# Global Psychotrauma Screen (GPS)

## User guide
November 2022

**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
- It 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.
- Á '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 (Olff 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 subdomains 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 Olff et al. (2020).

## The GPS and its subdomains

The GPS consists of 17 symptom items, and 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 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
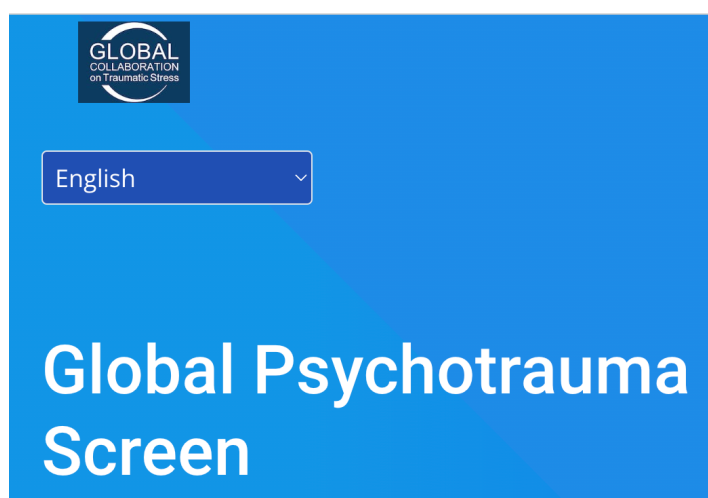- Psychological resilience

Functioning (1 item)

## GPS languages

The GPS is currently available in over 30 languages.
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.

## 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

GLOBAL
COLLABORATION
on Traumatic Stress

English

# Global Psychotrauma Screen

For languages in blue the GPS is available through the GPS app
For all languages a pdf can be downloaded

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

## 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

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

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.

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 subdomain scores*
Total and subdomain scores can be calculated, see *Tables 1 & 2*. See appendix 4 for a detailed SPSS Syntax.

*Cutoff scores*
Cutoff scores (Table 1) are provided to detect specific disorders with optimal sensitivity relative to specificity[1], 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.

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

**Table 1**. Scoring of subdomains scores

| TRAUMA RELATED DISORDERS OR PROBLEMS (SUBDOMAINS) | 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 |

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[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.

**Table 2**. Scoring total scores

| TRANSDIAGBOSTIC OVERALL SYMPTOM BURDEN | | 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 subdomains (Olff 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 (Olff et al., 2021). GPS total and subdomain 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-psychotrauma.net/data-sets).

## Ongoing research using the GPS

An overview of ongoing studies can be found here.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. GPS English version

| Global Psychotrauma Screen (GPS) | |\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|\_\_| **Participant Identification Number** |
|---|---|

| Gender | ☐ Female | ☐ Male | ☐ Other |
|---|---|---|---|

| Age (years) | |\_\_|\_\_|\_\_| |
|---|---|

**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**:　☐ last month　☐ last half year　☐ last year　☐ longer ago

**This event:**
☐ was a single event occurring, at age　|\_\_|\_\_|
☐ happened during a longer period / multiple times, between ages　|\_\_|\_\_| and |\_\_|\_\_|

**Which of the below characterize the event** (more answers possible):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Physical violence: | ☐ to yourself | ☐ happened to someone else |
| Sexual violence: | ☐ to yourself | ☐ happened to someone else |
| Emotional abuse: | ☐ to yourself | ☐ happened to someone else |
| Serious injury: | ☐ to yourself | ☐ happened to someone else |
| Life threatening: | ☐ to yourself | ☐ happened to someone else |

