

Global Psychotrauma Screen (GPS)

User guide

March 2023

The GPS in short.....	2
Development of the GPS.....	3
GPS languages	4
The GPS app.....	5
Collecting GPS data for research or clinical use	5
Scoring and interpretation	5
Psychometric properties and norm data.....	6
GPS existing data sets	7
Ongoing research using the GPS.....	7
References and contact details	8
Appendices.....	9
Appendix 1. GPS English version	9
Appendix 2. GPS symptoms and domain scores.....	11
Appendix 3. GPS symptoms scores per country	12
Appendix 4. SPSS Syntax	14

The GPS in short

- The GPS is a transdiagnostic screener for stress and trauma related reactions in the past month.
- The GPS begins with questions about the stressful or traumatic event.
- The GPS provides indicators of:
 - *specific trauma related disorders or problems* (e.g., PTSD)
 - *overall symptom burden*
- The GPS also assesses *risk and protective factors* known to influence the development or course of symptoms
- The GPS can be used in a variety of settings such as in primary care, after disasters, or in clinical practice.
- The GPS is available in over 30 languages.
- The *GPS-app* provides the user with direct feedback on the scores.
- A 'positive' score may require more detailed follow-up assessments, e.g., with structured interviews for specific disorders.

Development of the GPS

The GPS was developed by an international group of experts representing traumatic stress societies worldwide, called the Global Collaboration on Traumatic Stress (Olf et al., 2020; Schnyder et al., 2017). The aim was to address the need for a brief instrument that would assess the wide range of acute or long-term potential consequences of very stressful / potentially traumatic events. The instrument screens for more than posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD; see GPS domains below). The GPS is intended for use in a variety of settings such as in primary care, after disasters, or for quick screening in clinical practice. For details on its development, see Olf et al. (2020).

The GPS and its domains

The GPS consists of 17 symptom items, 5 risk/protective factor items, each answered in a yes/no format, and one functioning item assessed on a scale from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent).

The English version is attached (Appendix 1). See website (<https://www.global-psychotrauma.net/gps>) for other languages.

GPS and its domains

Symptom domains (17 items)

- PTSD
- Disturbances in Self-Organization (DSO) as part of Complex PTSD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sleep problems
- Self-harm
- Dissociation
- Other physical, emotional or social problems
- Substance abuse

Risk and protective factors (5 items)

- Other stressful events
- Childhood trauma
- History of mental illness
- Social support
- Psychological resilience

GPS languages

The GPS is currently available in over 30 languages (Table 1). For direct links: <https://www.global-psychotrauma.net/gps>

The English version has been translated into the languages listed above following the translation and cultural adaptation process described by Sousa and Rojjanasrirat (2011) or a similar process. Please note that some (African) languages are widely spoken across different countries and there might be instances when the terminology may suit one country better than another. Please contact us at gc.traumaticstress@gmail.com if a specific country version is required.

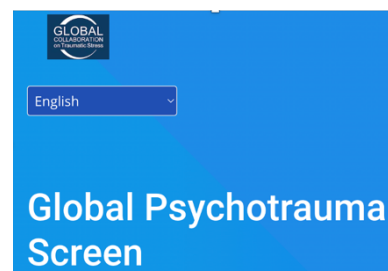
Table 1. GPS languages, availability through GPS app and pdf download

