

Measuring National Well-being: Life in the UK, 2012

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Abstract

Measuring National Well-being: Life in the UK 2012 provides a unique overview of well-being in the UK today. The report is the first snapshot of life in the UK to be delivered by the Measuring National Well-being programme and will be updated and published annually. Well-being is discussed in terms of the economy, people and the environment. Information such as the unemployment rate or number of crimes against the person are presented alongside data on people's thoughts and feelings, for example, satisfaction with our jobs or leisure time and fear of crime. Together, a richer picture on 'how society is doing' is provided.

Executive summary

Two years ago, the ONS launched the Measuring National Well-being (MNW) programme. The aim is to 'develop and publish an accepted and trusted set of National Statistics which help people understand and monitor well-being'. Traditional measures of progress such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have long been recognised as an incomplete picture of the state of the nation. Other economic, social and environmental measures are needed alongside GDP to provide a complete picture of how society is doing.

The Economy

During the first part of the millennium, incomes and GDP were rising and debt levels were rising slowly. The recession in 2008 led to a sharp fall in GDP and impacted on income and debt levels at both the national and household level. Real income has fallen as inflation has grown faster than incomes, and the public sector debt ratio has increased. GDP has started to recover, but at a slower rate than before the recession.

- Real household actual income per head (RHAI) in the UK grew from £16,865 to £18,159 between 2002 and 2008, before falling to near 2005 levels in 2011 (£17,862).
- UK Public Sector Net Debt grew between 32.5% and 42.8% of GDP between 2003 and 2008 before rising to 65.7% in 2011.
- GDP per head increased during the first part of the millennium, fell by 6.1% between 2007 and 2009, before rising again between 2009 and 2011.

People

The recession has led to a higher proportion who are unemployed, with a particular impact on the young, and in 2009/10 more than 1 in 8 (12.3%) of us were finding it quite or very difficult to manage financially. Life satisfaction presents a more resilient picture, having remained broadly stable throughout the last decade and the most recent figures for those who report being somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their social life and job standing at 67% and 77.8% respectively and satisfaction with our family life averaging 8.2 out of 10 (where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied). In terms of our health which is one of the most important influences on our well-being, our 'healthy' life expectancy has increased as has our overall satisfaction with our health.

- There has been a shift from employment to unemployment since the beginning of the recession, with the young being the worst affected. In Jun-Aug 2012 the UK unemployment rate for those aged 16-24 was 20.5% compared with 7.9% for those aged 16 and over.
- In the 2009/10 in the UK, 12.3 per cent were finding it quite or very difficult to manage financially.
- In 2011, just over three-quarters (75.9 per cent) of people aged 16 and over in the UK rated their overall life satisfaction at the medium or high level.
- Healthy life expectancy at birth in 2008-2010 was age 63.5 for males and 65.7 for females, in the UK, increases of 2.8 and 3.3 years respectively since 2000-02.
- In the UK in 2009/10, 68.3 per cent were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their health.

The Environment

Long term progress is being made with protecting our local and global environment. More than half of us visited our natural environment at least once a week in the 12 months prior to interview in 2011/12 and nationally, the proportion of protected areas, including land and sea has increased. Globally, emissions and energy consumption have fallen and use of renewable energy has increased during the last decade.

- In England in 2011/12, over half of us visited our natural environment at least once per week in the 12 months prior to interview.
- The total extent of land and sea protected in the UK through national and international protected areas increased from 3.7 million hectares in 2005 to over 7.5 million hectares in 2011.
- Emissions of carbon monoxide, the most prevalent air pollutant, has more than halved since 2000.
- Use of renewable and waste sources more than doubled between 2000 and 2010 from 2.7 million tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe) to 7.1 Mtoe.

Background

The Measuring National Well-being programme began in November 2010 with a six month National Debate, asking, 'what matters', to understand what measures of well-being should include. Following 175 events, with 2,750 people and 34,000 responses received online or via other channels, ONS developed a framework for measuring national well-being. The framework consists of 10 areas or 'domains', including areas such as Health, Education and What we do; and 40 headline measures

of well-being, for example, the unemployment rate, satisfaction with our health, or levels of crime. These measures and others have been used to describe life in the UK 2012, under the headings, the Economy, People and the Environment, and can be seen in the interactive wheel of measures¹.

Future plans

‘Better policies for better lives’ were words used by the OECD to describe the importance of going beyond GDP when measuring progress and national well-being. The snapshot of life in the UK presented is only based on a small selection of headline indicators. There is more to do to fully understand national well-being and what actions are needed to improve it. In particular, there is an important story in what lies beneath - where are the deviations from the norms and why, are there particular sub groups, for example, age groups, ethnic groups, those that are vulnerable for some reason or some other cluster which can be identified which differs considerably from others? Are there any particular geographical areas where things could be improved? Are we looking at the right measures?

The next phase of the Measuring National Well-being programme is to identify and explore in more detail those areas which deviate from ‘norms’ and to:

- Review and further refine domains and measures of well-being and the criteria used to select them;
- Develop means of appropriately assessing whether domains and/or measures are getting better or worse;
- Research drivers of well-being

Notes

1. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/interactive/well-being-wheel-of-measures/index.html>

Introduction and background

In November 2010, the ONS set up the Measuring National Well-being (MNW) programme. The aim is to ‘develop and publish an accepted and trusted set of National Statistics which help people understand and monitor well-being’.

This report begins with a background to well-being, the MNW programme and next steps. This is followed by an examination of life in the UK 2012, which looks at well-being under three broad headings including: Economic, Social and Environmental well-being.

What is National Well-being?

The well-being of the nation is influenced by a broad range of factors including economic performance, quality of life, the state of the environment, sustainability, equality, as well as individual well-being.

Measuring ‘how a country is doing’ has until now largely rested on traditional economic measures such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). But economists and statisticians have always acknowledged that GDP does not capture everything that determines society’s well-being and was not designed to do so. For example, fuel consumed in traffic jams adds to GDP but is unlikely to increase well-being; the environment and skills of the nation’s workers are important determinants of a nation’s future economic well-being but are not adequately represented by existing economic statistics.

Through supplementing economic measures, such as GDP, with measures which reflect social and environmental well-being, national well-being looks at the state of the nation through a broader lens.

Why is National Well-being important?

‘Better policies for better lives’ were the words used by the OECD at the recent world forum on statistics, knowledge and policy, New Delhi, November 2012, to describe the importance of going beyond GDP when measuring progress and national well-being.

In particular, having a more complete picture of national well-being will lead to:

- better understanding of policy impacts on well-being;
- better allocation of scarce resources via more informed policy evaluation and development;
- comparisons between how different sub-groups of the population are doing, across a range of topics;
- more informed decisions on where to live, which career to choose, based on well-being information for that area/organisation;
- assessments of the performance of government;
- comparisons between the UK with other countries.

How is information on well-being being used?

Measures of national well-being as defined by the MNW programme are still very much under development. It is therefore unrealistic to expect to be able to provide evidence of any major decisions that have been heavily influenced by well-being at this stage. However, the examples that follow demonstrate that the foundations are very much in place in UK policy:

- **Well-being data being made available at council and neighbourhood levels for more informed decision making:** subjective well-being data have been analysed and promoted at the local level and modelled against the geo-demographic (ACORN) profile of residents in each neighbourhood. The analysis has highlighted variation in well-being between neighbourhoods, and enables comparisons with local data and knowledge by local authorities, councillors and communities. (Department for Communities and Local Government)
- **Well-being of job seekers:** questions on subjective well-being have been used to track well-being of job seekers allowance applicants. Those with poor mental health and low subjective well-being were found to take longer to find work. Recommendation that connections could be made between Job Centres and Mental Health trusts to address the issues. (Department for Work and Pensions)

- **Impact of community learning:** recently published research shows adult learning has substantial impact on life satisfaction, well-being and health, including mental health. Techniques from Green Book Annex on social cost-benefit analysis were used to value the improvement to life satisfaction resulting from an adult learning course. This better understanding will lead to more informed decisions when allocating budget for Community Learning. (Business Innovation and Skills)
- **Well-being and the National Citizen Service:** a pilot for the National Citizen Service evaluated the subjective well-being of young people before and after their participation in the service. The results show increases in subjective well-being among participants, before and after involvement, compared with a control group of peers over the same period. (Cabinet Office)

Separate initiatives to investigate well-being are being undertaken by the devolved governments. These include: the National Performance Framework, which forms part of the 'Scotland performs'¹ initiative and the recently published 'Analysis of subjective well-being in Wales: Evidence from the Annual Population Survey'². These initiatives reflect the specific needs of the countries they represent.

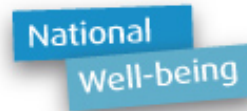
Internationally, there is considerable interest in how a shared view of well-being and progress can be produced. The EU's 'GDP and Beyond' initiative, the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi commission) and OECD's project on 'Measuring progress of Societies' and Better Life initiative look to measure the progress of society according to the 'triple bottom line' of the economy, society and the environment.

What has the Measuring National Well-being programme delivered so far?

The MNW programme began with a six month national debate asking people, 'what matters', in order to understand what should be included in measures of national well-being. ONS ran 175 events around the UK, involving around 7,250 people and received more than 34,000 responses, some from organisations representing thousands more.

Figure 1:

The Measuring National Well-being journey



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Analysis of the debate findings, existing research and international initiatives led to the development of a framework for measuring national well-being. The framework consists of a set of 10 areas or 'domains' and 40 headline measures of well-being. Headline measures reflect our quality of life, the state of the natural environment as well as the performance of the economy and people's assessment of their own well-being. The measures are grouped into a set of domains covering areas such as individual well-being, health, personal relationships and what we do. The domains and measures were consulted upon and will continue to be developed and refined throughout the programme. A summary of domains and measures and latest status is available in Annex A. An interactive 'wheel of measures'³ has also been developed and shows the latest data for each measure.

Alongside the domains and measures, a range of supporting outputs have been published. Measures of economic well-being which better reflect the household and individual position, as opposed to the national picture have been published in outputs such as the 'Economic position of households'; Environmental Accounts have been published which measure the impact the economy has on the Environment; questions on individual well-being have been added to ONS household surveys; interactive maps and graphs⁴ have been developed and a series of articles which provide more information on each of the domains have been published. A summary of the progress to date is provided in Figure 1. Links to the domain articles are provided in Annex B.

Future developments

Critical to the success of the MNW programme has been and will continue to be user engagement. ONS regularly consult with a broad audience including analysts, policy makers, academics, the public, the media and others, and will continue to do so. A National Statistician's Advisory Forum and a Technical Advisory Group have also been established.

The next phase of the MNW programme is to identify and explore in more detail those areas which deviate from 'norms' and to investigate what if any relationships exist between the factors affecting well-being.

In the short term, the MNW programme will:

- review and further refine domains and measures of well-being and the criteria used to select them;
- develop means of appropriately assessing whether domains and/or measures are getting better or worse;
- report on subjective well-being regression analysis;
- explore the social and economic position of different groups using 2011 Census data, to identify those at risk of social exclusion;
- further develop visual tools for better access to well-being data.

Longer term, the programme will:

- investigate international comparisons of economic well-being;
- analyse the distribution of real income, wealth, foreign direct investment and material well-being;
- develop experimental estimates of the value of childcare in household production;
- analyse social impacts on national well-being, including health, education, crime and personal relationships;
- further test the subjective well-being measures;
- further analyse the drivers of subjective well-being among different sub-groups of the population and over time;
- further explore social capital and latest statistical developments.

Notes

1. www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms
2. www.wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/latestresearch/wellbeing/?jsessionid=E12847E54DBC1AD0B6F69108EE50C79E?lang=en
3. www.ons.gov.uk/ons/interactive/well-being-wheel-of-measures/index.html
4. www.ons.gov.uk/ons/interactive/well-being-interactive-graph/index.html

Life in the UK, 2012 - Key information

About this section

This section summarises well-being in the UK in 2012.

- Where possible, data are presented for the UK. Where this is not the case, the best available geography is used.
- Data are the latest available at the end of September 2012, with the exception of economy measures which reflect more up to date data published in the Measuring National Well-being: Economy article
- As a guide, trends in the data have been considered over a 10 year time period. Longer time periods are included where appropriate, for example, for changes in life expectancy. Shorter time periods reflect data availability.
- Objective data, for example the number of reported crimes, or the unemployment rate, are provided alongside data about how people think and feel, for example, fear of crime, or satisfaction with one's job. Data presented in this way lead to a richer understanding of life in the UK.

