



GLOBAL APPROACHES TO WELLBEING MEASUREMENT

Indices and Frameworks

Sunil Rajpal, Neelima VP, Mohit Pandey, Shreya Ronanki, Ishika Pahuja, Anushka Ramesh, Nikita Suri

CONTENTS

Overview

i

Indices and Frameworks

| | |
|---|----|
| Gross National Happiness | 1 |
| World Happiness Report | 2 |
| Human Flourishing Measure | 3 |
| Quality of Life Indicators in Korea | 4 |
| Australian Unity Wellbeing Index | 5 |
| OECD Better Life Index | 6 |
| The Subjective Well-Being Index and the Regional Well-Being Index | 7 |
| Luxembourg Index of Well-being (LIW) | 8 |
| Better Well-being Index | 9 |
| Irish Well-being Framework | 10 |
| UK Measures of National Well-being (UK MNW) | 11 |
| Equitable and Sustainable Well-being | 12 |
| Wales Well-being | 13 |
| Satisfaction and Quality of Life | 14 |
| Wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand | 15 |
| Way Forward | 16 |
| References | 17 |

OVERVIEW

Over the past two decades, the limitations of conventional economic indicators in capturing human progress have been increasingly acknowledged in global discourse. Widening gaps between material outcomes and self-rated life evaluations have drawn attention to the importance of subjective wellbeing. Governments, international organizations, and academicians are now actively investing in integrating subjective wellbeing metrics into policy and evaluation at the population level.

This compendium note is part of the larger efforts of the CRWBH to develop an Indian wellbeing framework and its measurement at the population level in the Indian context. The document is an attempt to list 15 leading efforts made towards measuring wellbeing worldwide, spanning 10 indices and 5 frameworks. This note restricts the list to only those wellbeing indices (around the world) that explicitly contain subjective wellbeing components in the framework. More specifically, we included Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index, the World Happiness Report, the Human Flourishing Measure, Korea's Quality of Life Indicators, the Australian Unity Wellbeing Index, the OECD Better Life Index, Kazakhstan's Subjective and Regional Well-being Indices, the Luxembourg Index of Well-being, Japan's Satisfaction and Quality of Life, the Better Well-being Index in the Netherlands, Ireland's Well-being Framework, the UK's Measures of National Well-being, Italy's Equitable and Sustainable Well-being, Wales' Well-being framework, and New Zealand's Te Tai Waiora. These collective efforts reflect a growing movement to define progress through wellbeing and happiness, along with economic growth.

Life satisfaction, self-rated health, education, work, income, and social relationships emerge as core domains across frameworks and indices. Yet country-level efforts have made adaptations based on local contexts. Bhutan incorporates spirituality and cultural resilience, Italy places value on landscape and heritage, Wales sets statutory goals for resilience and language, Japan considers caregiving and child-rearing, South Korea emphasizes stress recognition and safety, and New Zealand integrates indigenous perspectives on cultural belonging.

Global findings consistently highlight the strength of Nordic countries such as Finland, Denmark, and Iceland, where high trust, strong governance, and balanced lives sustain the highest wellbeing levels. Middle-income countries often perform better than expected relative to their economies, while challenges persist in youth wellbeing across wealthier nations. India features in global comparisons through the World Happiness Report and the Global Flourishing Study, contributing to the wider international evidence base.

Collectively, these measures represent a decisive shift toward multidimensional and people-centered understandings of progress. Combining subjective perceptions with objective realities, they reveal how societies are truly performing and provide policymakers with actionable insights to shape policies that enhance health outcomes, social cohesion, and meaningful living.

GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2008 | Every Few Years | Government of Bhutan, Gross National Happiness Commission | Bhutan |

Methods

Data

The Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index is derived from nationally representative household surveys administered by the Centre for Bhutan and GNH Studies (CBS). The data is collected from both urban and rural populations. Respondents include household members aged 15 years and above, providing self-reported information across multiple dimensions of well-being. While most indicators are based on primary survey data, certain domains as ecological indicators incorporate administrative and environmental datasets to supplement household responses.

Domains

Subjective

- Psychological well-being
 - Life satisfaction
 - Emotions
 - Spirituality
- Health
 - Self-reported health

Objective

- Health
- Education
- Time use
- Cultural diversity & resilience
- Good governance
- Community vitality
- Ecological diversity & resilience
- Living standards

Measurement

The Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index is constructed using the Alkire-Foster multidimensional poverty measurement method. The framework aggregates information across 9 domains and 33 indicators. In the computation of the index, each domain is assigned an equal weight of one-ninth, ensuring balanced representation across dimensions. Within each domain, however, the indicators are weighted differently, with objective measures receiving slightly greater emphasis than subjective ones to strengthen the robustness and comparability of results.



Recent Findings

- Recent report, 2022, depicted that younger respondents scored lower on life satisfaction and spirituality than older groups, raising concerns about intergenerational wellbeing.
- Environmental resilience indicators (forest cover, biodiversity conservation) continue to play a strong role in Bhutan's wellbeing model, aligning with its constitutional commitment to maintain 60% forest cover.
- Bhutan's model has inspired adaptations internationally, such as city-level GNH initiatives in Canada and the UK.