LANGUAGE	TAKE GPS APP	DOWNLOAD PDF
Afrikaans	take GPS app	download pdf
Amharic		download pdf
Arabic		download pdf
Armenian	take GPS app	download pdf
Chinese	take GPS app	download pdf
Croatian	take GPS app	download pdf
Dutch	take GPS app	download pdf
English	take GPS app	download pdf or <<audio>>
Farsi/Persian		download pdf
French	take GPS app	download pdf
Georgian	take GPS app	download pdf
German	take GPS app	download pdf
Greek	take GPS app	download pdf
Hausa		download pdf
Hebrew		download pdf
Indonesian	take GPS app	download pdf
Italian	take GPS app	download pdf
Japanese	take GPS app	download pdf
Norwegian	take GPS app	download pdf
Polish	take GPS app	download pdf
Portuguese (Europe)	take GPS app	download pdf
Portuguese (Brazil)	take GPS app	download pdf
Russian	take GPS app	download pdf
Slovak	take GPS app	download pdf
Spanish	take GPS app	download pdf
Spanish (Argentinian)	take GPS app	download pdf
Swahili		download pdf
Turkish	take GPS app	download pdf
Ukrainian		download pdf
Xhosa		download pdf
Yoruba		download pdf

The GPS app

The GPS is also available through the GPS webapp. The app allows users to easily fill out the GPS and to receive immediate feedback on scores.

For direct links: <https://www.global-psychotrauma.net/gps>



Collecting GPS data for research or clinical use

Researchers and clinicians may get a private portal for access to GPS app data. Please contact us if you are interested.

Scoring and interpretation

Respondents are asked to answer each of the 17 symptom items and each of the 5 risk and protective factors with 'Yes' or 'No'. Note that the resilience item must be recoded - in the Web-app data this item is already recoded.

The functioning item is scored on a 10-point scale, with 1 indicating poor functioning and 10 excellent functioning.

GPS Scoring

GPS items 1-21:	No=0 Yes=1
GPS Item 22:	No=1 Yes=0 (In the <i>GPS-app</i> GPS22 is already recoded)
GPS item 23:	10-point scale 1 = poor 10 = excellent

The demographic and event information fields are descriptive. The short textual descriptions of the stressful experience have been used in a text mining study as predictors of trauma-related symptoms (Marengo et al., 2022).

Total and GPS domain scores

GPS total and domain scores can be calculated see *Tables 2 & 3*. See appendix 4 for a detailed SPSS Syntax.

Cutoff scores

Cutoff scores (Table 2) are provided to detect specific disorders with optimal sensitivity relative to specificity¹, based on the currently available published and unpublished studies (find them [here](#)). In situations where it is important to minimize false positives, a higher cutoff score might be considered.

¹ Optimal sensitivity means we prioritize detecting persons with mental health problems potentially needing help or treatment (true positives), while the number of false negatives should be low. Specificity relates to correctly identifying trauma survivors without traumatic stress problems.

It is advised that scoring above the total symptom cutoff or on certain domains is followed up with more detailed assessments, e.g., with structured interviews for specific disorders.

Table 2. Scoring of domains

TRAUMA RELATED DISORDERS OR PROBLEMS (DOMAINS)	SCORING	CUTOFF WITH OPTIMAL SENSITIVITY FOR DETECTING SPECIFIC DISORDERS / PROBLEMS
GPS PTSD	Sum of items 1-5 (range 0-5)	3
GPS DSO	Sum of items 6-7 (range 0-2)	1
GPS COMPLEX PTSD	Sum of items 1-7 (range 0-7)	4
GPS ANXIETY	Sum of items 8-9 (range 0-2)	1
GPS DEPRESSION	Sum of items 10-11 (range 0-2)	1
GPS INSOMNIA	Item 12 (range 0-1)	1
GPS SELF-HARM	Item 13 (range 0-1)	1
GPS DISSOCIATION	Sum of items 14-15 (range 0-2)	1
GPS SUBSTANCE ABUSE	Item 18 (range 0-1)	1
GPS OTHER PROBLEMS	Item 16 (range 0-1)	1

Table 3. Scoring total scores

TRANSDIAGNOSTIC OVERALL SYMPTOM BURDEN	ITEMS	HOW TO USE
GPS Symptoms	Sum of items 1-16 + 18 (range 0-17)	Higher scores indicate higher overall burden. Cutoff with optimal sensitivity for detecting any disorder / problem and severity categories will be available in 2023. Mean scores per country are provided in Appendix 2.
RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS		
GPS Risk & Protective factors	Sum of items 17 + 19-22r (range 0-5)	Higher scores indicate higher risk for (a negative course of) trauma related disorders or problems. Cutoff with optimal sensitivity for predicting any disorder / problem will be available in 2023.