Key facts about the UK

- In 2012, the population of England and Wales, according to the 2011 Census figures was 56.1 million, with 53.0 million in England and 3.1 million in Wales.
- The UK population has grown from 59.1 million in mid-2001 to 62.3 million at mid-2010, the latest available estimate.
- The UK population is ageing. At the time of the 2011 Census, one in six of the population (16.4 %) were aged 65 and over in England and Wales. In 2011, there were 430,000 residents aged 90 and over compared with 340,000 in 2001. The median age of the population in England and Wales was 39.
- The UK economy is the seventh largest economy in the world. After adjusting for inflation Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was £1.4 trillion in 2011. The economy had grown by 0.9 per cent since 2010 but was still 2.3 per cent below its pre-recession peak in 2007.

The Economy - Introduction

The Economy section of this report will cover the measures proposed in the economy and personal finance domains. It will begin with an overview of the national economy, which affects our well-being by impacting on us financially. It will then discuss what this means for us personally, how it affects our income and wealth and how we feel about this.

The Economy - National Economy

“A sense that everybody has access to a good standard of living” (ONS, 2011, response to “what things matter to you?” from the National Debate)

The economy covers the set of activities related to the production and distribution of goods and services. Its performance will impact on all of us financially and will therefore affect our national well-being.

This section will discuss the four headline measures of economic well-being, namely Real¹ Net National Income (RNNI) per head; Real Household Actual Income (RHA) per head; inflation rate (as measured by the Consumer Prices Index) and Public Sector Net Debt (PSND) as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It will also include GDP as a reference point for the other economic measures outlined above.

A wider and more comprehensive analysis of GDP and the four proposed measures of economic well-being is available in *Measuring National Well-being: The Economy*². Unemployment is covered in the People section.

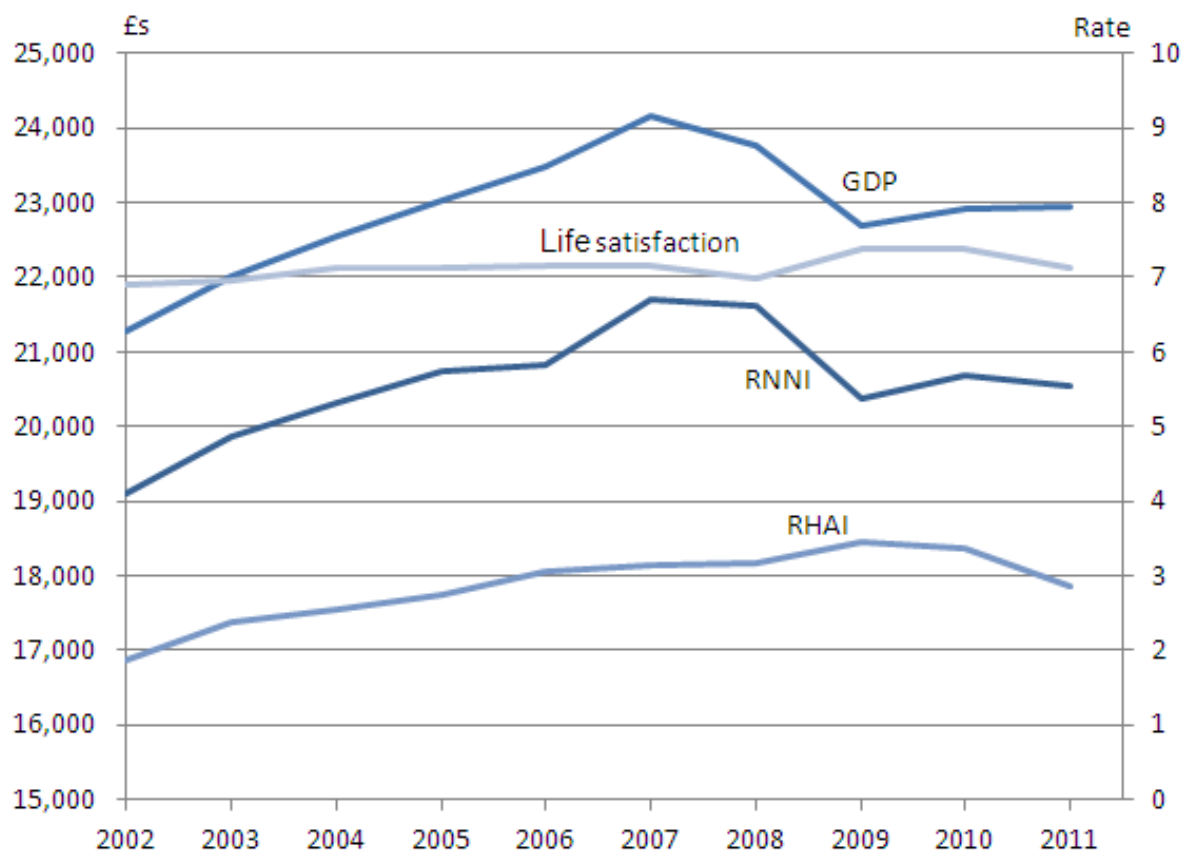
Economic measures and life satisfaction

It is widely reported that as GDP grows, the strength of the positive relationship between income and reported levels of happiness levels off. (Easterlin, 1974; Allin, 2007; Thomas and Evans, 2010). While critics of this paradox argue that this is due to the nature of GDP (Stevenson and Wolfers,

2008), time series data from multiple countries illustrate that despite large increases in GDP per capita, levels of life satisfaction have moved differently.

Figure 2: GDP per head, Real (1) Net National Income per head, Real Household Actual Income (2) per head and Life Satisfaction (3) over time

United Kingdom



Source: Office for National Statistics, UKEA and Blue Book; World Database of Happiness

Notes:

1. 'Real' is calculated to exclude the effects of price inflation.
2. Real household actual income = Real household actual gross disposable income.
3. Life satisfaction data are as a proportion of Great Britain respondents who stated that they were fairly or very satisfied when answering the question: 'On the whole how satisfied are you with the life you lead?' – with the responses 1) not at all satisfied; 2) not very satisfied; 3) fairly satisfied; 4) very satisfied. This was then increased to a 10 point scale by linear stretch. For an explanation of linear stretch refer to Veenhoven, R. Trends in Nations, World Database of Happiness, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Introductory text [hppt:// worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl](http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl) (2002-2011). The data used is for the Autumn quarter where available.

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Figure 2 shows that over the last 9 years GDP per head, RNNI per head and RHA1 per head have moved differently to life satisfaction in the UK, though over the past 4 years, RHA1 has followed a similar pattern to life satisfaction. GDP per head increased during the first part of the millennium but, as a result of the global recession, it decreased sharply by 6.1% between 2007 and 2009. Since then, GDP has started to rise again albeit at a slower rate than it was growing previously.

National Income

“material living standards are more closely associated with NNI and consumption than with GDP” (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009)

A more appropriate economic measure of well-being is RNNI per head (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009). That is the total national income divided by the population.

Figure 2 shows that RNNI per head consistently grew between 2002 and 2007, following a similar pattern to GDP. Between 2008 and 2009, average incomes dropped by 5.8%. RNNI per head began increasing again in 2010, before falling again in 2011 whereas, GDP per head increased during this period.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction remained broadly stable throughout the last decade. According to the World Database of Happiness, between 2007 and 2008, life satisfaction in the UK dropped by 0.17 points (from 7.15 - 6.98 out of 10) but appeared to recover more quickly than GDP or RNNI. Between 2008 and 2009 there was an increase of 0.4 points taking average life satisfaction to 7.38 out of 10. From 2009 onwards, life satisfaction fell once more, to 7.12 out of 10.

The fall in life satisfaction between 2007 and 2008 coincides with the beginning of the recession. This could perhaps be explained by an initial reaction to the news of the recession, whereby people were concerned about their finances and what the recession may mean for them. However, the recession was followed by a period when a person’s income was not immediately affected, perhaps explaining the increase in life satisfaction between 2008 and 2009.

Household income

More recently, household incomes have begun to decrease and this is shown in the pattern of RHA1 in Figure 2. RHA1 per head measures the disposable income a household has left after deductions such as taxes and pensions. It is adjusted to include the extra benefit to households of goods and services that are free or subsidised, for example healthcare in the UK. This also allows better international comparisons of material well-being. RHA1 moves more consistently with life satisfaction than RNNI per head and GDP per head.

‘It gives me huge reassurance to know that I don't have to worry that I may not be able to pay for hospital treatment or educating my children and great reassurance to know that the majority of fellow citizens feel the same way’ (ONS, 2011, response to the National Debate)

RHAI went through a sustained period of growth from 2002 until the recession in 2008 (from £16,865 to £18,159). At the beginning of the recession, growth in RHAI continued to grow, as employment did not fall as much as expected, given the size of the recession; mortgage payments fell due to low interest rates and taxes and benefits provided a stabilising effect³. Average household incomes peaked in 2009 but due to higher prices (inflation) and the ongoing recession, real household average incomes fell back in 2011 close to levels seen in 2005.

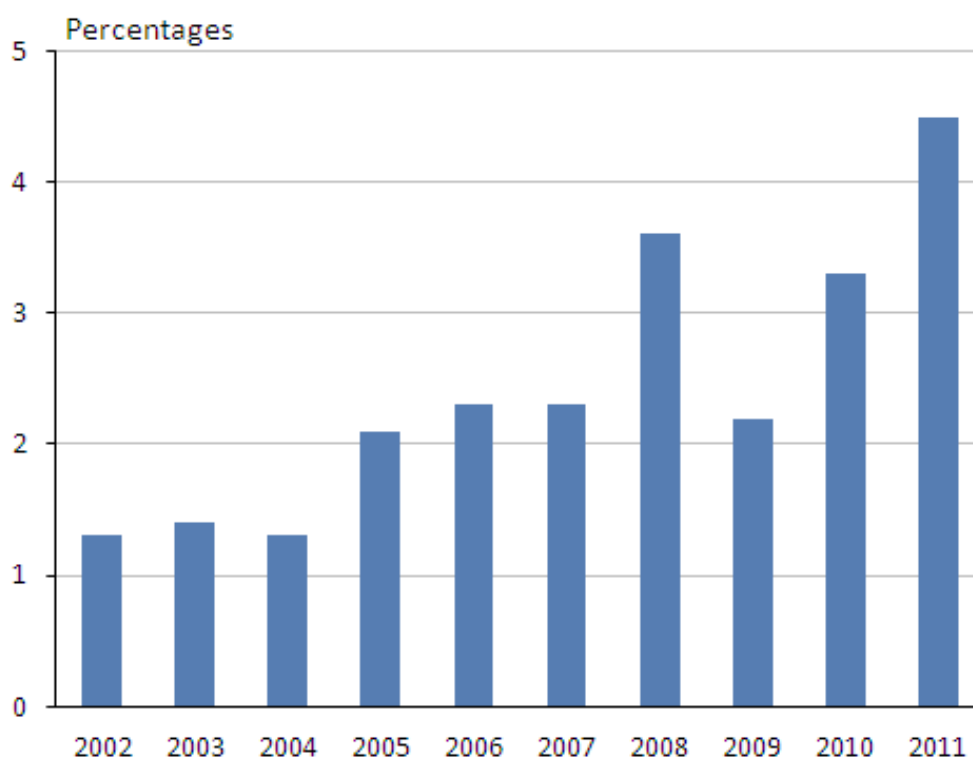
The fall in RHAI coincided with a second fall in life satisfaction that occurred in between 2009 and 2011 (from 7.38 to 7.12 out of 10) and is more indicative of how the individual's income was affected by the recession, than GDP or RNNI.

Rate of Inflation

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) measures the changes in the average prices of goods and services in the UK. Changes in the CPI over a 12 month period are referred to as the rate of inflation⁴. The inflation rate decreases the real value of income and wealth.

Figure 3: Inflation rate measured by CPI (1)

United Kingdom



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Consumer Prices Index.