WORLD HAPPINESS REPORT

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2012 | Annual | United Nations, Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Gallup | ~150 countries |

Methods

Data

The World Happiness Report (WHR) used data primarily from the Gallup World Poll (GWP), which, on average, surveys approximately 3,000 respondents per country aged 15 and above.

Domains

Subjective

- Life evaluation
 - Cantril Ladder
- Positive affect
 - The average of previous-day affect measures for laughter
 - Enjoyment
 - Doing interesting things
- Negative affect
 - Average of previous-day affect measures for worry
 - Sadness
 - Anger

Objective

- GDP per capita
- Healthy life expectancy at birth
- Social support
- Freedom to make life choices
- Generosity
- Absence of corruption

Measurement

The WHR calculates happiness rankings by averaging self-reported life evaluations from the Gallup World Poll, using a three-part model (Dystopia baseline + six explanatory factors + residuals) to explain cross-country differences. To enhance reliability, results are averaged across a three-year period to smooth short-term fluctuations.



Recent Findings

- The recent report 2025 shows that Nordic countries (Finland, Denmark, Iceland) consistently top the rankings, reflecting strong social cohesion, governance, and trust.
- The report highlighted growing youth dissatisfaction in high-income countries, while middle-income nations (e.g., Latin America) reported relatively higher happiness compared to economic expectations.

For more information, visit <https://www.worldhappiness.report/faq/>

HUMAN FLOURISHING MEASURE

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2017 | Annual | Harvard Human Flourishing Program, Baylor University, Gallup, Center for Open Science, United States | 22 countries |

Methods

Data

Data are collected from surveys developed by the Human Flourishing Program, with adaptations of Flourish scores also calculated using Gallup World Poll data. Variants of the measure have been designed for specific contexts, including adolescents, end-of-life settings, extended well-being assessments, and “years-of-life” approaches. The study follows a longitudinal design, surveying the same individuals across waves, which allows changes in flourishing to be tracked over time and linked to determinants such as demographics or childhood experiences.

Domains

Subjective

- Happiness and life satisfaction
- Mental and physical health
- Meaning and purpose
- Character and virtue
- Close social relationships
- Financial and material stability

Measurement

The Flourish measure assesses well-being through five core domains: Happiness and Life Satisfaction, Mental and Physical Health, Meaning and Purpose, Character and Virtue, and Close Social Relationships. Each domain is measured using two validated survey items (10 questions in total), with responses rated on a 0–10 scale. These provide domain-specific scores that capture multiple aspects of flourishing.

The Secure Flourish measure extends this framework by including a sixth domain, Financial and Material Stability, represented by two additional items. This addition reflects the capacity to sustain flourishing across the core domains into the future.

Results are typically reported by domain, allowing for detailed insights across each dimension of flourishing. However, scores across the five or six domains can also be averaged to create a composite summary score ranging from 0 to 10, which serves as an overall indicator of flourishing.



Recent Findings

- Preliminary findings as per the Vanderweele's 2025 study¹ reveal that Flourishing scores were often higher in middle-income countries (Indonesia, Mexico, Philippines, Brazil) than in wealthier nations.
- Flourishing rose with age from midlife onward, contrasting earlier U-shaped wellbeing patterns.
- Positive childhood conditions (good parental relationships, better financial status, good health, fewer adverse experiences) predicted higher adult flourishing.

For more information, visit <https://hfh.fas.harvard.edu/>

¹ VanderWeele TJ, Rogge RA, Lindsey T, MacIntosh H, et al. The Global Flourishing Study: study profile and initial results on flourishing. *Nat Ment Health*. 2025; (in press). doi:10.1038/s44220-025-00423-5

QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS IN KOREA

| Origin (Year) | Frequency | Developed by | Geography |
|---------------|-----------|---|-------------|
| 2011 | Quarterly | Statistics Research Institute, Statistics Korea | South Korea |

Methods

Data

Subjective indicators are measured primarily through nationwide surveys, Korean Social Survey conducted by Statistics Korea (KOSTAT) biennially. Objective indicators, in contrast, are derived from administrative and statistical data maintained by government agencies and institutions. Drawing upon statistics from national repositories as well as data collected by the organization, information on 42 objective and 29 subjective indicators is collected across 11 domains.