Psychometric properties and norm data

Ongoing research suggests good internal reliability as well as concurrent validity of the GPS with instruments measuring a range of psychotrauma related symptom domains (Olf et al., 2020 & 2021, Oe et al., 2020; Rossi et al., 2020; Rossi et al., 2021; Frewen et al., 2021). Network analyses confirm the conceptualization of psychological responses to traumatic events (including COVID-19) as a network of highly interconnected symptoms and support the use of a transdiagnostic approach (Williamson et al., 2021).

Cross cultural norm data have been collected in a large global sample and data collection is ongoing. A paper based on over 7000 participants has been published (Olf et al., 2021). GPS total and domain scores per gender aggregated from countries with samples sizes >100 are listed in Appendix 2. Means and SDs for GPS symptom scores of male and female respondents in specific countries with sample sizes > 100 are listed in Appendix 3.

GPS existing data sets

Please feel free to use existing data sets including the GPS to answer further research questions. These can be found [here](https://www.global-psycho-trauma.net/data-sets) (<https://www.global-psycho-trauma.net/data-sets>).

Ongoing research using the GPS

An overview of ongoing studies can be found [here](#).

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Contact details

If you have any questions regarding the GPS, please contact:

gc.traumaticstress@gmail.com

Appendices

Appendix 1. GPS English version

Global Psychotrauma Screen (GPS)													
	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center; font-size: 8px;">Participant Identification Number</td> </tr> </table>							Participant Identification Number					
Participant Identification Number													
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Other												
Age (years)	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>												
Sometimes things happen to people that are unusually or especially frightening, horrible, or traumatic.													
Briefly describe the event or experience that currently affects you the most:													
This event happened: <input type="checkbox"/> last month <input type="checkbox"/> last half year <input type="checkbox"/> last year <input type="checkbox"/> longer ago													
This event: <input type="checkbox"/> was a single event occurring, at age <table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 10px;"><tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table> <input type="checkbox"/> happened during a longer period / multiple times, between ages <table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 10px;"><tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table> and <table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 10px;"><tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table>													
Which of the below characterize the event (more answers possible): Physical violence: <input type="checkbox"/> to yourself <input type="checkbox"/> happened to someone else Sexual violence: <input type="checkbox"/> to yourself <input type="checkbox"/> happened to someone else Emotional abuse: <input type="checkbox"/> to yourself <input type="checkbox"/> happened to someone else Serious injury: <input type="checkbox"/> to yourself <input type="checkbox"/> happened to someone else Life threatening: <input type="checkbox"/> to yourself <input type="checkbox"/> happened to someone else <input type="checkbox"/> Sudden death of a loved one <input type="checkbox"/> You causing harm to someone else <input type="checkbox"/> Corona virus (COVID-19)													
Considering the above event, <u>in the past month</u> have you....													
1.	.. had nightmares about the past traumatic life event(s) you have experienced or thought about the event(s) when you did not want to? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes												
2.	.. tried hard not to think about past traumatic life event(s) or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of the event(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes												
3.	.. been constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes												
4.	.. felt numb or detached from people, activities, or your surroundings? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes												
5.	felt guilty or unable to stop blaming yourself or others for past traumatic life event(s) or any problems the event(s) caused? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes												
6.	.. tended to feel worthless? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes												
7.	.. experienced angry outbursts that you could not control? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes												