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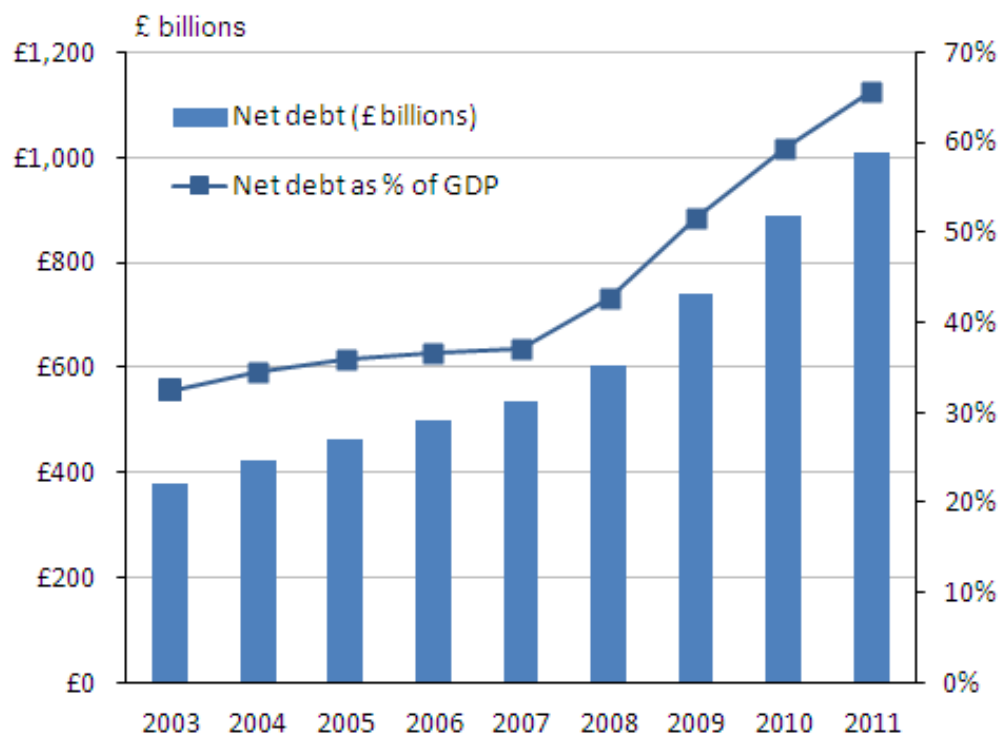
The UK inflation rate grew steadily from around 1.3% in 2002 to around 3.6% in 2008 (**Figure 3**). Monthly figures show that by September 2008 the rate of inflation peaked at 5.2% but fell back to 1.1% in September 2009. Due to factors such as high oil and energy prices, the rate of inflation rose steadily from this point to peak at 4.5% in 2011. The effect of this has been to erode real incomes. This means that prices have been rising faster than people's incomes and over time, people have found their income will not stretch as far.

Public Sector Net Debt

Public Sector Net Debt (PSND) as a percentage of GDP⁴ measures total financial liabilities (for example any type of debt the government owes), less any financial assets (such as bank deposits). Debt is an important measure of sustainability⁵ as it indicates the extent to which the burden of paying for goods and services has been transferred from the present to the future.

Figure 4: Public sector net debt as a percentage of GDP (1)

United Kingdom



Source: Public Sector Finances, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Temporary effects of Financial interventions are excluded.

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Figure 4 shows that UK PSND grew between 2003 and 2008 (rising from 32.5% to 42.8%) before accelerating in the past few years. It has increased from 42.8% of GDP in 2008 to 65.7% in 2011, when it exceeded one trillion pounds for the first time. If PSND is not reduced, the effect may be to limit spending possibilities for future generations due to the burden of debt interest payments.

Notes

1. All the economic indicators used in this section are “real”, which means they have been calculated to exclude the effects of price inflation. This enables a more meaningful comparison of different time periods.
2. [The economy](#)
3. As employment falls, people pay less in the way of taxes (income tax) and claim more in the way of benefits (unemployment benefits). Therefore the income that people used to get from wages (minus the amount they paid in income taxes) is replaced by income from benefits – lessening the extent of any fall in income from unemployment.
4. It is constructed by measuring the change in the prices of a representative basket of goods and services. The changes in prices of different items are weighted by the relative proportion of household expenditure each good and service attracts. Overall, an average change is taken and then converted into a percentage form.
5. It does not include the temporary effects of financial interventions (e.g. bank bail outs) since, in the long run, it is intended that they will be reversed and will have negligible effects on PSND.
6. Sustainability in this context means whether the extent to which this level of well-being can last over time.

The Economy - Personal finance

“I would hate for someone to be worrying about whether they will have something to eat or a roof over their head. Also doing other things including recreation activities improves your mental well-being which in turn affects your general well-being but you can only do those things if you are in a good financial position.” (ONS, Well-being)

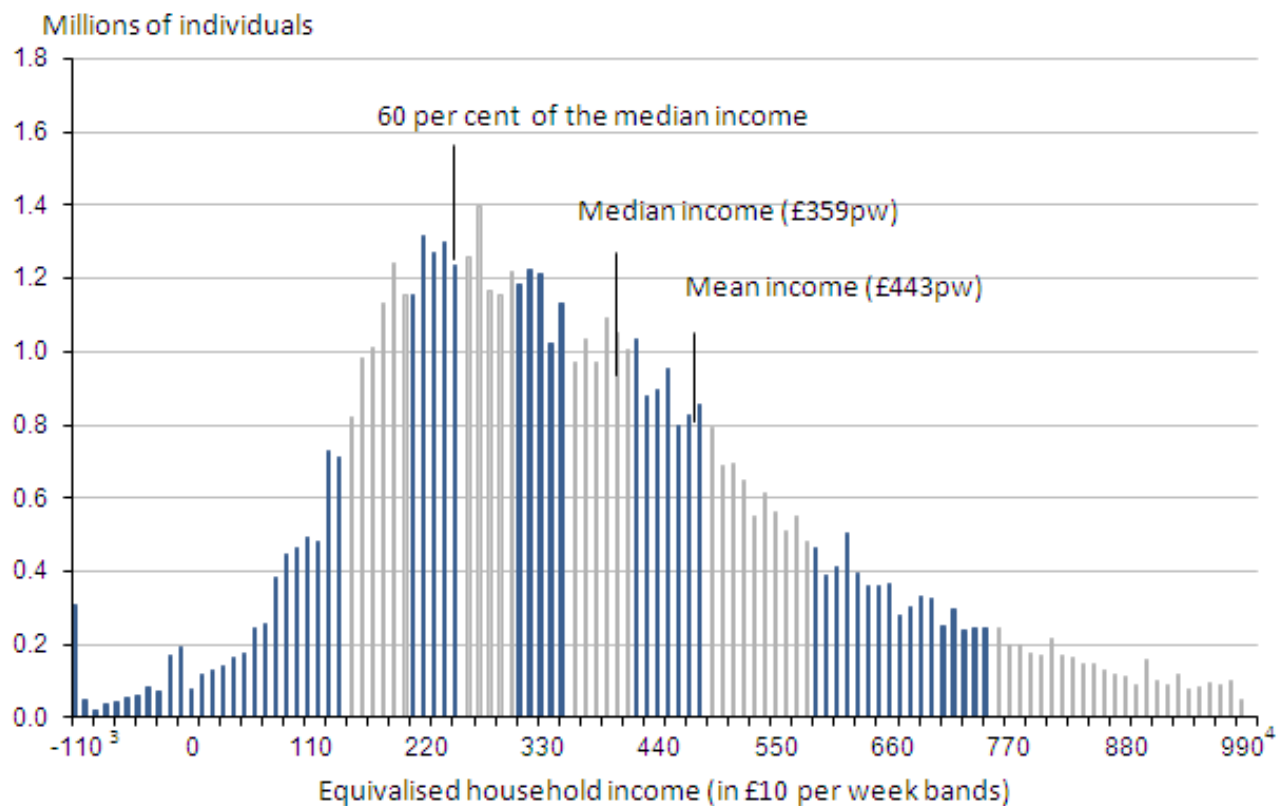
Personal finance relates to the individual and household, both now and in the future. During the National Debate respondents were asked ‘what things in life matter to you?’ The importance of having adequate income or wealth to cover basic needs was highlighted by 45% of respondents. A wider and more comprehensive analysis of personal finance is available in *Measuring National Well-being: Personal Finance*¹.

Poverty

A household is currently described as in poverty if its income is less than 60% of the median² net household income, before and after housing costs³. Households with above average poverty rates include large families, workless households, lone parents and those without educational qualifications. In 2010/11 median income after housing costs in the UK was £359 per week, a rise from £277 per week in 1994/95 but a fall from £373 per week in 2009/10.

Figure 5: Income distribution for the total population (After Housing Costs) (1,2) 2010/11

United Kingdom



Source: Households Below Average Income, Department for Work and Pensions

Notes:

1. Equivalised household disposable income before deduction of housing costs (in £10 bands), using OECD equivalisation scale. The £10 bands are grouped into decile groups in alternating colours. For an explanation of linear stretch refer to Veenhoven, R. Trends in Nations, World Database of Happiness, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Introductory text available at www.worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl
2. Negative incomes BHC (Before Housing Costs) are reset to zero, but negative AHC (After Housing Costs) incomes calculated from the adjusted BHC incomes are possible. Where incomes have been adjusted to zero BHC, income AHC is derived from the adjusted BHC income.
3. There were also an additional 0.3 million individuals with income below -£100 per week.
4. There were also an additional 3.0 million individuals with income above £1,000 per week.

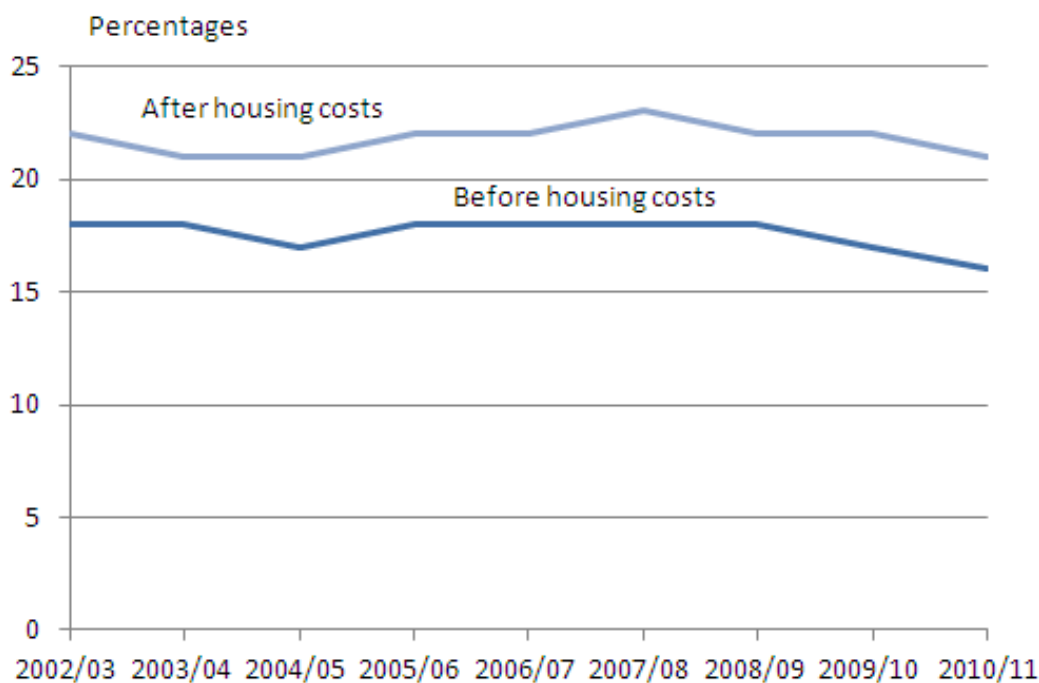
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Figure 5 illustrates that the income distribution for 2010/11 disposable incomes, which is the income left after housing costs are taken out, is not even. There is a much greater concentration of people at lower levels of weekly income, with nearly two-thirds of individuals living in households with a disposable weekly income lower than the mean of £443 per week⁴ (DWP, 2012).