Domains

| Domain | Subjective Indicators | Objective Indicators |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Family & Community | Family Relationship Satisfaction; Sense of Belonging to a Community | Live-alone Elderly Rate; Social Isolation; Social Group Participation Rate |
| Health | Self-reported Health; Stress Self-recognition | Life Expectancy; Healthy Life Expectancy; Physical Activity Rate; Obesity Rate; Suicide Rate |
| Education | Perception toward Effects of School Education; School Life Satisfaction*; Degree of Education Cost Burden | Preschool Enrollment Rate; Population with Tertiary Education; Employment Rate of College Graduates |
| Employment & Wage | Job Satisfaction | Employment Rate; Unemployment Rate; Average Monthly Wage; Working Hours; Proportion of Low-paid Workers |
| Income Consumption Wealth | Income Satisfaction; Consumption Satisfaction | Gross National Income per Capita; Equivalised Median Income; Household Net Wealth; Household Debt Ratio; Relative Poverty Rate |
| Leisure | Leisure Satisfaction*; Sufficiency of Leisure Time | Leisure Time; Travel Days per Person; Ratio of Expenditure on Leisure; Participation in Culture, Art & Sport Events |
| Housing | Housing Environment Satisfaction | Residential Area per Capita; Commuting Time to Office; Dwelling without Basic Facilities; Rent to Income Ratio; Home-ownership Rate |
| Environment | Climate Change Recognition; Air Quality Satisfaction; Water Quality Satisfaction*; Soil Quality Satisfaction; Noise Level Satisfaction; Green Environment Satisfaction | Fine Dust Concentration Level (PM.); Urban Park Area per Capita; Waterworks Supply Rate in Rural Area |
| Safety | Feeling Safe Walking Alone at Night*; Perception toward Societal Safety | Homicide Rate; Child Abuse Rate; Crime Victimization Rate; Child Mortality Rate from Safety Accidents; Industrial Accident Mortality Rate; Number of Fire Fatalities; Road Traffic Accident Fatality Rate |
| Civic Engagement | Perception of Political Empowerment; Citizenship; Corruption Perceptions Index*; Interpersonal Trust; Institutional Trust | Voter Turnout Rate; Voluntary Work Participation Rate |
| Subjective Well-being | Life Satisfaction*; Positive Emotions; Negative Emotions | – |

Note: * indicates key indicators

Measurement

Indicators were processed using normalization and weighting to ensure comparability and minimize bias.



Recent Findings

- In 2023, Statistics Korea introduced a framework for measuring quality of life by life cycle, expanding wellbeing assessment across age groups.
- According to their 2024 report, since COVID-19, indicators have partly rebounded but show stagnation or decline in subjective wellbeing (life satisfaction, family relationships, environment), while income, assets, and employment (including graduate employment) continue to improve.

For more information, visit <https://kostat.go.kr/>

AUSTRALIAN UNITY WELLBEING INDEX

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2001 | Annual | Australian Unity; Deakin University, School of Psychology; Australia Centre on Quality of Life (ACQOL) | Australia |

Methods

Data

The Australian Unity Wellbeing Index collects data from nationally representative samples of Australian adults (aged 18 years or above) through the Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI-Adult) and the National Wellbeing Index (NWI) surveys. In 2024, a dual-frame methodology was used: an interviewer-administered phone survey (via random-digit dialling) and a self-completed online survey through Life in Australia™, the nation's only probability-based online panel. Respondents rate their satisfaction across multiple life domains using a 0–10 numerical scale, capturing self-perceptions of quality of life.

Domains

Subjective

Global Satisfaction: Global Life Satisfaction (life as a whole), Global National Wellbeing (life in Australia)

Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI): Standard of living, Health, Achieving in life, Personal relationships, Safety, Community connectedness, Future security

National Wellbeing Index (NWI): Economic situation, State of natural environment, Social conditions, Government, Business, National security

Mental Health & Resilience: Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Loneliness, Resilience (recovery when things go wrong), Relational support (ease of getting help)

Financial Wellbeing: Satisfaction with ability to afford needs, Satisfaction with ability to save, Perceived intergenerational financial mobility (relative to parents and expectations for children)

Objective

Financial Wellbeing: Material deprivation (ability to meet 8 essential expenses: rent/mortgage, utilities, food, prescriptions, transport, phone, internet)

Housing: Home ownership status (renter, owner with mortgage, owner mortgage-free, living with parents, other)

Demographics & Social Context: Gender, Age, Marital status, Household composition, Number of children, Occupation/employment/student status, Household income, State/region (remoteness), SEIFA index (neighbourhood advantage/disadvantage), Citizenship, Country of birth, Language spoken at home, Government support payments

Measurement

The Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI) is computed as the average of seven personal domain scores, while the National Wellbeing Index (NWI) is derived from the average of six national domain scores. In addition, single-item global life satisfaction questions are included to capture overall evaluations. All scores are then converted to a percentage of scale maximum (%SM), standardising them on a 0–100 scale to allow comparability across domains and over time. The results are weighted using ABS population benchmarks, with adjustments for enrolment and response-propensity to correct for sample design and non-response bias. Once weighted, mean scores are reported for the PWI and NWI, with differences between groups expressed in both percentage points and standardised effect sizes to assess the magnitude of variation.



Recent Findings

- In the Survey 41 (June 2024), housing satisfaction and cost-of-living pressures emerged as significant correlates of subjective well-being.
- Life satisfaction scores remained relatively stable across Australia, with lower scores among younger adults and those in lower income brackets.

For more information, visit <http://www.acqol.com.au/publications#reports>

OECD BETTER LIFE INDEX

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2011 | Every 2-3 years | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) | 38 OECD Member Countries |

Methods

Data

The OECD Better Life Index (BLI) is based primarily on data from official statistical agencies, including OECD databases, national statistical offices, and United Nations Statistics. For certain dimensions, such as life satisfaction and self-reported health, the index draws on data from public opinion polls, most notably the Gallup World Poll (GWP).