8.	.. been feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
9.	.. been unable to stop or control worrying?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
10.	.. been feeling down, depressed, or hopeless?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
11.	.. been experiencing little interest or pleasure in doing things?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
12.	.. had any problems falling or staying asleep?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
13.	.. tried to intentionally hurt yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
14.	.. perceived or experienced the world or other people differently, so that things seem dreamlike, strange or unreal?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
15.	.. felt detached or separated from your body (for example, feeling like you are looking down on yourself from above, or like you are an outside observer of your own body)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
16.	.. had any other physical, emotional or social problems that bothered you?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
17.	.. experienced other stressful events (such as financial problems, changing jobs, moving to another house, relational crisis in work or private life)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
18.	.. tried to reduce tensions by using alcohol, tobacco, drugs or medication?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
19.	.. missed supportive people near you that you could readily count on for help in times of difficulty (such as emotional support, watch over children or pets, give rides to hospital or store, help when you are sick)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
20.	During <i>your childhood</i> (0-18 years), did you experience any traumatic life events (e.g., a serious accident or fire, physical or sexual assault or abuse, a disaster, seeing someone be killed or seriously injured, or having a loved one die)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
21.	Have you <i>ever</i> received a psychiatric diagnosis or have you ever been treated for psychological problems (for example, depression, anxiety or a personality disorder)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
22.	Do you <i>generally</i> consider yourself to be a resilient person?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes									
23.	How would you rate your present functioning (at work/home)?											
	Poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Excellent

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Appendix 2. GPS symptoms and domain scores

	FEMALE (N=6609) M (SD)	MALE (N=2132) M (SD)	TOTAL (N=8741) M (SD)
GPS_SYMPTOMS	8.48 (4.66)	6.45 (4.80)	7.99 (4.78)
GPS_PTSD	2.75 (1.7)	2.05 (1.7)	2.6 (1.75)
GPS_DSO	0.92 (0.8)	0.68 (0.78)	0.86 (0.8)
GPS_CPTSD	3.64 (2.24)	2.73 (2.24)	3.43 (2.31)
GPS_ANXIETY	1.36 (0.78)	1.06 (0.84)	1.28 (0.82)
GPS_DEPRESSION	1.24 (0.84)	0.98 (0.86)	1.18 (0.86)
GPS_INSOMNIA	0.61 (0.49)	0.47 (0.5)	0.58 (0.49)
GPS_SELF-HARM	0.12 (0.32)	0.07 (0.25)	0.1 (0.31)
GPS DISSOCIATION	0.54 (0.76)	0.38 (0.66)	0.5 (0.74)
GPS_SUBSTANCEABUSE	0.33 (0.47)	0.31 (0.46)	0.33 (0.47)
GPS_OTHERPROBLEMS	0.6 (0.49)	0.44 (0.5)	0.56 (0.5)
GPS_RISKPROTECT	3.25 (1.50)	2.79 (1.73)	3.14 (1.57)

Appendix 3. GPS symptoms scores per country

Means and SDs for GPS symptom score of males and females for countries with sample sizes > 100

Country	Gender	Number of respondents	GPS symptom score (Mean)	Standard
Armenia	Male	90	7.63	4.19
	Female	246	8.61	3.44
	Total	336	8.35	3.68
Australia	Male	40	7.38	5.44
	Female	143	9.24	4.87
	Total	183	8.83	5.04
Austria	Male	48	3.98	3.88
	Female	125	6.14	4.26
	Total	173	5.54	4.26
Belgium	Male	75	5.45	4.49
	Female	199	7.57	4.52
	Total	274	6.99	4.60
Brazil	Male	154	6.40	4.75
	Female	556	8.02	4.30
	Total	710	7.67	4.44
Canada	Male	27	8.19	5.39
	Female	244	10.01	4.36
	Total	271	9.83	4.50
Chile	Male	48	8.31	3.91
	Female	116	10.09	4.10
	Total	164	9.57	4.11
China	Male	167	7.36	4.75
	Female	326	6.81	4.80
	Total	493	7.00	4.78
Croatia	Male	33	6.45	4.49
	Female	245	7.53	4.00
	Total	278	7.41	4.07
Cyprus	Male	33	5.82	4.15
	Female	96	6.72	4.67
	Total	129	6.49	4.55
France	Male	55	8.07	4.70
	Female	296	9.24	4.70
	Total	351	9.06	4.71
Georgia	Male	48	7.08	4.08
	Female	65	7.38	4.06
	Total	113	7.26	4.06
Germany	Male	27	7.56	5.85
	Female	207	10.53	4.90
	Total	234	10.18	5.09