Figure 6: The percentage of individuals living in households with less than 60 per cent median income

United Kingdom



Source: Households Below Average Income, Department for Work and Pensions

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In 2010/11, just over 1 in 5 (21%) people in the UK, lived in poverty after housing costs. Before housing costs this figure was 16%. **Figure 6** shows that between 2002/03 and 2010/11 there was a small decrease in the proportion of individuals living in households where the income falls below 60% of contemporary median income, either before or after housing costs (from 18% to 16% and 22% to 21% respectively). The reduction in the percentage below the poverty rate between 2009/10 and 2010/11 is in part attributable to a fall in median income rather than any substantial improvement of the financial situation of the people at the bottom of the distribution. Usually reductions in poverty are driven by incomes at the bottom of the distribution growing faster than incomes in the middle (DWP, 2012).

Satisfaction with household income

While over 1 in 5 (21%) live in poverty after housing costs, figures from the Understanding Society Survey show that only 5.8% adults aged 16 and over in the UK were completely dissatisfied with

their income. Those in the North East were most likely to report being completely dissatisfied with their income (6.9%) (Understanding Society, 2011).

Overall 57.2% were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their income in 2009/10. People in Scotland were most satisfied, with 60% reporting being somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their income.

Table 1: Satisfaction with income of household (1)

United Kingdom (Percentages (2))

Responses	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Completely satisfied	11.1	11.2	10.1	9.7	9.7	9.6	8.5
Mostly satisfied	19.9	21.8	22.0	18.3	20.7	22.4	20.4
Somewhat satisfied	27.4	29.0	27.5	26.6	28.0	28.2	29.5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19.9	19.2	20.1	20.9	20.2	20.1	20.8
Somewhat dissatisfied	11.7	10.7	11.8	12.7	12.0	11.3	11.9
Mostly dissatisfied	5.9	5.0	5.1	6.9	5.6	5.2	5.3
Completely dissatisfied	4.1	3.1	3.4	5.0	3.7	3.2	3.6

Somewhat mostly or completely satisfied	58.4	61.9	59.6	54.6	58.4	60.2	58.5
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Source: British Household Panel Survey

Table notes:

1. Responses to " How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with.....The income of your household ?"
2. The percentages are of those who responded. Estimated percentages are based on the full sample adjusted to UK figures using cross-sectional weights.
3. Responses to earlier waves of the BHPS differ. However, they have always been on a seven point scale varying from completely (or very) satisfied to completely (or very) dissatisfied.

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Figures from the earlier British Household Panel Survey show that between 2002/03 and 2008/09, those somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their household income fluctuated between 54.6 and 61.9% (**Table 1**). In 2008/09, in the middle of the recession, satisfaction dropped to 58.5% from 60.2% in the previous year. There has however been a steady decrease in those who are completely satisfied with their household income throughout the whole period, with a low of 8.5% in 2008/9.

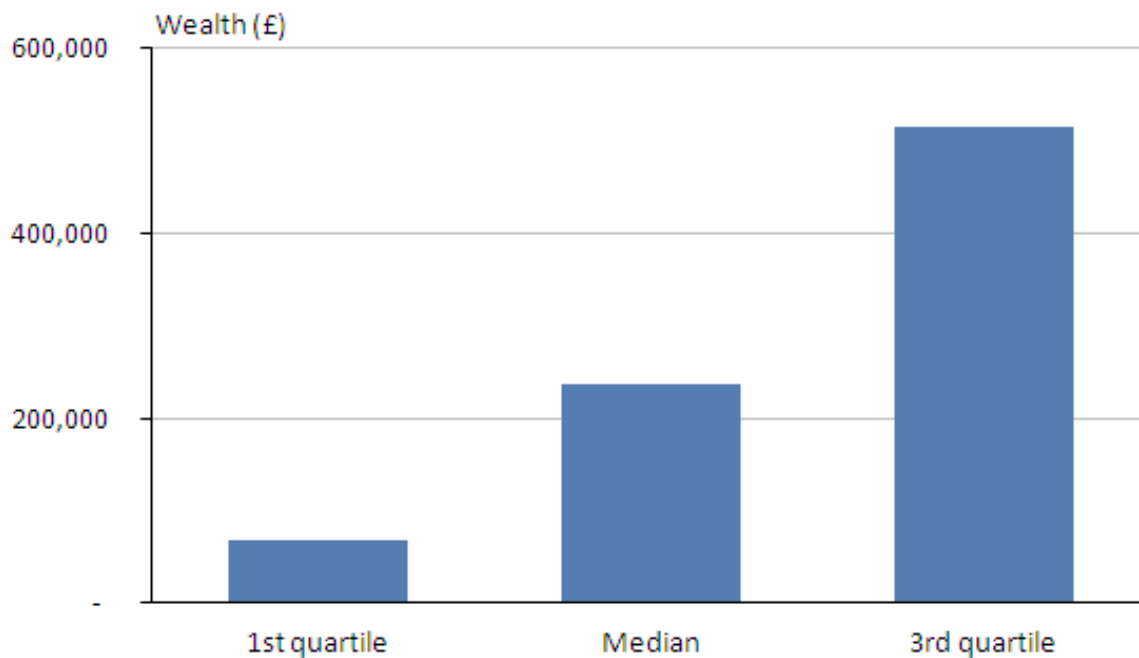
Wealth

It is important to consider income jointly with wealth. Those who have recently had an increase in income may still be paying off debts, while those who have recently had a fall in income may be able to live off wealth.

Wealth can include home ownership, investment schemes, the ownership of shares and the accumulation of wealth, for instance through pensions. It is an important component in the financial position of households as it can be used to fund future consumption and can provide a 'safety net' against loss of income. Estimated median household wealth for Great Britain, including pension wealth, was £236, 973 in 2008/10, this was an increase of around 13% from 2006/08 (£210,313) (ONS WAS).

Figure 7: Total household wealth (1), 2008/10

Great Britain



Source: Wealth and Assets Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Excludes assets held in Trusts (except Child Trust Funds) and any business assets held by households.

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The median value of household wealth masks considerable variation in wealth for households (**Figure 7**). For example, in 2008/10, households a quarter of the way from the top of the distribution (third quartile) of all wealth had around eight times more wealth than those households a quarter of the way up the distribution from the bottom (first quartile) (ONS WAS).

Managing financially

Figures from the Understanding Society Survey show that in 2009/10, 12.3% of adults aged 16 and over in the UK found it quite or very difficult to manage financially. Adults in London were finding it hardest with 15.4% reporting such difficulty. People in the East of England, the South East and Northern Ireland were least likely to report that they found it quite or very difficult to manage financially, with around 11% reporting that they were finding it difficult (Understanding Society, 2011)..

Table 2: Managing financially (1)

United Kingdom (Percentages (2))

Responses	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Living comfortably	32.9	34.2	33.4	31.4	32.4	32.4	28.4
Doing alright	39.8	39.7	39.5	40.0	39.7	39.8	38.2
Just about getting by	21.7	21.3	21.5	22.7	21.8	21.8	25.8
Finding it quite difficult	4.1	3.5	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.3	5.4
Finding it very difficult	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.8	2.0	1.7	2.1
Finding it quite/very difficult	5.6	4.9	5.6	5.9	6.2	6.0	7.5

Source: British Panel Household Survey

Table notes:

1. Responses to " How well would you say you yourself are managing financially these days? Would you say you are.... ?"
2. The percentages are of those who responded. Estimated percentages are based on the full sample adjusted to UK figures using cross-sectional weights.

- Responses to earlier waves of the BHPS differ. However, they have always been on a seven point scale varying from completely (or very) satisfied to completely (or very) dissatisfied.

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Data from the earlier BHPS⁵ (**Table 2**), covering the period between 2002/03 and 2008/09, show that 7.5% of adults aged 16 and over in the UK found it quite or very difficult to manage financially in 2008/09, higher than in any year since 2002/03. During this period there was also a significant decrease in those who feel they are living comfortably (from 32.9% to 28.4%).

Personal finance measures indicate that the current economic downturn has influenced people's ability to cope financially and their feelings about their current financial situation. This is also reflected in expenditure trends that show that households are increasing spending on essential items such as food, housing and utilities while reducing spending on non essentials such as travel, recreation and eating out. In addition, in 2010, the number of households in fuel poverty in the UK had increased to around 4.8 million (approx 19% of all households), a fall of 0.7 million from the previous year. However, there had been an increase of about 1 million households in fuel poverty between 2008 and 2009, continuing an upward trend since 2004. Saving ratios have also increased in the UK suggesting that households are paying debts, borrowing less and saving more.

Notes

- [Measuring National Well-being - Personal Finance](#)
- The numerical value separating the higher half of a sample, a population, or a probability distribution, from the lower half. The median of a finite list of numbers can be found by arranging all the observations from lowest value to highest value and picking the middle one. If there is an even number of observations, then there is no single middle value; the median is then usually defined to be the mean of the two middle values.
- This value of a specific income or 'poverty' depends on the number of individuals in the household, as larger households need more money (although not proportionately more) than smaller ones in order to achieve the same standard of living.
- The mean is equal to the sum of the values divided by the number of values. The mean is the arithmetic average of a set of values, or distribution.
- The British Household Panel Survey was replaced with the Understanding Society Survey in 2009. While the questions are similar the methodology has changed to such an extent that it is not possible to compare the two.

People - Introduction

The People section of this report will cover the measures proposed in the following domains:

- Education and skills,
- Environment
- Governance,
- Health,
- Individual well-being,
- Our relationships,
- What we do,
- Where we live.

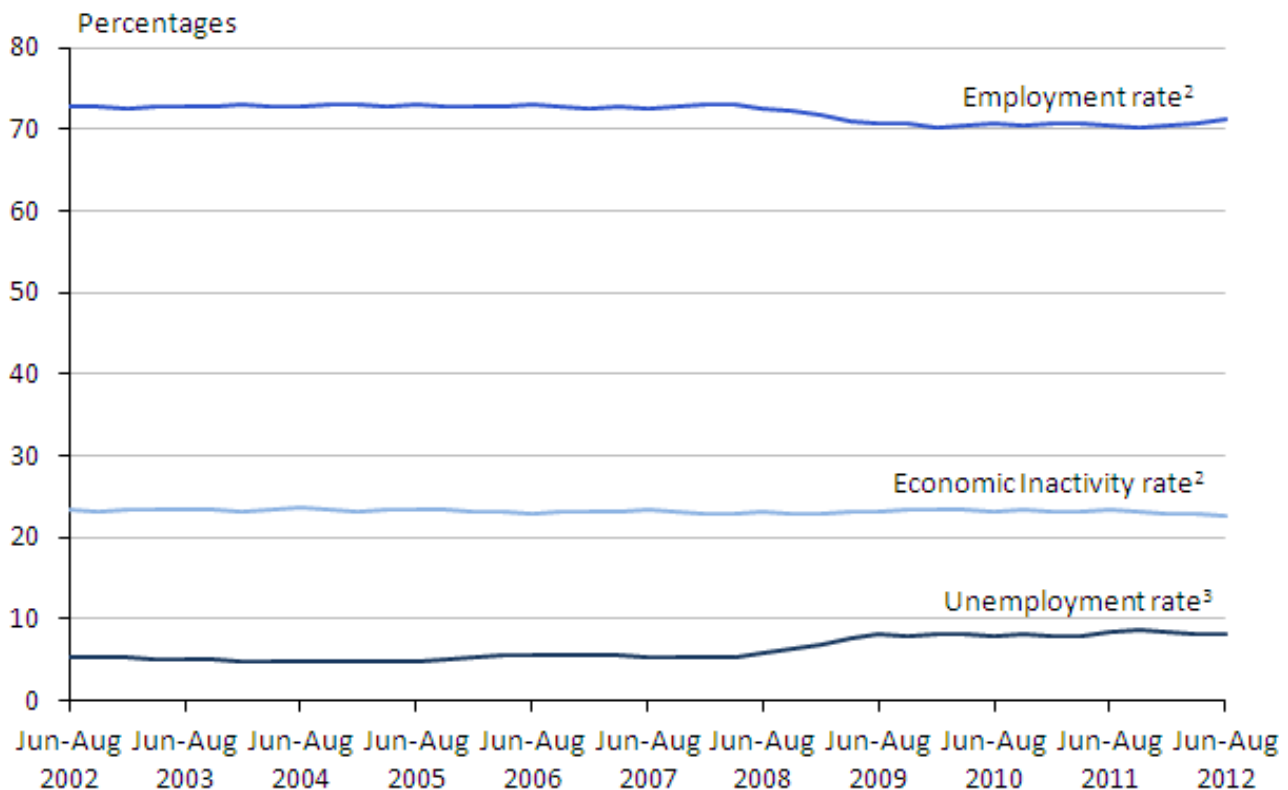
People - Labour market

"There is a strong evidence base showing that work is generally good for physical and mental health and well-being. Worklessness is associated with poorer physical and mental health and well-being" (Gordon Waddell, A Kim Burton, 2006).

