteries on frequency of disagreements and ways of resolving them, if any. Although partnership dissolution is one of the target processes of the survey, the core questionnaire only includes one question on thoughts of breaking up. The full block of intentions of breaking up comparable to intentions of other key behaviours is included in the optional module, because in some countries these questions are expected to cause emotional reactions that may put the continuation of interview at risk.

Section 5 aims at collecting the key information on **parents and parental home**, and the relationship between the respondent and his or her parents in the way that mirrors the questions on the relationship between the respondent and his or her children. Parents are defined as biological parents.

Since questions about **parents** have to be formulated differently depending on whether the parents are alive, whether they live together with each other and whether they live together with the respondent, the printed questionnaire includes several sub-sections based on the configuration of parents according to these dimensions. All these sub-sections collect parents' dates of birth, death, and breaking up, information on current living arrangement, disability, proximity, meeting frequency, respondent's satisfaction with the relationship and intention to start living together with a parent. As a rule, all questions are asked separately about mother and father, with the exception of break-up date, and, if parents live together with each other, also their living arrangement, proximity, and the respondent's intention to start living together with them.

Differently from the sub-section on parents, the questions about **parental home** may apply to step, adoptive or foster parents if the respondent spent most of his or her childhood with them. Parental home is described in terms of location, father's and mother's highest attained level of education and occupation. The section concludes with questions on the date of leaving parental home and the complete block of intentions of leaving, asked from those living with parents.

Section 6 *Fertility* begins with a part on **contraception**, **infertility treatment** and **current intention of having a child**, formulated separately for currently pregnant respondents (respectively, male respondents with a currently pregnant partner) and others in reproductive age (respectively, male respondents living alone or with a partner in reproductive age). These questions collect information on the time when the respondent or the couple stopped contraception or started infertility treatment. They also establish whether the respondent or the couple is physically able to have more children. The second part of the Fertility section consists of the full block of intention questions on having (more) children. Those who are physically not able to have children receive a question on adoption intention instead.

Section 7 begins with a micro-module of three questions that covers the different dimensions of **health**. Both physical and mental health problems are covered by these questions, which concern self-assessed general health, morbidity (long-standing or chronic disease only), and restrictions in activities. This section continues with two consistent modules on providing and receiving personal care and emotional support, respectively. See the description of questions on Private transfers and social network further below for more details.

This section also includes the question about the extent of **control** the respondent perceives to have over his or her financial situation, work, housing conditions, health, and family life. This information can also be analyzed in conjunction with the perceived role these circumstances play in decisions about demographic behaviour addressed in corresponding blocks of intention questions. The section ends with two questions with item batteries about the respondent's current **emotional well-being**.

Sections 8 and 9 contain identical questions on **economic activity and income** about the respondent and his or her current partner, respectively. At the beginning, the interviewer ascertains the current main activity as reported to the household grid for the respondent and the co-resident partner or in the Partnerships section for the non-resident partner. Based on this activity status, a different set of appropriately formulated questions is asked. The section on partner's activity does not include subjective assessments, like the questions on satisfaction and intentions. All those who do not work at the time of the interview (whose partner does not work, respectively), have to provide information on the occupation, the type of employment and the reason for stopping to work in their last job or business; the date since when they are in their current status (not asked about the ill or disabled), subjective satisfaction with it, and the intention to take a job or start a business (the latter two are not asked about the partner).

The respondent's and partner's current **job or business** receives relatively detailed attention. The objective information obtained both about the respondent and about the partner includes occupation, date of starting this job or business, the number of hours spent at work and characteristics of the work schedule, personnel supervision, type of organization, and employer's provisions for families with children. Questions on the gender composition of the work place, type of employment contract and regularity of work only pertain to the respondent's job, because he or she would frequently not know this information about the partner. Several of the mentioned items do not apply to the self-employed; about them, information on the number of employees they employ is collected. If the respondent or the partner have an additional job or business, information is collected on its type and kind and the time used in it.

The subjective aspects of the job or business that are asked only about the respondent include satisfaction with the current job or business, satisfaction with the job security (for the self-employed, expectations about the development of the business), intentions to change job or business and intentions to give up paid work.

All respondents enter the sub-sections on **income** regardless of their own or their partner's current activity (of course, those without a partner skip the questions on partner's income). The aim of these questions is to elicit the total annual income received from all sources. The questions are formulated on the assumption that most people are better able to recall the size of certain payments they receive than the total of those payments over the last twelve months. Therefore, the questions address each potential income source separately; the total is summed up at the stage of analysis. Respondents refusing to say an amount, receive a second question asking to select an income range from a card.