Greece	Male	68	5.15	3.90
	Female	190	6.01	3.81
	Total	258	5.78	3.84
India	Male	63	5.57	3.95
	Female	118	7.18	4.55
	Total	181	6.62	4.41
Indonesia	Male	128	7.16	4.58
	Female	452	8.13	4.53
	Total	580	7.92	4.56
Italy	Male	27	6.30	4.17
	Female	103	7.04	4.08
	Total	130	6.88	4.09
Japan	Male	41	4.90	3.94
	Female	99	5.42	4.41
	Total	140	5.27	4.27
Netherlands	Male	79	6.32	4.61
	Female	163	7.18	4.85
	Total	242	6.90	4.78
Norway	Male	14	8.29	4.58
	Female	164	8.29	4.93
	Total	178	8.29	4.89
Poland	Male	29	9.10	5.47
	Female	259	10.57	4.17
	Total	288	10.42	4.33
Portugal	Male	152	5.48	4.82
	Female	142	6.47	4.48
	Total	294	5.96	4.67
Russian Federation	Male	221	2.72	3.64
	Female	224	5.06	4.07
	Total	445	3.90	4.03
South Africa	Male	29	6.55	4.15
	Female	185	9.55	4.69
	Total	214	9.14	4.72
Turkey	Male	32	7.97	4.80
	Female	111	8.16	3.90
	Total	143	8.12	4.10
UK and Northern Ireland	Male	25	6.88	4.76
	Female	79	9.58	4.67
	Total	104	8.93	4.81
United States of America	Male	193	9.44	4.57
	Female	977	10.69	4.28
	Total	1170	10.48	4.36

Appendix 4. SPSS Syntax

SPSS Syntax for calculating GPS symptom and domain scores

*GPS domain mean scores.

```

COMPUTE GPS_PTSD=SUM(GPS1,GPS2,GPS3,GPS4,GPS5)/5.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_DSO=SUM(GPS6,GPS7)/2.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_CPTSD= SUM(GPS1,GPS2,GPS3,GPS4,GPS5,GPS6,GPS7)/7.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_Anxiety=SUM(GPS8,GPS9)/2.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_Depr=SUM(GPS10,GPS11)/2.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_Insomnia=SUM(GPS12).
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_Selfharm=SUM(GPS13).
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_Dissoc=SUM(GPS14, GPS15)/2.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_Substance=GPS18.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE GPS_Otherproblems=GPS16.
EXECUTE.

```

```

VARIABLE LABELS GPS_PTSD 'GPS PTSD'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_Anxiety 'GPS Anxiety'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_Depr 'GPS Depression'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_DSO 'GPS PTSD DSO'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_CPTSD 'GPS CPTSD'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_Insomnia 'GPS Insomnia'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_Selfharm 'GPS Self harm'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_Dissoc 'GPS Dissociation'.
VARIABLE LABELS GPS_Otherproblems 'GPS Other problems'.
EXECUTE.

```

*GPS symptom scores.

```

COMPUTE GPS_Sym = sum(gps1 to gps16 ) + gps18.
EXECUTE.
VARIABLE LEVEL GPS_Sym(SCALE).

```

*GPS Risk-protective factors.

** Note that when using the GPS app data the GPS22 (resilience item) has already been recoded, for hand coding see scoring instructions above).

```

COMPUTE RiskNrFactors = GPS17 + GPS19 + GPS20 + GPS21 + GPS22.
EXECUTE.

```