Having a job is an essential element of well-being. It provides earnings which in turn contribute to a person's financial security. During the National Debate, job satisfaction and economic security were one of the main things that mattered most in people's lives and that should be included in measures of well-being. A large part of many adult's lives, at least between the ages of 16 and 64, is spent either working or looking for employment.

Figure 8: Rates of economic activity and inactivity (1)

United Kingdom



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Data are seasonally adjusted.
2. Men and women aged 16 to 64.
3. Total unemployed as a percentage of economically active for all those aged 16 and over.

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Over the last 10 years, the proportion of people of working age who are economically active has been generally stable. The employment rate for those aged from 16 to 64 for June to August 2012 was 71.3%, the highest figure since February to April 2009 and up 0.9% on a year earlier (**Figure 8**). The number of people in employment aged 16 and over was 29.6 million. The number of people in employment has not been higher since comparable records began in 1971, but the employment rate of 71.3%, for those aged from 16 to 64, is lower than the pre-recession peak of 73.0% recorded for March to May 2008. The unemployment rate for June to August 2012 was 7.9% of the economically active population, down 0.3% on a year earlier. There were 2.5 million unemployed people in June to August 2012, down 50,000 from a year earlier. The economic inactivity rate for those aged from 16

to 64 for June to August 2012 was 22.5%, down 0.8% on a year earlier. The number of economically inactive people aged from 16 to 64 was 9.0 million in June to August 2012 (ONS LFS).

Youth unemployment has risen in each of the last three recessions and the immediate years following their end. Around 1 in 5 (20.5%) people aged 16 to 24 in the UK were unemployed in June to August 2012, equivalent to 957,000 young people. This compares with peaks of 924,000 in 1993 and 1.2 million in 1984. In June to August 2012 nearly four times as many (3.71 million) young people were in employment than were unemployed (ONS, LFS).

Figure 9: Satisfaction with job (1), 2009/10

United Kingdom



Source: Understanding Society Survey

Notes:

1. Responses to "How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with.....your job (if in employment)". The percentages are of those who responded.

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For those that are working, job satisfaction may not only help make the working environment enjoyable and add to a person's well-being but may also improve productivity. Over three-quarters (77.8%) of people aged 16 and over in the UK with a job were somewhat, mostly or completely

satisfied with their job according to the 2009–10 Understanding Society Survey (**Figure 9**). However it must be noted that over 1 in 5 (22.2%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied or were somewhat, mostly or completely dissatisfied with their job (Understanding Society).

Voluntary work can give people an increased sense of well-being, for example, by meeting new people and forging friendships while in a 'working' environment. The British Household Panel Survey asked adults aged 16 and over in the UK in 2008/09 how frequently they did unpaid voluntary work. Just under 1 in 5 (19.0%) did unpaid voluntary work several times a year or more. Of these 5.4% did voluntary work at least once a week, 7.6% at least once a month and 6.0% several times a year. However it must be noted that the majority of respondents (76.9%) reported that they almost never or never did any voluntary work.

People - Education

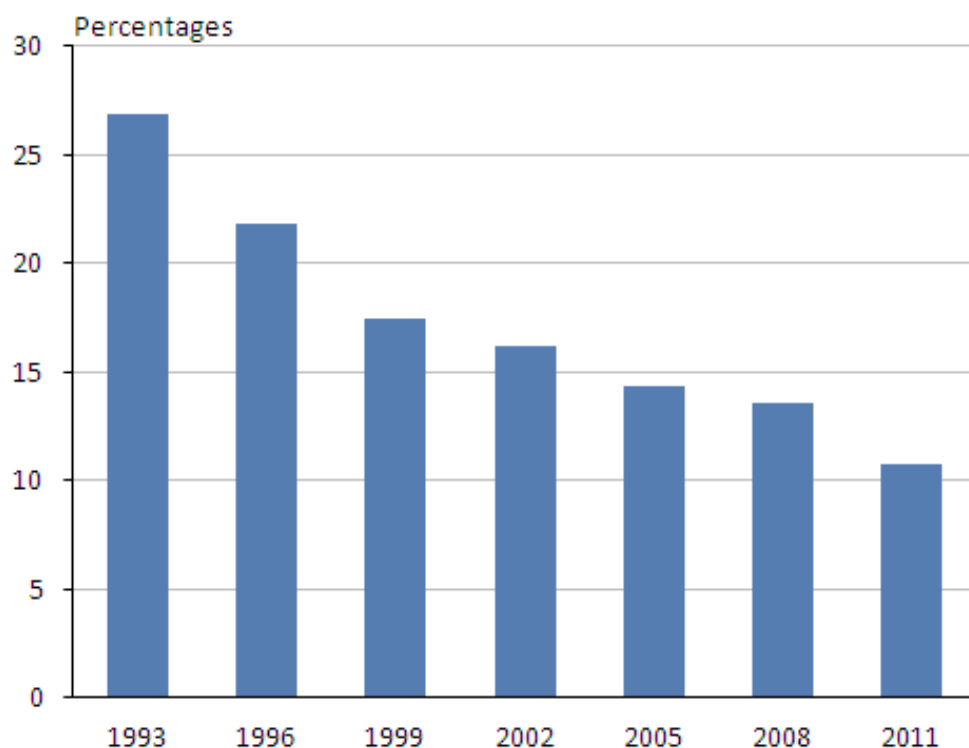
Educational qualifications

“Learning encourages social interaction and increases self-esteem and feelings of competency. Behaviour directed by personal goals to achieve something new has been shown to increase reported life satisfaction” New Economics Foundation (2009).

Employment and education are linked. Educational qualifications can give a person a good basis to gain employment in the sector of their choice. As well as showing discipline academically, it proves a sound knowledge of a person's chosen studies. Education and training was considered in the National Debate to be one of the most important things to include in measures of well-being.

Figure 10: Proportion of people with no qualifications (1): by selected years

United Kingdom



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Those aged 16 to 64.

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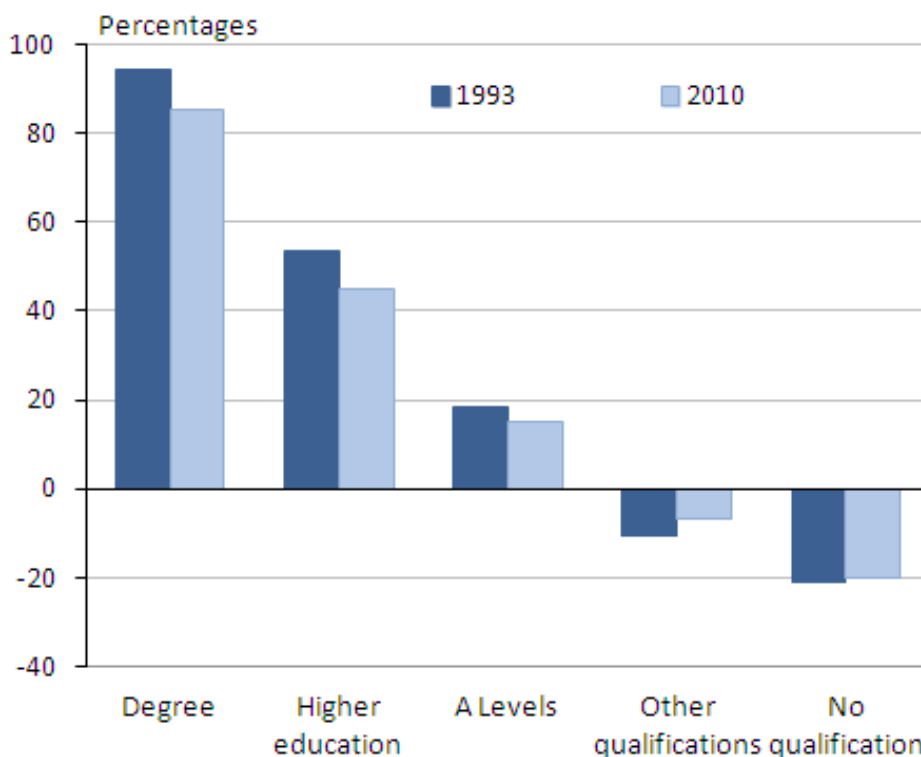
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Of the 40 million adults aged 16 to 64 in the UK in 2011, 35.4 million (89%) had some kind of formal educational qualification, but 4.3 million (11%) had no formal qualifications (**Figure 10**). In the last 18 years, the number of adults without any formal educational qualifications has more than halved from the 9.0 million (27%) in 1993. Large decreases occurred between 1993 and 1996 (1.3 million) and 1996 and 1999 (1.4 million) and between 2008 and 2011 (1.1 million). This is not, however, because the proportion of young adults without a qualification has been falling (it has remained broadly unchanged) but because older adults, where the proportion without a qualification is high, have been reaching pensionable age.

In 2010, a quarter (25%) of the UK population aged 22 to 64 had a degree as their highest qualification, while around a fifth had A levels (21%) or GCSE grades A* to C (20%).

Figure 11: Percentage hourly pay gap to employees with GCSE or equivalent level of education (1)

United Kingdom



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Respondents aged 22 to 64 in October to December.

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People with the highest educational qualifications tend to earn more, however the pay gap comparing employees educated to around the GCSE or equivalent level with those educated to a higher level, was lower in 2010 than in 1993 (the earliest year for which data are comparable). According to the Labour Force Survey (October to December 2010), employees in the UK with a minimum of a degree, earned on average, around 85% more than employees educated to around GCSE level compared with 95% in 1993 (**Figure 11**). Those educated to around A Level or an equivalent qualification earned around 15% more per hour compared with 18% in 1993. The pay gap to employees with no formal educational qualification has been reasonably stable over time and these employees earned around 20% less than employees educated up to GCSE level in 2010¹ (ONS Pay Gap).

A measure of pupils' academic performance which focuses more on core skills is the proportion of pupils achieving at least five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C including English and mathematics. Just over half (52.9%) of pupils in the UK in their last year of compulsory education achieved this in 2009/10, compared to 47.7% in 2007/08 and 49.8% in 2008/09. This measure was achieved by a higher proportion of girls (57.1%) than boys (48.9%).

Human capital stock

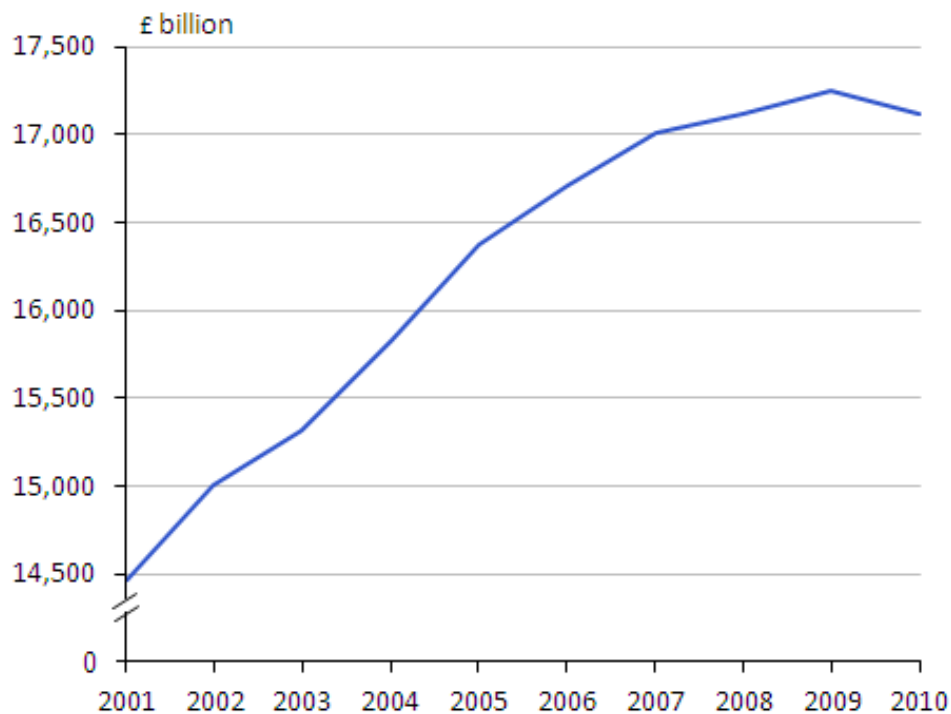
“The well-being of modern society is dependent not only on traditional capital and labour but also on the knowledge and ideas possessed and generated by individual workers. Education is the primary source of this human capital.” (Crocker 2002)

The stock of human capital is measured in the UK as the value of the qualifications of those in the labour market². It can be used as a measure of an economy's future well-being, as the work on economic growth suggests that countries with higher levels of human capital, other things being equal, have greater potential output and income in the future.