Domains

Subjective

- Life satisfaction
 - Self-reported overall life evaluation
- Self-reported health

Objective

- Housing (housing conditions, affordability)
- Income (household income, wealth)
- Jobs (employment, earnings, job security)
- Community (quality of social support networks)
- Education (educational attainment, skills, lifelong learning)
- Environment (air quality, environmental conditions)
- Civic engagement (trust in institutions, voter turnout)
- Health (life expectancy)
- Life satisfaction (self-reported overall life evaluation)
- Safety (personal security, homicide rates)
- Work–life balance (time devoted to leisure, family life)

Measurement

The OECD Better Life Index (BLI) is calculated using a composite index approach that aggregates standardized indicators across 11 domains of well-being. Each indicator is first normalized (using min–max scaling) so that results are comparable across countries despite differences in measurement units. Within each domain, normalized indicators are averaged to produce a domain score. Domains are then equally weighted by default, though the interactive BLI tool allows users to assign their own weights to reflect personal priorities. Finally, the weighted domain scores are aggregated into an overall index score for each country, enabling cross-country comparisons of both overall well-being and domain-specific performance.



Recent Findings

- In recent, 2024, shows that Nordic countries consistently top the rankings as Nations like Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland score highly across life satisfaction, health, work–life balance, and governance.
- Work–life balance and community ties matter as much as income, countries such as Netherlands and Spain perform well despite lower GDP per capita, due to stronger social connections, leisure time, and community trust.

For more information, visit <https://www.oecd.org/en/data/tools/oecd-better-life-index.html>

THE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING INDEX AND THE REGIONAL WELL-BEING INDEX

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2022 | Annual | Asian Development Bank and The Economic Research Institute (ERI), Government of Kazakhstan | Kazakhstan |

Methods

Data

The Subjective Well-Being Index (SWI) and the Regional Well-Being Index (RWI) for Kazakhstan were developed through data collected by ERI researchers between August and November 2022. A total of 4,034 individual surveys were administered using a structured questionnaire, with the survey design based on international best practices such as the World Values Survey, European Social Survey, and European Values Survey. Respondents included adults living in private households across all regions of Kazakhstan. The data collection period, spanning approximately five months, was intended to provide robust and comparable measures of subjective well-being across the country.

Domains

Subjective

- Life satisfaction
 - Life satisfaction
 - Worthwhile life
 - Negative affect balance
- Self-reported health

Objective

- Income and wealth
- Work and job quality
- Housing
- Health status
- Knowledge and skills
- Social connections
- Environmental quality
- Civic engagement and governance
- Personal safety

Measurement

The Index is calculated using a composite index approach. Both subjective indicators and objective indicators are selected and standardized to a comparable scale. Weighted indicators are then aggregated into a composite score, producing the SWI at the individual level, while regional averages of these scores generate the RWI.




Recent Findings

- Recent report (2022) showed that life satisfaction varied significantly across regions, often linked to material conditions (jobs, income) and quality of infrastructure.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) is considering this model as a pilot for broader application in Central Asia.

For more information, visit <http://dx.doi.org/10.22617/SPR230209>

LUXEMBOURG INDEX OF WELL-BEING (LIW)

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2009 | Annual | Conseil économique et social (CES), Conseil supérieur pour un développement durable (CSDD), and Observatoire de la Compétitivité, with research led by STATEC | Luxembourg |

Methods

Data

It monitors 63 indicators grouped into 11 domains, capturing both subjective and objective aspects of quality of life. Data is drawn from a mix of national and international surveys as well as registry data. The population coverage includes analyses at the individual, household, and national levels. Results are further disaggregated by demographic sub-groups such as age, gender, income, family situation, nationality, socio-professional status, education level, and place of residence.

Domains

Subjective

- Subjective well-being
 - Life satisfaction; a single direct measure of perceived quality of life

Objective

- Income and wealth
- Occupation
- Housing
- Health
- Work-life balance
 - Private and working life
- Education and skills
- Social relationships
- Governance and civic engagement
- Environment
- Personal security
 - Safety
 - Physical integrity

Measurement

The Luxembourg Index of Well-being (LIW) is calculated through a three-step process. First, each indicator is normalized relative to its base year (2009), with negative measures such as unemployment or chronic disease inverted to ensure that higher values consistently represent better outcomes. Second, these normalized indicators are aggregated within their respective domains, producing a set of domain indexes. Finally, the LIW is constructed as a composite index by calculating the weighted average of these domain indices. In its standard form, all domains are given equal weight, reflecting their equal importance to overall well-being; however, robustness checks have been conducted using alternative weighting schemes informed by OECD Better Life Initiative user preferences across Luxembourg, Germany, France, and Belgium, which confirmed the stability of the results.



Recent Findings

- Based on report 2022 the Luxembourg well-being decline compared to 2021, despite Luxembourg's strong post-pandemic economic recovery.
- Rising housing costs and declining real economic growth weighed heavily on overall well-being.