☐ Sudden death of a loved one
☐ You causing harm to someone else
☐ 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? | ☐ No | ☐ 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)? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 3. | .. been constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 4. | .. felt numb or detached from people, activities, or your surroundings? | ☐ No | ☐ 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? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 6. | .. tended to feel worthless? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 7. | .. experienced angry outbursts that you could not control? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8. | .. been feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 9. | .. been unable to stop or control worrying? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 10. | .. been feeling down, depressed, or hopeless? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 11. | .. been experiencing little interest or pleasure in doing things? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 12. | .. had any problems falling or staying asleep? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 13. | .. tried to intentionally hurt yourself? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 14. | .. perceived or experienced the world or other people differently, so that things seem dreamlike, strange or unreal? | ☐ No | ☐ 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)? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 16. | .. had any other physical, emotional or social problems that bothered you? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 17. | .. experienced other stressful events (such as financial problems, changing jobs, moving to another house, relational crisis in work or private life)? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 18. | .. tried to reduce tensions by using alcohol, tobacco, drugs or medication? | ☐ No | ☐ 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)? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| | | | |
| 20. | During *your childhood* (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)? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 21. | Have you *ever* received a psychiatric diagnosis or have you ever been treated for psychological problems (for example, depression, anxiety or a personality disorder)? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| 22. | Do you *generally* consider yourself to be a resilient person? | ☐ No | ☐ Yes |
| | | | |
| 23. | How would you rate your present functioning (at work/home)?<br>Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Excellent | | |

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## Appendix 2. GPS symptoms and subdomain scores

|  | FEMALE (N=6132) M (SD) | MALE (N=1998) M (SD) | TOTAL (N=8130) M (SD) |
|---|---|---|---|
| GPS_SYMPTOMS | 8.30 (4.67) | 6.30 (4.77) | 7.81 (4.77) |
| GPS_PTSD | 0.54 (0.34) | 0.40 (0.34) | 0.50 (0.35) |
| GPS_DSO | 0.45 (0.40) | 0.33 (0.39) | 0.42 (0.40) |
| GPS_CPTSD | 0.51 (0.32) | 0.38 (0.32) | 0.48 (0.32) |
| GPS_ANXIETY | 0.67 (0.40) | 0.52 (0.42) | 0.63 (0.41) |
| GPS_DEPRESSION | 0.62 (0.42) | 0.48 (0.43) | 0.58 (0.43) |
| GPS_INSOMNIA | 0.60 (0.49) | 0.46 (0.50) | 0.57 (0.50) |
| GPS_SELF-HARM | 0.11 (0.31) | 0.06 (0.24) | 0.10 (0.30) |
| GPS_DISSOCIATION | 0.26 (0.37) | 0.19 (0.33) | 0.24 (0.36) |
| GPS_SUBSTANCEABUSE | 0.32 (0.47) | 0.30 (0.46) | 0.31 (0.46) |
| GPS_OTHERPROBLEMS | 0.59 (0.49) | 0.42 (0.49) | 0.55 (0.50) |
| "GPS_RISKPROTECT" | 3.22 (1.53) | 2.75 (1.74) | 3.10 (1.60) |