Data from ONS shows the estimated value of human capital in the UK has increased from £14,460 billion in 2001 and peaked at £17,250 billion in 2009 before falling to £17,120 billion in 2010 (ONS Human Capital).

Figure 12: Human capital stock (1)

United Kingdom



Source: Human Capital Estimates, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures in 2010 prices, labour productivity growth rate = 2% and discount rate = 3.5%.

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Figure 12 illustrates the effect of the economic downturn on the UK's human capital stock as the total number of people employed decreased. The value of the UK's human capital stock increased steadily between 2001 and 2007, averaging annual growth of 2.8% (£425 billion). By 2009 the annual rate of growth had slowed to 0.8% (£130 billion) and its value fell by 0.75% (£130 billion) in 2010 (ONS Human Capital).

Notes

1. This analysis focuses on employees aged 22 to 64 because most people have completed their full-time education by this age.
2. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), defines human capital as the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being. This is a broad definition, encompassing a range of attributes such as the knowledge, skills, competencies and health conditions of individuals.

People - Individual well-being

“Just generally how I feel - all things considered, how satisfied am I with my life as a whole these days?” (response to “What things matter to you?” from the National Debate).

An important component of national well-being is the subjective well-being of individuals, which is measured by finding out how people think and feel about their own lives. Since April 2011, ONS has included four monitoring questions of subjective well-being on their household surveys.

Table 3: Individual well-being measures (1)

United Kingdom (Percentages)

Indicator	Definition	Value (%)
Life satisfaction ²	Percentage with medium/high rating of satisfaction with life overall	75.9
Worthwhile ³	Percentage with medium/high rating of how worthwhile the things they do are	80.0
Happy yesterday ⁴	Percentage with medium/high rating who rated their happiness yesterday	71.1
Anxious yesterday ⁵	Percentage with medium/low rating who rated how anxious they were yesterday	60.1

Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

Table notes:

1. Respondents aged 16 and above. All questions were answered on an 11 point scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'.
2. Based on the question "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?"
3. Based on the question "Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?"
4. Based on the question "Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?"
5. Based on the question "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?"

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Table 3 shows that in terms of overall reflections on the quality of our lives, the picture is positive. Just over three-quarters (75.9%) of people aged 16 and over in the UK rated their overall life

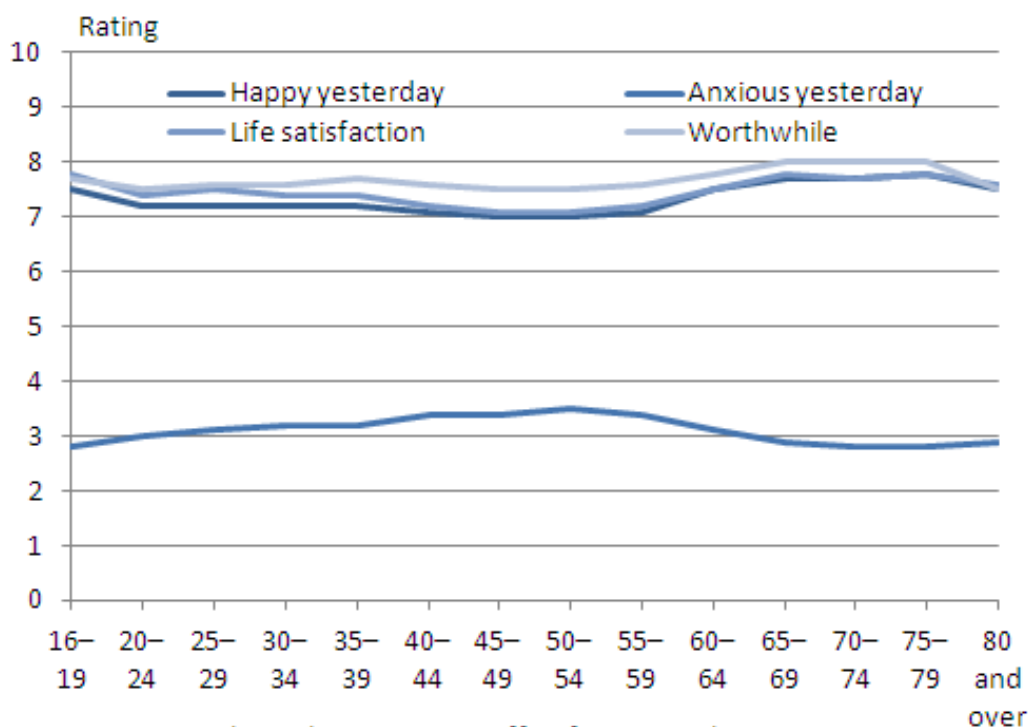
satisfaction as medium or high¹ in 2011/12 and four-fifths (80.0%) felt that the things they do in their life are worthwhile.

When asked to reflect on their feelings during the preceding day, over 7 out of 10 (71.1%) people in the UK rated their happiness as medium/ high. In terms of anxiety people felt the day before, 4 out of 10 (40%) reported high anxiety.

These figures provide a helpful overall picture of individual well-being in the UK, but important differences exist in the levels of well-being reported by different groups in the population. For example, levels of well-being differ by age, health, relationship and employment status and where we live.

Figure 13: Subjective well-being by age group, 2011–12 (1,2,3)

United Kingdom



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Data from April 2011 to March 2012.
2. All data weighted.
3. Non-respondents not included.

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Figure 13 shows that well-being is highest for the young and old but is lower for the middle aged. Younger people aged 16 to 19 and older people aged 65 to 79 rated their life satisfaction highest between 7.7 and 7.8 out of 10 and felt that the things that they do were worthwhile (between 7.7 and 8.0 out of 10). Those in middle age (aged 40 to 59) were least satisfied with their lives, reporting a score of 7.1 to 7.2 out of 10 and also reporting the highest anxiety levels; 3.4 to 3.5 out of 10. Anxiety levels among the younger and older age groups were lower at 2.8 out of 10.

Many of the specific measures that are related to an individual's well-being are also related to each other such as age, employment status, marital status and health. ONS is currently analysing² the relationship between each measure and subjective well-being. Preliminary results suggest that for the measures available, self reported health, relationship status, employment status and ethnicity are most strongly related to subjective well-being. A methodological report providing more detailed results will be available in Spring 2013.

Notes

1. Experimental thresholds are still under evaluation. For 'Life satisfaction', 'Worthwhile' and 'Happy yesterday', medium/high is 7 to 10 on a 11 point scale, where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely. For 'Anxious yesterday', medium/low is 0 to 3 on the same scale.
2. Regression analysis - a statistical procedure that determines a relationship between one set of variables or measurements and another.

People - Health

During the National Debate, health was the most common response when individuals were asked what things in life mattered and what should be reflected in the measures of national well-being. The four headline measures of health currently include healthy life expectancy, self-reported health and a measure of mental illness. For a wider evaluation of health please refer to the Measuring National Well-being domain article on health¹.

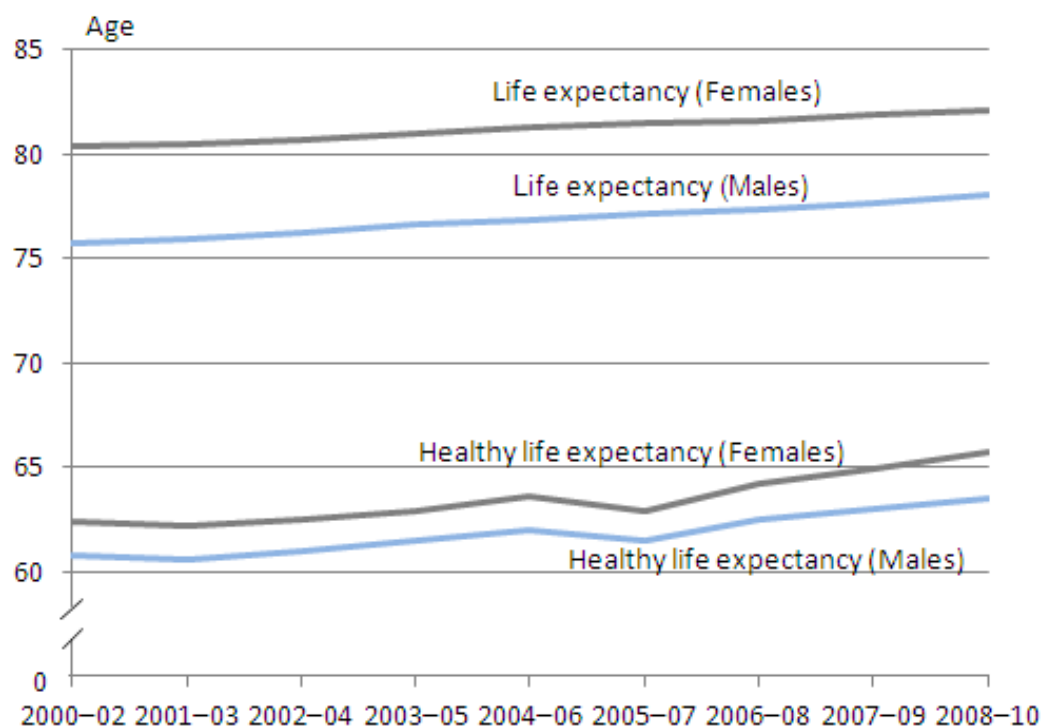
Life expectancy

Over time there have been considerable improvements in life expectancy in the UK. Between 1930 and 2010, life expectancy at birth in the UK increased by around 20 years (or a third) for both sexes. In 1930 life expectancy was 58.7 years for males and 63.0 years for females, increasing to 78.1 years for males and 82.1 years for females in 2010 (ONS ST & ONS Health).

Increasing life expectancy has important implications for areas of government policy such as retirement age and healthcare provision. It is important to establish whether these extra years of life are being accompanied by increased periods in good health.

Figure 14: Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy (1) for males and females at birth

United Kingdom



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Healthy life expectancy based on five-point general health question; 2005-07 to 2008-10. Estimates for 2000-02 to 2004-06 are simulations based on original survey data.

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Healthy life expectancies provide the number of years, or proportion of lifetime spent in very good or good health (Healthy life expectancy (HLE)). ONS estimates of HLE for males and females at birth between 2000-02 and 2008-10 in the UK have shown greater increases than life expectancy over the same period. HLE has increased by 2.8 years for males and by 3.3 years for females (**Figure 14**). Over this time, life expectancy rose by around 2.3 years for males and 1.7 years for females.

Another measure of healthy life expectancy is Disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) or the number of years spent free from a limiting persistent illness or disability. ONS estimates for DFLE for males and females at birth in the UK between 2000-02 and 2008-10, have risen by 3.6 years for males and by 2.3 years for females.

Increases in a lifetime spent in very good or good health or free from a limiting persistent illness may ultimately reduce the healthcare burden associated with an ageing population and has important implications for fitness for work beyond retirement age.

The World Bank published data about life expectancy at birth for all residents as well as for males and females for a large number of countries. Of the 193 countries for which they provide figures for 2010, the UK was ranked 20th with a life expectancy at birth of 80.4 years. Of these countries; San Marino, Japan, Hong Kong SAR, and Switzerland had the highest life expectancies (between 82.2 years and 83.2 years) in 2010. Lesotho and Sierra Leone had the lowest with life expectancies at birth of 47 years.