In Section 10, economic aspects of life are further dealt with from the household perspective. At first, five questions elicit information on **household possessions and economic deprivation**. These include lists of possessions, experienced financial problems in everyday housekeeping, possibilities for saving and a subjective assessment of the household's ability to make ends meet. These questions are followed by addressing those aspects of **household income** that would not emerge from Sections 8 and 9 where the respondent's and his or her partner's income was dealt with. The respondent is asked to indicate which sources make up the household income and to provide the total either over the period of last twelve months or for a typical month within that period. There is no attempt to link the individual income sources to their specific amounts or to specific household members. Questions on **monetary transfers** between the respondent's household and other persons conclude this section.

After being subjected to long parts that aim at eliciting various facts, the final substantive section on **value orientations and attitudes** is supposed to help to conclude the interview in a more relaxed atmosphere. The section begins with questions on religion and religiousness, followed by a standard battery on materialism and post-materialism and a question on trust and confidence in institutions and in other people. These are followed by a battery of views on marriage, children, and the family, a question on job related values, attitudes on inter-generational relationships and care transfers, and, finally, attitudes towards gender related issues.

In the end, the respondent is asked to provide contact information of a close person who could help the survey organization to find the respondent again in the following wave. In some countries, interviewers may need to elicit explicit consent to being contacted again later. With this question, the interview is completed. The interviewer is supposed to fill in two questions on the respondent's dwelling and an account of the interview on his or her own.

4.2. Prospective questions

Consistent with its prospective view and the related panel design of the survey, prospective questions are asked about the main demographic behaviours target by the survey as well as about behaviours in other domains that are primarily designed to explain these demographic behaviours. The time span for the intention questions is three years, which is the planned time interval between consecutive panel waves.

On the main target processes of the survey, the prospective block comprises questions on the intention to engage in the behaviour within the next three years, on the expected consequences of engaging in the behaviour on various other domains of life (the perception of costs and benefits), on the circumstances on which the decision whether to engage or not in the behaviour would depend, and the question on perceived attitudes from several categories of relevant others (Section 3.17). This complete block of questions is implemented for intentions of

- starting to live with a partner; if in a non-residential partnership, starting to live with the current non-resident partner;
- starting to live separately from parents;
- having a/another child;
- retirement;
- of breaking up (in the corresponding optional sub-module).

The full block of intentions of breaking up is included in the optional module because in some countries these questions are expected to cause emotional reactions that may put the continuation of interview at risk.

Prospective questions on fertility include some additional aspects, reflecting the long tradition in analyzing fertility intentions and the need to be able to compare with other surveys. Respondents are asked about their own and their partner's current wish for a/another child. To those who do not intend to have a child during the next three years, a question is posed on whether they want to have any more children at all and how many, and about the sex preference for the next child. In addition, all respondents are asked about their intention to adopt a child.

Most behavioural domains covered by the survey include a question on engaging in a certain behaviour during the next three years, without any additional inquiry about the circumstances or considerations. The intention question is asked about

- moving, specifying of type of move;
- resuming education (those who are not studying);
- marrying somebody; if in a partnership, marrying the current partner;
- starting to live together with parents; if parents live separately, starting to live together with mother, starting to live together with father;
- resuming work after maternity leave, parental leave, or childcare leave;
- taking a job or starting a business (those who are not working or studying);
- finishing education (those who are studying);
- changing company or starting a business (employees); starting a new business or taking a job (self-employed);
- give up paid work (those who are working).

These questions are placed close to the other questions on corresponding topics.

4.3. Private transfers and social network

Although social capital and social networks belong to the topics covered by the survey, the questionnaire does not include a distinct part to address these issues. The respondent's social

network is mapped through several consistent blocks of questions on various kinds of transfers, which are placed close to the other questions on the corresponding topics.

The transfer questions address both the receiving and providing side. The persons receiving or providing help are identified to the extent of their type of relationship to the respondent, which is coded using the List of Providers and Receivers.

The domains about which providing and receiving help is asked include

- childcare,
- personal care in daily activities like eating, getting up, dressing, bathing, or using toilets,
- emotional support (talking about personal experiences),
- monetary transfers and inheritance

Questions on household work are primarily motivated from the need to analyze how the partners divide household tasks between each other. To better understand this, contributions of other household members and people from outside the household is asked, the latter being also relevant for mapping the network. Provision of help with household work by the respondent to others is not covered.

In childcare and personal care, the question on help received from relatives, friends, and other non-professional childcare providers is separated from the one that addresses institutional and paid childcare. The block on receiving personal care nevertheless includes a question on the payment to the helping person, which reflects social security arrangements in some countries.

The questions on receiving help with childcare and with household tasks aim at identifying the arrangement that the respondent considers typical at the time of the interview. In questions on providing childcare and in all the other questions on transfers the reference period is the last twelve months.

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