For more information, visit <https://statistiques.public.lu/dam-assets/catalogue-publications/PIBien-etre/2018/pibien-etre-18.pdf>

BETTER WELL-BEING INDEX

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2016 | Annual | Institutions for Open Societies, Utrecht University | Netherlands |

Methods

Data

Data were collected from public datasets at the national level (2003–2024) and the regional level (2013–2023). Subjective indicators were primarily derived from the Social Cohesion and Wellbeing Survey (SCSW) and the Housing Survey of the Netherlands (WoON).

Domains

Subjective

- Happiness
- Satisfaction

Objective

- Safety (violent crimes, murders)
- Personal development: education level, pisa score, personal development (education level, pisa score)
- Housing (housing satisfaction)
- Environment (fine particulate matter (pm2.5), Living planet index)
- Health (life expectancy)
- Income (average standardized income)
- Job security (unemployment, flexible employment relationship)
- Work–life balance (working hours)
- Social contacts (social contacts with family, friends or neighbours)
- Social engagement / civic involvement (volunteering, trust in others)

Measurement

Missing data were addressed through linear interpolation or, when necessary, by carrying forward the last available value. In cases where regional data were unavailable, national growth rates were applied to generate estimates.

All variables were normalized using the min–max method and benchmarked against 13 Northwestern European countries, with scores ranging from 0 to 1; positive indicators were scaled upward, while negative indicators were transformed inversely.

Within each dimension, variables were aggregated with equal weights, and the resulting dimension scores were further combined using the OECD Better Life Index weighting scheme. This process yields the BWI integrated well-being score, which captures overall performance while accounting for trade-offs across dimensions.



Recent Findings

- In 2024, broad wellbeing in the Netherlands rose slightly, alongside a modest increase in GDP per capita. Gains were seen in subjective wellbeing, income, and job security, while housing satisfaction and work–life balance declined.
- Between 2013 and 2023, broad wellbeing improved across all regions, though growth was uneven: areas like Gooi en Vechtstreek, Leiden and Bollenstreek, and the Achterhoek led, while Delfzijl and Groot-Rijnmond lagged behind.

IRISH WELL-BEING FRAMEWORK

|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
|---|---|--|---|
| 2021 | Annual | Government of Ireland, Central Statistics Office (CSO), National Economic and Social Council. | Ireland |

Methods

Data

The indicators are taken from sources like the Central Statistics Office which includes both objective and subjective measures, the selection of the indicators are guided by the National Economic and Social Council, while being in alignment with OECD standards. These indicators are grouped into 11 dimensions and presented in a dashboard format rather than combining the data into a single index.

Domains

| Domain | Subjective Indicators | Objective Indicators |
|---|---|--|
| Subjective Well-being | Population rating overall life satisfaction as high; Population who did not feel depressed/downhearted in last 4 weeks; School-aged children happy with their life at present | – |
| Mental & Physical Health | Population reporting depression; Unmet need for medical attention | Healthy Life Years |
| Income & Wealth | Households making ends meet with great difficulty | Median real household disposable income; Median household net wealth; Net government worth |
| Knowledge, Skills & Innovation | – | Reading & maths performance in 15-year-olds (PISA); Lifelong learning rate; Research & development personnel |
| Housing & Built Environment | – | A/B domestic dwelling energy rating share; New dwelling completions; Average distance to everyday services; At-risk-of-poverty rate after rent & mortgage interest |
| Environment, Climate & Biodiversity | Pollution, grime or other environmental problems | Water bodies assessed as high or good; Greenhouse gas emissions; Waste to landfill |
| Safety & Security | Population who worry they could be a victim of a crime | Murder rate per 100,000; Persons killed or injured on roads |
| Work & Job Quality | – | Labour underutilisation rate; Employment rate; Mean weekly earnings |
| Time Use | Population satisfied with time use | Long working hours in main job; Carers providing 20 hours care/week |
| Connections, Community & Participation | Population who feel lonely; Population with 2 people to count on if they had a serious problem | – |
| Civic Engagement, Trust & Cultural Expression | Satisfaction with how democracy works in Ireland; Persons who experienced discrimination in previous 2 years; Perceived social inclusion | – |

Measurement

The Ireland Well-being Framework is designed as a dashboard of indicators rather than a single composite index. Each indicator is presented in its natural statistical unit without normalization or aggregation across domains. Results are reported separately across the 11 domains and 35 indicators, with disaggregation by demographic groups and regions where possible.

This approach allows policymakers and the public to monitor well-being across multiple dimensions, track trends over time, and identify areas requiring targeted intervention, while avoiding the limitations of collapsing diverse indicators into a single score.



Recent Findings

- Recent findings from Understanding Life in Ireland 2025 show strong outcomes in Income & Wealth, Connections & Community, and Work & Job Quality, with improvements driven by rising government net worth and fewer people reporting loneliness.
- People in the Midlands reported the highest worry levels (22%), compared with 16% in Dublin, Mid-East and Mid-West, 15% in the South-East, 13% in the West, and 11% in the South-West and Border regions.