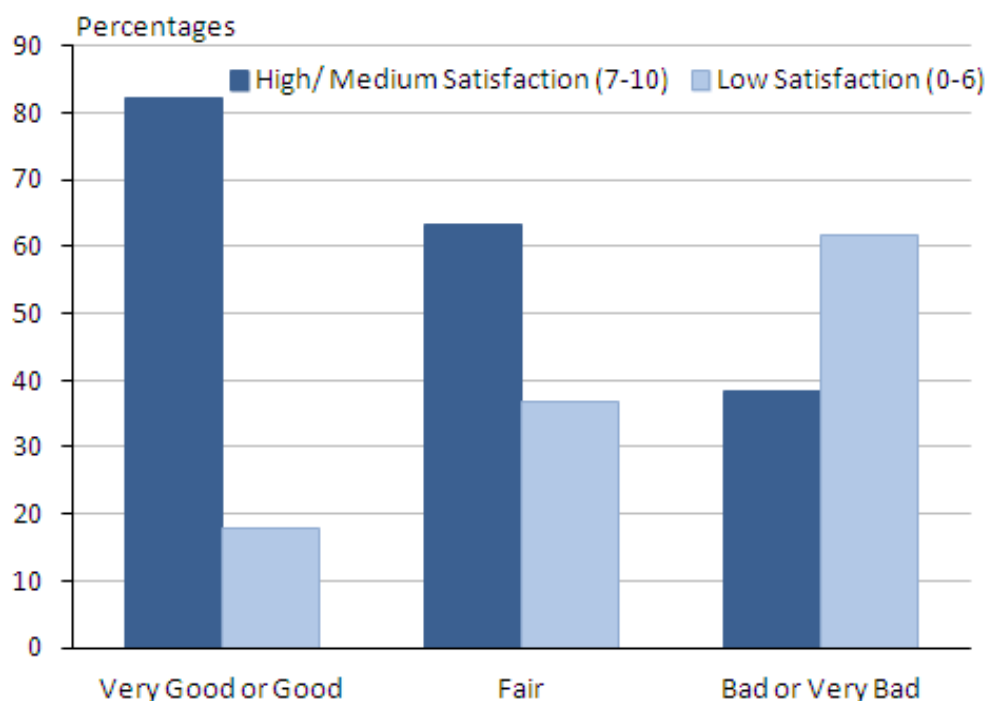
Satisfaction with health

Figures from the Understanding Society Survey report that in 2009/10, 68.3% of adults aged 16 and over in the UK were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their health. Those in Northern Ireland were most satisfied with their health than those in the rest of the UK with 69.7% of respondents claiming to be somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied. They were also the most likely to report being completely dissatisfied with their health (5.6% compared with a national average of 4.2%).

Figures from the earlier BHPS show that the proportion of adults aged 16 and over in the UK that were satisfied with their general health increased between 2002/03 and 2008/09. In 2002/03, 66.7% reported being somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their health, compared with 70.2% in 2008/09 ²

Figure 15: Self-reported health (1) and satisfaction with life overall (2), 2011/12

United Kingdom



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Individuals are asked to say whether their general health is very good, good, fair, bad or very bad.
2. Individuals were asked to rate how satisfied they were with their lives overall on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 was 'not at all satisfied' and 10 was 'completely satisfied'.

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People's own assessment of their health is associated with their assessment of overall life satisfaction; those who feel that they have good health are much more likely to report higher levels of subjective well-being and, conversely, those who report poor health are much more likely to report lower subjective well-being. Figure 15 shows that almost two thirds (61.7%) of those reporting bad health also reported low levels of well-being, compared to almost one in five (18.0%) of those reporting good health.

Disability

Physical health has a strong association with individual well-being. The number of adults aged between 16 and retirement age³, who report a current disability has remained at approximately 1 in 5 since 2001 (fluctuating between 18.6 and 19.9%). Half of individuals reporting being long term disabled reported low overall life satisfaction. This compares to around 1 in 5 (19%) of those with no disability.

Mental health

‘Mental health and well-being are fundamental to quality of life, enabling people to experience life as meaningful and to be creative and active citizens. Mental health is an essential component of social cohesion, productivity and peace and stability in the living environment, contributing to social capital and economic development in societies’ (WHO, 2005).

Positive mental health can be described as people thinking and feeling good about themselves and feeling able to cope with their problems. This positivity is important to an individual’s well-being. Mental health differs from mental illness. Mental illness covers a range of mental health problems which can cause marked emotional distress and interfere with daily function, including different types of depression and anxiety. These types of problems can also have a detrimental effect on an individual’s well-being.

Table 4: Percentage (1) with some evidence indicating probable psychological disturbance or mental ill health indicated by a GHQ12 score of 4 or more (2)

United Kingdom (Percentages)

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Score of 4 or more	20.0	19.3	19.3	20.6	20.0	19.5	20.5
Score of 11 or 12	2.8	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.5

Source: British Household Panel Survey

Table notes:

1. Percentages exclude missing and proxy values.
2. The GHQ-12 questionnaire concentrates on the broader components of psychological morbidity and consists of twelve items measuring general levels of happiness; depression and anxiety; sleep disturbance; and ability to cope over the last few weeks. The twelve items are rated on a four-point response scale, where a score of 0 is given

to responses such as that the symptom is present 'not at all' or 'no more than usual' and a score of 1 is given to responses symptom is present 'not at all' or 'no more than usual' and a score of 1 is given to responses such as 'rather more than usual' or 'much more than usual'. Consistent with analysis of other surveys, a GHQ12 score of 4 or more is referred to as a 'high GHQ12 score', indicating probable psychological disturbance or mental ill health.

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Table 4 shows that between 2002/03 and 2008/09 around 1 in 5 (ranging from 19.3% and 20.5%) adults aged 16 and over in the UK indicated some element of psychological distress (scoring 4 or more). For the same period, between 2.8% and 3.5% reported a score of 11 or 12, indicating a much higher level of distress.

The Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey (APMS)⁴ estimates the number of adults suffering from common mental disorders (CMDs) such as anxiety and depression. Results showed that in England in 2007 around 1 in 6 adults (17.6%) met the diagnostic criteria for at least one CMD in the week prior to interview. Between the surveys conducted in 1993 and 2000 there had been an increase in the prevalence of both mixed anxiety and depressive disorders and a slight increase in generalised anxiety disorders (from 7.5% to 9.4% and 4.4% to 4.7% respectively) , but there were only small changes between 2000 and 2007 (ONS, 2012, Health).

For a wider discussion of mental health including a discussion on positive mental health measures please refer to ONS Health.

Notes

1. [Health](#)
2. The British Household Panel Survey was replaced with the Understanding Society Survey in 2009. While the questions are similar the methodology has changed to such an extent that it is not possible to compare the two.
3. Men aged 16-64, women aged 16-59.
4. The Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey (APMS) series provides data on the prevalence of both treated and untreated psychiatric disorder in the English adult population (aged 16 and over).

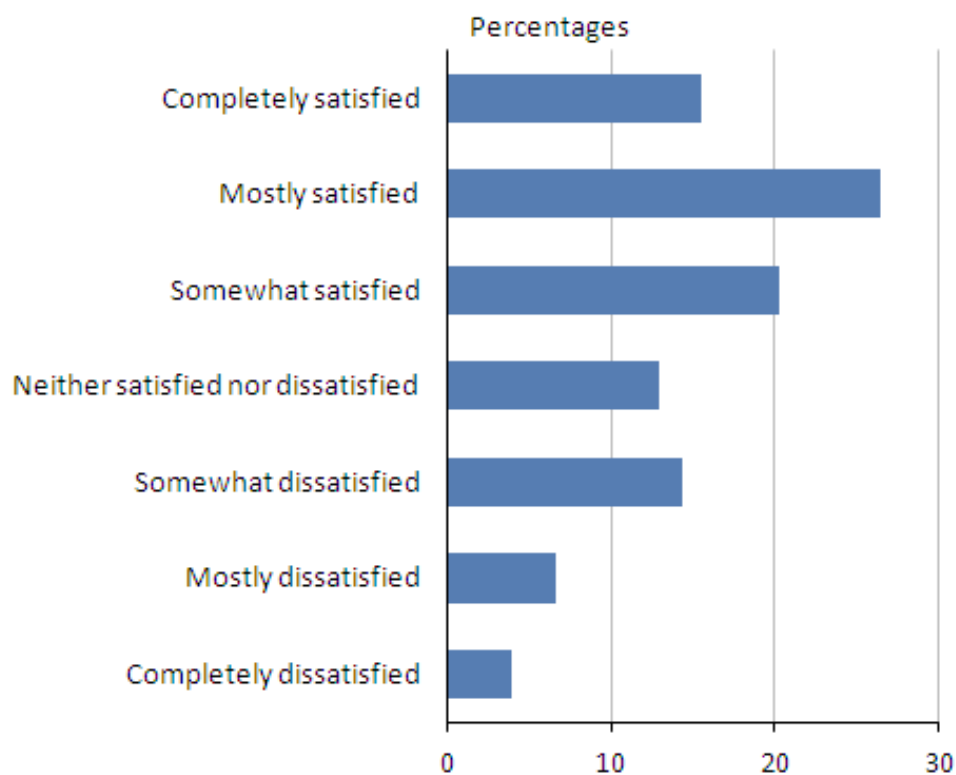
People - Our relationships

Leisure time

Leisure time may provide many health benefits, both physically and mentally. Obtaining and maintaining the correct balance between working life and home life can be beneficial to an individual's overall well-being.

Figure 16: Satisfaction with amount of leisure time (1), 2009/10

United Kingdom



Source: Understanding Society Survey

Notes:

- Adults aged 16 and over were asked 'How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with.....The amount of leisure time you have'. The percentages are of those who responded.

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The Understanding Society Survey asked respondents 'How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the amount of leisure time you have'. In the UK, in 2009/10, 62.3% of adults aged 16 and over reported that they were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied, 12.9% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 24.8% were somewhat, mostly or completely dissatisfied (**Figure 16**) (Understanding Society).

Social life

"The quality of a person's social life could have an even greater impact than diet and exercise on their health and well-being" (research by the Universities of Exeter and Queensland, Australia).

A social life can be an important part of someone's leisure time. Having a good social life with good social networks may increase a person's sense of well-being. According to the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), nearly 7 in 10 (67.0%) adults aged 16 and over in the UK were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their social life in 2008–09. Social life satisfaction varied by age. Those aged 16 to 24 and 55 and over were more likely to report that they were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their social life (75.7% and 71.7% respectively). This compares with 58.2% of those aged 35 to 44, 62.1% aged 45 to 54 and 63.2% of those aged 25 to 34. This is consistent with the pattern of general life satisfaction discussed previously. Lower satisfaction with social life for these age groups may be due to people having less time for socialising because of work or family commitments. The presence of children in the family clearly has an effect. Three-quarters (75.2%) of couples with no children and 71.8% of couples with non-dependent children were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their social life. This is higher than the equivalent figures for couples with dependent children (62.2%) and lone parents with dependent children (50.8%).

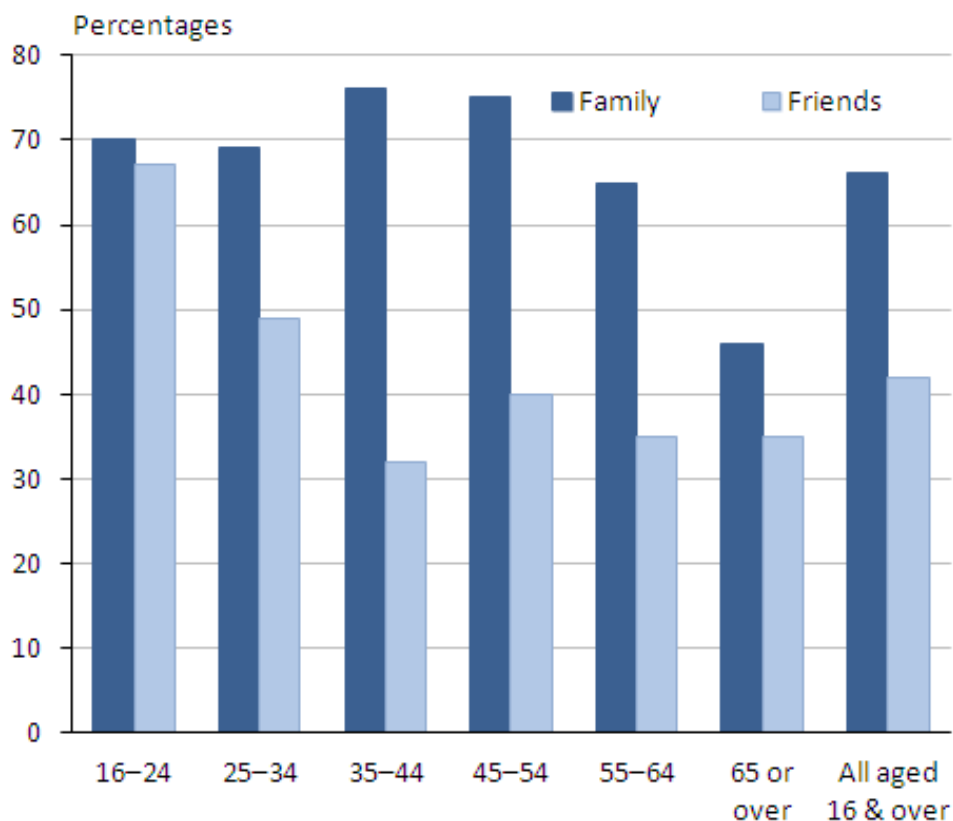
Relationships with family and friends

“The frequency of contact with others and the quality of personal relationships are crucial determinants of people's well-being. People get pleasure from spending time with others – be it family, friends or colleagues – and activities are typically more satisfying when shared with others. Furthermore, social networks provide material and emotional support in times of need” (Kahneman and Krueger, 2006).