## 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 DEVIATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ARMENIA | Male | 81 | 7.52 | 4.29 |
| | Female | 231 | 8.58 | 3.48 |
| | Total | 312 | 8.30 | 3.73 |
| AUSTRALIA | Male | 37 | 6.97 | 5.43 |
| | Female | 113 | 8.78 | 5.06 |
| | Total | 150 | 8.33 | 5.20 |
| AUSTRIA | Male | 48 | 3.98 | 3.88 |
| | Female | 125 | 6.14 | 4.26 |
| | Total | 173 | 5.54 | 4.26 |
| BELGIUM | Male | 74 | 5.35 | 4.43 |
| | Female | 197 | 7.54 | 4.51 |
| | Total | 271 | 6.94 | 4.58 |
| BRAZIL | Male | 153 | 6.40 | 4.76 |
| | Female | 556 | 8.02 | 4.30 |
| | Total | 709 | 7.67 | 4.45 |
| CANADA | Male | 23 | 7.91 | 5.37 |
| | Female | 223 | 9.93 | 4.34 |
| | Total | 246 | 9.74 | 4.47 |
| CHILE | Male | 44 | 8.39 | 4.04 |
| | Female | 116 | 10.09 | 4.10 |
| | Total | 160 | 9.63 | 4.14 |
| CHINA | Male | 167 | 7.36 | 4.75 |
| | Female | 326 | 6.81 | 4.80 |
| | Total | 493 | 7.00 | 4.78 |
| CROATIA | Male | 32 | 6.56 | 4.51 |
| | Female | 243 | 7.51 | 4.01 |
| | Total | 275 | 7.40 | 4.07 |
| CYPRUS | Male | 33 | 5.82 | 4.15 |
| | Female | 96 | 6.72 | 4.67 |
| | Total | 129 | 6.49 | 4.55 |
| FRANCE | Male | 52 | 8.21 | 4.52 |
| | Female | 283 | 9.13 | 4.73 |
| | Total | 335 | 8.99 | 4.70 |
| GEORGIA | Male | 48 | 7.08 | 4.08 |
| | Female | 65 | 7.38 | 4.06 |
| | Total | 113 | 7.26 | 4.06 |
| GERMANY | Male | 22 | 7.95 | 5.92 |
| | Female | 190 | 10.58 | 4.89 |
| | Total | 212 | 10.31 | 5.06 |
| GREECE | Male | 68 | 5.15 | 3.90 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female | 190 | 6.01 | 3.81 |
| | Total | 258 | 5.78 | 3.84 |
| **INDIA** | Male | 61 | 5.52 | 3.91 |
| | Female | 116 | 7.18 | 4.52 |
| | Total | 177 | 6.61 | 4.38 |
| **INDONESIA** | Male | 127 | 7.21 | 4.56 |
| | Female | 450 | 8.14 | 4.53 |
| | Total | 577 | 7.93 | 4.55 |
| **ITALY** | Male | 26 | 6.31 | 4.25 |
| | Female | 102 | 7.05 | 4.10 |
| | Total | 128 | 6.90 | 4.12 |
| **JAPAN** | Male | 39 | 4.51 | 3.63 |
| | Female | 93 | 5.45 | 4.27 |
| | Total | 132 | 5.17 | 4.10 |
| **NETHERLANDS** | Male | 70 | 6.54 | 4.58 |
| | Female | 156 | 7.12 | 4.92 |
| | Total | 226 | 6.94 | 4.81 |
| **NORWAY** | Male | 14 | 8.29 | 4.58 |
| | Female | 162 | 8.29 | 4.93 |
| | Total | 176 | 8.29 | 4.89 |
| **POLAND** | Male | 28 | 9.07 | 5.56 |
| | Female | 255 | 10.59 | 4.18 |
| | Total | 283 | 10.44 | 4.35 |
| **PORTUGAL** | Male | 149 | 5.44 | 4.79 |
| | Female | 142 | 6.47 | 4.48 |
| | Total | 291 | 5.94 | 4.66 |
| **RUSSIAN FEDERATION** | Male | 219 | 2.60 | 3.43 |
| | Female | 222 | 5.01 | 4.01 |
| | Total | 441 | 3.81 | 3.92 |
| **SOUTH AFRICA** | Male | 28 | 6.75 | 4.09 |
| | Female | 182 | 9.53 | 4.72 |
| | Total | 210 | 9.16 | 4.72 |
| **TURKEY** | Male | 31 | 8.06 | 4.84 |
| | Female | 111 | 8.16 | 3.90 |
| | Total | 142 | 8.14 | 4.10 |
| **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** | Male | 141 | 9.23 | 4.72 |
| | Female | 677 | 10.53 | 4.42 |
| | Total | 818 | 10.31 | 4.50 |

## Appendix 4 SPSS Syntax

### SPSS Syntax for calculating GPS symptom and subdomain scores

**\*GPS subdomain 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_Anx=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_Anx '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.