For more information, visit <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-the-taoiseach/campaigns/a-well-being-framework-for-ireland/>

UK MEASURES OF NATIONAL WELL-BEING (UK MNW)

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2010 | Annual/ Quarterly | Office for National Statistics (ONS), United Kingdom | United Kingdom |

Methods

Data

The UK Measures of National Well-being (MNW) draw on a combination of data sources, including surveys conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), administrative records, and other official and public datasets. Data are primarily collected through household surveys, which sample private household residents across the United Kingdom. This design ensures national coverage of both urban and rural populations, while typically excluding individuals living in communal establishments such as prisons, care homes, or military barracks. Respondents are adults residing in private households, providing information on multiple dimensions of personal and societal well-being that together form the UK's national well-being indicators.

Domains

Subjective

- Personal Well-being
 - Life satisfaction
 - Feeling things done in life are worthwhile
 - Happiness
 - Feeling anxious
 - Hope for the future
 - Fair treatment

Objective

Relationships (unhappy partner relationships, satisfaction with social relationships, people to rely on, loneliness, local community integration, trust in others), Health (activity levels, health behaviors, and overall health outcomes), what we do (Work & Activity), Employment, work-life balance, and daily activities, Where we live (Housing, neighborhood satisfaction, and environment), personal finance (Income, financial security, and household resources), education and skills (educational attainment and skills development), economy (macro-level economic indicators and opportunities), governance (trust in government, civic engagement, and public services), Environment (natural environment, air/water quality, and green spaces).

Measurement

The UK Measures of National Well-being is a dashboard of indicators across multiple domains. Each indicator is derived from survey responses, administrative records, or official statistics. Instead of aggregating into a single number, the MNW framework presents separate indicators within 10 domains (e.g., health, relationships, economy, governance, environment), allowing policymakers and the public to track progress across different dimensions of well-being.



Recent Findings

- The proportion of adults reporting low life satisfaction has risen: ~5.8% in Oct–Dec 2023 compared with ~4.4% in the same period five years earlier.
- In the final quarter of 2023, 23.5% of respondents said they felt high levels of anxiety “yesterday,” up from ~20% in the same quarter of 2018.

For more information, visit <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/ukmeasuresofnationalwellbeing/dashboard>

EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE WELL-BEING

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2013 | Annual | Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), National Council for Economy and Labour (CNEL), Ministry of Economy and Finance for policy integration | Italy |

Methods

Data

The Equitable and Sustainable Well-being (BES) framework for Italy is built from a combination of data sources, including official statistics, national household surveys, and public opinion/perception data. To ensure territorial coverage, the framework also incorporates stakeholder consultations and regional breakdowns across Italy. For survey-based measures, respondents are adults living in private households, while administrative data sources extend coverage to the population as a whole. Together, these datasets form the basis for monitoring well-being across multiple domains at both the national and regional levels.

Domains

Subjective

- Subjective Well-being
 - Life satisfaction
 - Satisfaction with leisure
 - Satisfaction with future prospects
 - Optimism/pessimism
- Health
 - Self-reported health

Objective

Health (healthy life expectancy at birth, prevalence of overweight/obesity, self-reported health, chronic illness), education and training (educational attainment, participation in learning), work and life balance (employment, job quality, work hours), economic well-being (household income, inequality, poverty), social relationships (family networks, social support, trust), politics and institutions (civic participation, trust in institutions, equality), security (crime rates, perceptions of safety), subjective well-being (life satisfaction, happiness, sense of purpose), landscape and cultural heritage (access to culture, preservation of heritage), environment (air quality, land use, ecological sustainability), research and innovation (R&D investment, technological progress), quality of Services (access to transport, childcare, social services)

Measurement

BES is a multidimensional framework (dashboard) of well-being. It tracks progress across over 130 indicators distributed across 12 domains.



Recent Findings

In recent report 2023, the regional disparities remain wide. Northern Italy shows higher levels of health, education, and employment well-being, while Southern regions continue to lag in economic security, services, and social capital. Annual updates allow monitoring of trends over time and regional disparities in well-being across Italy.

- Air quality and exposure to environmental risks are persistent issues, and an aging population continues to affect health, care, and intergenerational equity.

For more information, visit https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2022/11/the-equitable-and-sustainable-well-being-framework-in-italy_84b03a0c/4f48c504-en.pdf

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2015 | Annual | Welsh Government, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and Wellbeing Economy & Future Generations Wales | Wales |

Methods

Data

The Welsh Government monitors well-being using 50 national indicators that are aligned with the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. These indicators are drawn from robust sources such as the National Survey for Wales (NSW), Office for National Statistics (ONS), and the Annual Population Survey (APS). Each indicator has a technical definition and is calculated using standardized statistical methods, with checks for reliability and comparability. Alongside indicators, national milestones serve as long-term targets to assess progress towards the seven statutory well-being goals. Progress is measured annually and published in the Well-being of Wales Report.

Domains

The framework explicitly integrates four forms of well-being (economic, social, environmental, and cultural), and progress is evaluated against seven statutory goals: a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales, cohesive communities, vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and a globally responsible Wales.

