

Measuring National Well-being - Domains and Measures - September 2013

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Abstract

This article is published as part of the ONS Measuring National Well-being Programme. The programme aims to produce accepted and trusted measures of the well-being of the nation - how the UK as a whole is doing. The article outlines the latest changes to the measures of national well-being and is part of the ongoing refinement of measures. Also published today is an updated National Well-being Wheel of Measures and National Well-being interactive graphs.

Introduction

The aim of the MNW programme is to 'develop and publish an accepted and trusted set of National Statistics which help people to monitor national well-being'. Critical to achieving this aim is the development of an agreed set of domains and measures.

The initial list of national well-being domains and measures was developed based on responses to the National Debate (which took place between November 2010 and April 2011), existing research and international initiatives.

The measures were the subject of a public consultation which ran between October 2011 and January 2012. A summary and discussion of responses received was published in July 2012, [Measuring National Well-being: Report on consultation responses on proposed domains and measures. \(524.4 Kb Pdf\)](#) No significant changes were made to the set of measures at that time.

In May 2013 [Measuring National Well-being – Review of domains and measures, 2013](#) was published. This honoured a commitment made in November 2012 in [Measuring National Well-being: Life in the UK, 2012](#) that ONS would 'review and further refine domains and measures of well-being and the criteria used to select them'. Feedback was invited on the changes made in this review, resulting in the further refined set of measures published today.

ONS seek and welcome feedback about the national well-being domains and measures. Please send comments to nationalwell-being@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Summary of changes to measures

This section summarises the changes made to national well-being measures since the last publication in May 2013.

- A 'Population mental well-being' measure has been added to the personal well-being domain.
- A 'Median household income' measure has been added to the personal finance domain and the 'Real household actual income per head' measure has been removed from the economy domain.
- The calculation has changed for the 'Has a spouse, family member or friend to rely on if they have a serious problem' measure in the Our relationships domain.
- In the Natural environment domain, the source for 'Energy consumed within the UK from renewable sources' has changed so the measure is on a UK territory basis.

Explanation of changes to measures

This section explains the changes made to national well-being measures since the last publication in May 2013.

1. A 'Population mental well-being' measure has been added to the personal well-being domain.

ONS has previously committed to the inclusion of a measure of mental well-being from the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). The addition of this new measure honours this commitment and is supported by the Department of Health.

2. A 'Median household income' measure has been added to the personal finance domain and the 'Real household actual income per head' measure has been removed from the economy domain.

There is support for using median household income as the preferred measure for indicating how changes in GDP per capita affect average households, for example in the London School of Economics (LSE) Growth Commission report 'Investing for prosperity'¹.

With the inclusion of median household income, it was decided to remove real household actual income per head to avoid any confusion between these measures of household income.

3. The calculation has changed for the 'Has a spouse, family member or friend to rely on if they have a serious problem' measure in the Our relationships domain.

The current measure includes those who have either a spouse or family member or friend who they can rely on 'a lot'. The calculations used for the May 2013 release included responses of 'a little', 'somewhat' or 'a lot' but resulted in a lower figure as respondents were only included where they had a spouse and family member and friend who they could rely on.

4. In the Natural environment domain, the source for 'Energy consumed within the UK from renewable sources' has changed so the measure is on a UK territory basis.

For the May 2013 publication this measure was sourced from AEA Energy and Environment and ONS and was on a resident basis. The source has been changed to the Department for Energy and Environment (DECC) so the measure is now on a UK territory basis, consistent with the 'Total green house gas emissions' measure, also sourced from DECC.

Details of which measures data has been updated since the May 2013 publication can be found in the [Measuring National Well-being Domains and Measures, September 2013 \(1.56 Mb Excel sheet\)](#) spreadsheet.

Notes

1. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/researchAndExpertise/units/growthCommission/documents/home.aspx>

Where to find domains and measures data

There are now 41 measures of national well-being split across 10 domains. Information and data for the latest release of domains and measures is available in various formats:

- [National Well-being wheel of measures \(3.75 Mb Pdf\)](#) – includes the latest data for all measures (as available at August 2013) in PDF 'print and keep' format
- [National Well-being interactive wheel of measures](#) – an interactive tool which includes the latest data for all measures (as available at August 2013) and a previous period for comparison
- [Measuring National Well-being Domains and Measures, September 2013 \(1.56 Mb Excel sheet\)](#) – an Excel file with time series data and information about sources for the measures
- [National Well-being interactive graph](#) – an interactive tool showing a range of measures by region and country

Further national well-being analysis and articles are available from the Measuring National Well-being pages on the ONS website at [Measuring National Well-being](#)

About the ONS Measuring National Well-being Programme

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This article is published as part of the ONS Measuring National Well-being Programme.

The programme aims to produce accepted and trusted measures of the well-being of the nation - how the UK as a whole is doing.

Measuring National Well-being is about looking at 'GDP and beyond'. It includes headline indicators in areas such as health, relationships, job satisfaction, economic security, education, environmental conditions and measures of 'subjective well-being' (individuals' assessment of their own well-being).

Find out more on the [Measuring National Well-being](#) website pages.

Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

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