Subjective

- Life satisfaction
- Happiness
- Self-reported well-being
- Community satisfaction
- Perceptions of equality

Objective

- Economic (income distribution, employment, gender pay gap, qualifications)
- Health (smoking rates, breastfeeding, physical activity, mental health, vaccination)
- Social (education attainment, ethnic minority employment, housing, safety, cohesion)
- Environment (recycling rates, renewable energy, water quality, biodiversity)
- Cultural (arts and sports participation, Welsh language use)
- Governance/global (civic engagement, climate action, greenhouse gas reduction)

Measurement

The Wales Well-being framework operates as a dashboard of indicators rather than a single composite score. Each of the 50 indicators is linked to one or more of the seven statutory goals. National milestones provide long-term targets against which annual progress is assessed.



Recent Findings

- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees earned, on average £1.93 (13.8%) less per hour than White employees in 2023. This compares to an ethnicity pay difference of £2.23 (or 16.8%) in 2022.
- Employment rates in Wales remain lower for women than for men (70.2% and 76.8% respectively in the year ending March 2024). The gap has grown to 6.6 percentage points from 4.8 percentage points the previous year.

SATISFACTION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2011 | Annual | Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (National Policy Formation) | Japan |

Methods

Data

Data are collected through a nationwide questionnaire survey that covers all 47 prefectures, ensuring representation across the entire country. Respondents consist of Japanese adults from diverse age groups, genders, and both urban and rural regions, providing a comprehensive picture of life satisfaction and quality of life across the population.

Domains

Subjective

- Overall life satisfaction

Objective

- Household income and assets
- Employment conditions and wages housing
- Work–life balance (WLB)
- Health
- Education and learning environment
- Social connections
- Politics
- Administration
- Judiciary
- Natural environment
- Personal safety
- Ease of child-rearing
- Ease of caregiving and receiving care
- Enjoyment and fun in life

Measurement

Respondents provide self-reported satisfaction scores for each domain of life (such as health, income, housing, work–life balance, and social connections). These domain-level scores are then combined, either by averaging or by applying weights, to generate an overall Quality of Life (QoL) index that reflects multidimensional well-being. Finally, the results are aggregated at both the national and regional levels, enabling comparisons across prefectures and demographic groups, and allowing policymakers to identify areas of strength and domains requiring improvement.



Recent Findings

- Survey results are standardized and compiled into Japan's Well-Being Dashboard, which tracks long-term changes.
- Indicators are also aligned with the OECD Better Life Index to enable international comparison of well-being levels.

For more information, visit https://gensoken.toyo.ac.jp/context/japanese-society-and-culture/article/1089/viewcontent/Development_of_an_Integrated_Well-Being_Scale_for_Japan.pdf/

WELLBEING IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Origin (Year) |  Frequency |  Developed by |  Geography |
| 2019 | Every 4 years | Te Tai Ōhanga The Treasury, New Zealand Government (with input from other government agencies, OECD, and wellbeing experts) | New Zealand |

Methods

Data

The Te Tai Waiora report is grounded in two complementary frameworks. The Living Standards Framework (LSF) provides a structured approach to wellbeing, capturing individual and collective wellbeing across 12 domains (such as health, knowledge and skills, work, income, safety, environment, social connections, and civic engagement). Together, these frameworks provide a holistic perspective on wellbeing, with specific He Ara Waiora indicators still under development. The analysis draws on multiple data sources, including national household surveys, administrative records, and official statistics collected by Statistics New Zealand (Stats NZ), as well as comparative data from the OECD, ensuring both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of wellbeing are captured.

Domains

Subjective

- Subjective wellbeing
 - Life satisfaction

Objective

- Health
- knowledge and skills
- Cultural capability and belonging
- Work
- Care and volunteering
- Engagement and voice
- Income
- Consumption and wealth
- Housing
- Environmental amenity
- Leisure and play
- Family and friends
- Safety

Measurement

Te Tai Waiora uses a dashboard of indicators, not a single composite score.



Recent Findings

- The recent report (2022) shows that over the past 20 years, New Zealanders are healthier, living longer, and earning higher incomes. Crime rates have fallen, and international comparisons show strong performance in areas such as air quality, jobs, social connections, and life satisfaction. Older people, in particular, report strong social support and relatively low poverty.
- Children raised by parents with low wellbeing often do less well themselves over the life course.

For more information, visit <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-report/te-tai-waiora-2022>

WAY FORWARD

Subjective wellbeing is no longer the preserve of developed nations but a global priority for nations at all stages of development. India, which has emerged as a global economic powerhouse with its vast demographic diversity, is a critical case for the development of a systematic wellbeing framework.

Although the nation has taken notable steps towards economic wellbeing, the outcomes of development remain uneven. Existing evidence on subjective wellbeing in India is fragmented and insufficient, often limited to domains, geographies, or age groups.

While India is included in global surveys such as the Gallup World Poll and World Values Survey, the sample sizes are far from being representative, considering the socioeconomic and geographic heterogeneity. While the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (LASI) provides extensive modules on life satisfaction, self-rated health, depressive symptoms, and more, its coverage is largely restricted to the elderly population. Perhaps, it is time for existing nationally representative surveys, such as the National Sample Survey (NSS) and National Family Health Survey (NFHS), to think about including separate modules (survey rounds) on subjective domains as well.

Moving forward, a systematic and culturally grounded approach involving mapping existing resources, designing representative surveys, and developing a comprehensive wellbeing framework that reflects the country's sociocultural diversity is essential. Such an approach would equip policymakers with multidimensional insights into inequalities, and more importantly, initiate a national dialogue on adopting a holistic perspective to wellbeing. Owing to its large population base, India is uniquely positioned to stand as a global leader in redefining progress through multidimensional measures of wellbeing.

REFERENCES

- » Gross National Happiness Centre Bhutan. History of GNH. Available from: <https://www.gnhcentrebhutan.org/history-of-gnh/>
 - » Sustainable Development Solutions Network. World Happiness Report: Frequently Asked Questions. Available from: <https://www.worldhappiness.report/faq/>
 - » Harvard University. Human Flourishing Program. Available from: <https://hfh.fas.harvard.edu/>
 - » VanderWeele TJ, Rogge RA, Lindsey T, MacIntosh H, et al. The Global Flourishing Study: study profile and initial results on flourishing. *Nat Ment Health*. 2025. doi:10.1038/s44220-025-00423-5
 - » Statistics Korea. Statistics Korea (KOSTAT). Available from: <https://kostat.go.kr/>
 - » Australian Centre on Quality of Life (ACQOL). Publications: Australian Unity Wellbeing Index Reports. Available from: <http://www.acqol.com.au/publications#reports>
 - » Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). OECD Better Life Index. Available from: <https://www.oecd.org/en/data/tools/oecd-better-life-index.html>
 - » Asian Development Bank. The Subjective Well-being Index and the Regional Well-being Index in Kazakhstan. Manila: ADB; 2023. doi:10.22617/SPR230209
 - » STATEC Luxembourg. Indicateurs complémentaires au PIB – Bien-être (PIBien-être 2018). Luxembourg: STATEC; 2018. Available from: <https://statistiques.public.lu/dam-assets/catalogue-publications/PIBien-etre/2018/pibien-etre-18.pdf>
 - » Utrecht University. Better Well-being Index. Available from: <https://www.uu.nl/en/research/institutions-for-open-societies/better-well-being/better-well-being-index>
 - » Government of Ireland. A Well-being Framework for Ireland. Available from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-the- taoiseach/campaigns/a-well-being-framework-for-ireland/>
 - » Office for National Statistics (ONS). UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard. Available from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/ukmeasuresofnationalwellbeing/dashboard>
 - » Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT). The Equitable and Sustainable Well-being Framework in Italy. Paris: OECD; 2022. Available from: https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2022/11/the-equitable-and-sustainable-well-being-framework-in-italy_84b03a0c/4f48c504-en.pdf
 - » Welsh Government. National Well-being Indicators and Milestones 2024: Quality Report. Cardiff: Welsh Government; 2024. Available from: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2024/9/4/1727339441/national-well-being-indicators-and-milestones-2024-quality-report.pdf>
 - » Toyo University. Development of an integrated well-being scale for Japan. Japanese Society and Culture Working Paper Series. 2023. Available from: https://gensoken.toyo.ac.jp/context/japanese-society-and-culture/article/1089/viewcontent/Development_of_an_Integrated_Well_Being_Scale_for_Japan.pdf
 - » New Zealand Treasury. Te Tai Waiora: Wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand 2022. Wellington: The Treasury; 2022. Available from: <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-report/te-tai-waiora-2022>
-

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS

Centre for Research in Wellbeing and Happiness (CRWBH), FLAME University, Pune, is envisaged to foster interdisciplinary thoughts and ideas encompassing subjective aspects of wellbeing through a social-science lens. It is a pioneering research initiative established at FLAME University, dedicated to addressing challenges related to individual and societal wellbeing by integrating objective and subjective dimensions within the Indian context. We aim to conduct academic and policy research in the areas allied to wellbeing, focusing on the interaction between objective and subjective measurements. The centre aims to explore and advance the understanding of wellbeing beyond conventional social and economic metrics, by focusing on subjective aspects through a comprehensive social science perspective. It seeks to incorporate diverse factors of wellbeing into academic, research, and policy discussions to foster holistic societal development.

Declaration: The study was supported by FLAME University, Pune. However, FLAME University is not responsible for the content, findings, or opinions presented in this document. These are solely the responsibility of the authors.

Contributors:

Sunil Rajpal, *Assistant Professor*, FLAME University, Pune, India.

Neelima VP, *Research Analyst (Former)*, CRWBH, FLAME University, Pune, India.

Mohit Pandey, *Research Consultant*, CRWBH, FLAME University, Pune, India.

Shreya Ronanki, *Research Analyst*, CRWBH, FLAME University, Pune, India.

Ishika Pahuja, *PhD Scholar*, FLAME University, Pune, India.

Anushka Ramesh, *FSP*, FLAME University, Pune, India.

Nikita Suri, *Student Intern*, CRWBH, FLAME University, Pune, India.

Designed:

Dhananjay Upadhyay and Pannita Jain



Gate No. 1270, Lavale, Off. Pune
Bengaluru Highway, Pune - 412115,
Maharashtra, India.
<https://www.flame.edu.in/>