Relationship with families and friends was another key measure identified in the National Debate. Adults in the EU-27 were asked on the Eurofound European Quality of Life Survey on a scale of 1 to 10 how satisfied they were with their family life where 1 was very dissatisfied and 10 was very satisfied. The average (mean) rating for the UK was 8.2, higher than the average for the EU-27 at 7.9. Denmark and Malta had the highest average rating at 8.8 and 8.7 respectively while Bulgaria and Macedonia had the lowest average ratings of 6.5 and 6.9 respectively (Eurofound).

Figure 17: Spending most days or everyday with family and friends (1): by age, 2011

England



Source: Survey of public attitudes and behaviours towards the environment, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Notes:

1. Sample composed of 1,769 adults aged 16 and over.

Download chart

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The 2011 survey of public attitudes and behaviours towards the environment run by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) asked people in England how often in the previous two weeks they had spent time together with family and friends. Two-thirds (66%) of respondents reported having spent time with family every day or most days during the two weeks prior to interview (**Figure 17**). This is an increase from 61% in 2007. Those aged 65 and over were much less likely to report spending time with family every day or most days (46%) than other age groups (Defra 2011).

Over 4 in 10 adults (42%) spent time with friends every day or most days. This was an increase from 37% in 2007. Proportionately, younger people were more likely to report spending time with friends than older people; 67% of 16 to 24 year-olds spent time with friends on most or every day in the two

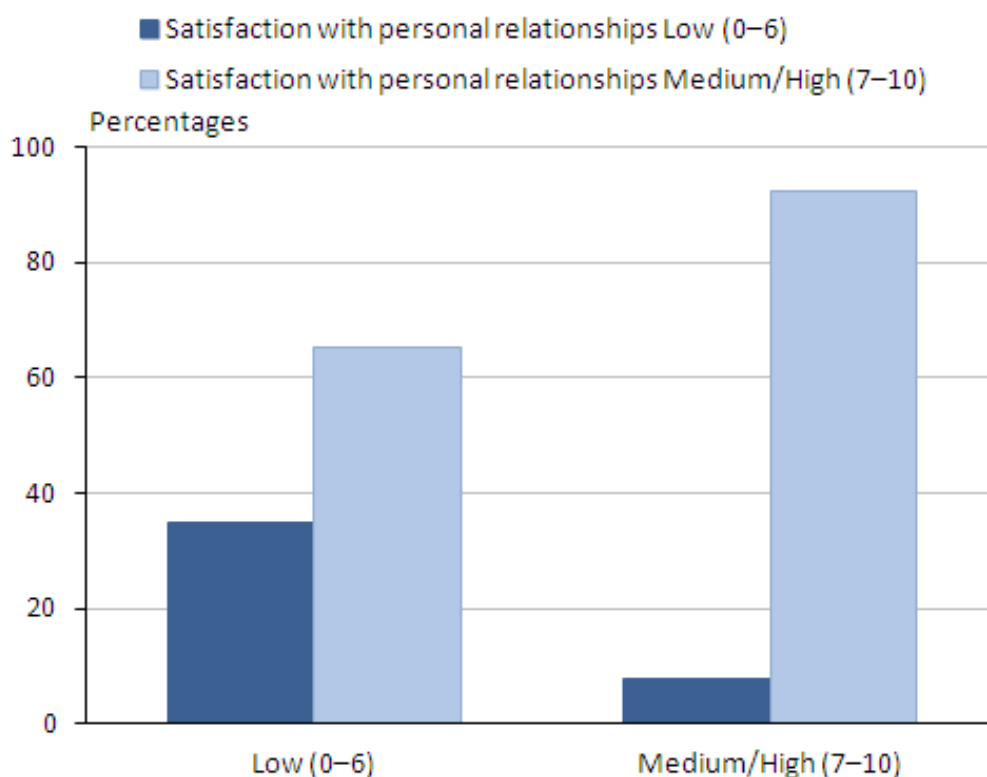
weeks prior to interview, compared with 35% of those aged 55 to 64 and 65 and over. The lowest proportion of people spending time with friends on most or every day was those in the 35 to 44 age group (32%). This may be due to having young children to look after and work commitments (Defra 2011).

Social connections

“Social connections, including marriage, of course, but not limited to that, are among the most robust correlates of subjective well-being. People who have close friends and confidants, friendly neighbours and supportive co-workers are less likely to experience sadness, loneliness, low self-esteem and problems with eating and sleeping...” – (Helliwell and Putnam, 2004).

Figure 18: Satisfaction with personal relationships compared with life satisfaction (1), 2011–12 (2)

Great Britain



Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

- Adults aged 16 and over were asked 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' and 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your personal relationships?' Where 0 is 'not at all satisfied' and 10 is 'completely satisfied'.
- Data are for April, June & October 2011 and February 2012. There were different split trials (April & June – Mode effect, October – Order effect of the four headline questions and February – Show card effect). These trials may have had an impact on the resulting data.

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(34.5 Kb)

Overall satisfaction with life and personal relationships are related. Of those who reported a medium/high satisfaction with life (7 to 10 out of 10), 92.3% also reported a medium/high satisfaction with their personal relationships (**Figure 18**). Conversely, 34.7% of those who reported a low satisfaction with life (0 to 6 out of 10) also had low satisfaction with their personal relationships. However it must be noted that 65.3% who reported a low satisfaction with life also had a medium/high satisfaction with their personal relationships, which indicates that there are other factors that impact on overall individual well-being.

Over 9 in 10 (96.8%) adults aged 16 and over in the UK reported on the British Household Panel Survey in 2007/08 that there was someone who they could really count on to help out in a crisis. Just under a quarter of adults (24.4%) had one person to rely on and nearly three-quarters (72.4%) had more than one person to rely on. However 3.2% of adults had no one at all to rely on.

Inadequate levels of social relationships may lead to people experiencing loneliness in life. However the feeling of loneliness is subjective and a person may experience this even when in the company of family and friends. In 2011–12¹, the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey asked adults aged 16 and over in Great Britain on a scale of 0 to 10 how lonely they felt in daily life where 0 was not lonely at all and 10 was very lonely. Over a third (34.5%) of respondents who answered this question recorded not being lonely at all in their daily life (0 out of 10), while 3.1% recorded being completely lonely in their daily life (10 out of 10). However it must be noted that over 6 in 10 (62.4%) reported some degree of loneliness, scoring between 1 and 9.

Isolation can be a major factor in someone's feeling of loneliness and where people live can have an effect on people's sense of isolation. A feeling of belonging to a person's neighbourhood can influence people's sense of identity and may also contribute to an individual's sense of well-being. According to the 2009/10 Understanding Society Survey two-thirds (66.0%) of adults aged 16 and over in the UK strongly agreed or agreed that they felt they belonged in their neighbourhood. However, just over a quarter (25.7%) neither agreed or disagreed and 8.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they felt they belonged in their neighbourhood (Understanding Society).

Adults aged 18 and over in Great Britain were asked in a survey by YouGov in 2011 whether they or anyone else they knew felt isolated as a result of having difficulty accessing local shops and services. Around 1 in 20 (5%) of people reported feeling a sense of isolation, while just over 1 in 5 (22%) reported that they knew someone who felt a sense of isolation due to difficulty accessing local shops and services (YouGov).

Notes

1. Data for July & November 2011 and March 2012

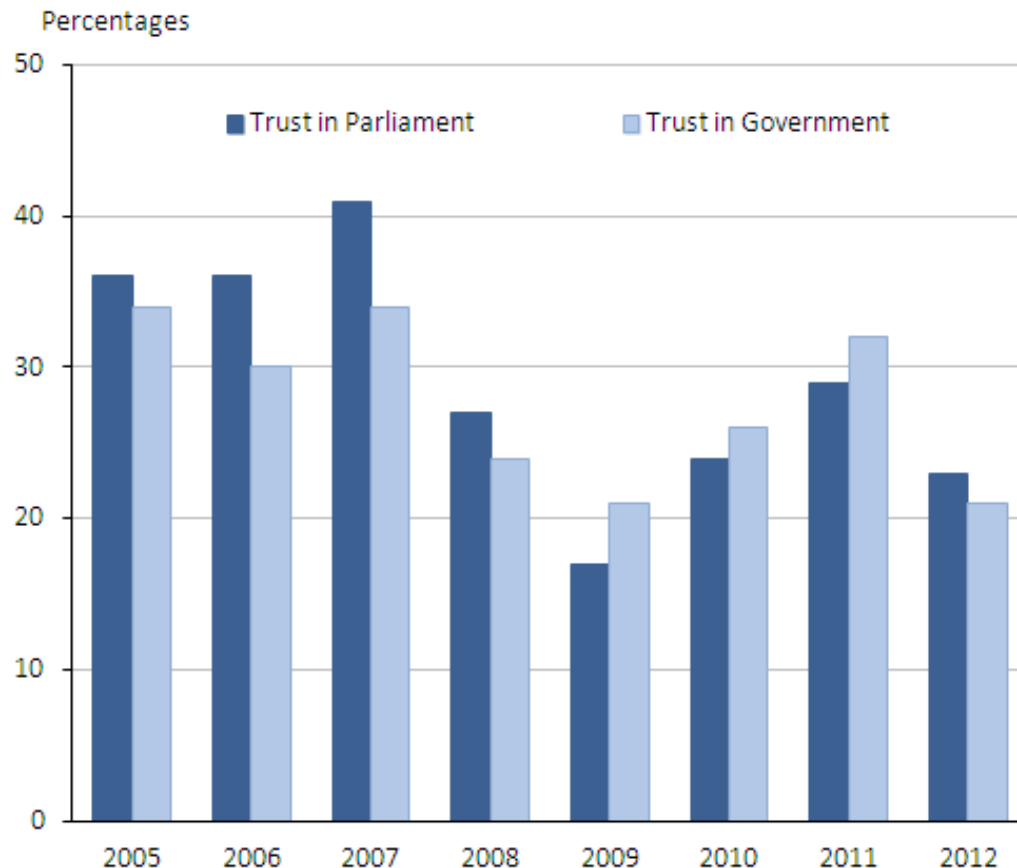
People - Governance

“..... participation in political life (through voting or engaging in associations) is influenced by “solidarity incentives” that are “intangible costs and benefits of a social nature deriving, for example, from friendship, camaraderie, recreational activity, status, social pressure, or a sense of belonging” Knack (1992).

Trustworthy and honest public administration is fundamental for citizens’ trust in democracy and the state. Having trust in parliament and a feeling that people have a voice or that they can help themselves has an effect on how we think and feel. Trust in, and accountability of, national government and the role of parliament were key concerns reported during the National Debate. In the simplest sense, government accountability means that the government is answerable for performance or results. Much of the public's trust rests upon the government being openly accountable for its decisions, actions and mistakes.

Figure 19: Trust in parliament and government (1)

United Kingdom



Source: Eurobarometer

Notes:

1. Adults aged 15 and over were asked if they 'tend to trust' or 'tend to not trust' the UK parliament and government. Percentages are for those who answered 'tend to trust'. Fieldwork was carried out in May and June in 2005; March and May in 2006; April and May in 2007; March and April in 2008; June and July in 2009 and May in 2010 to 2012.

Download chart

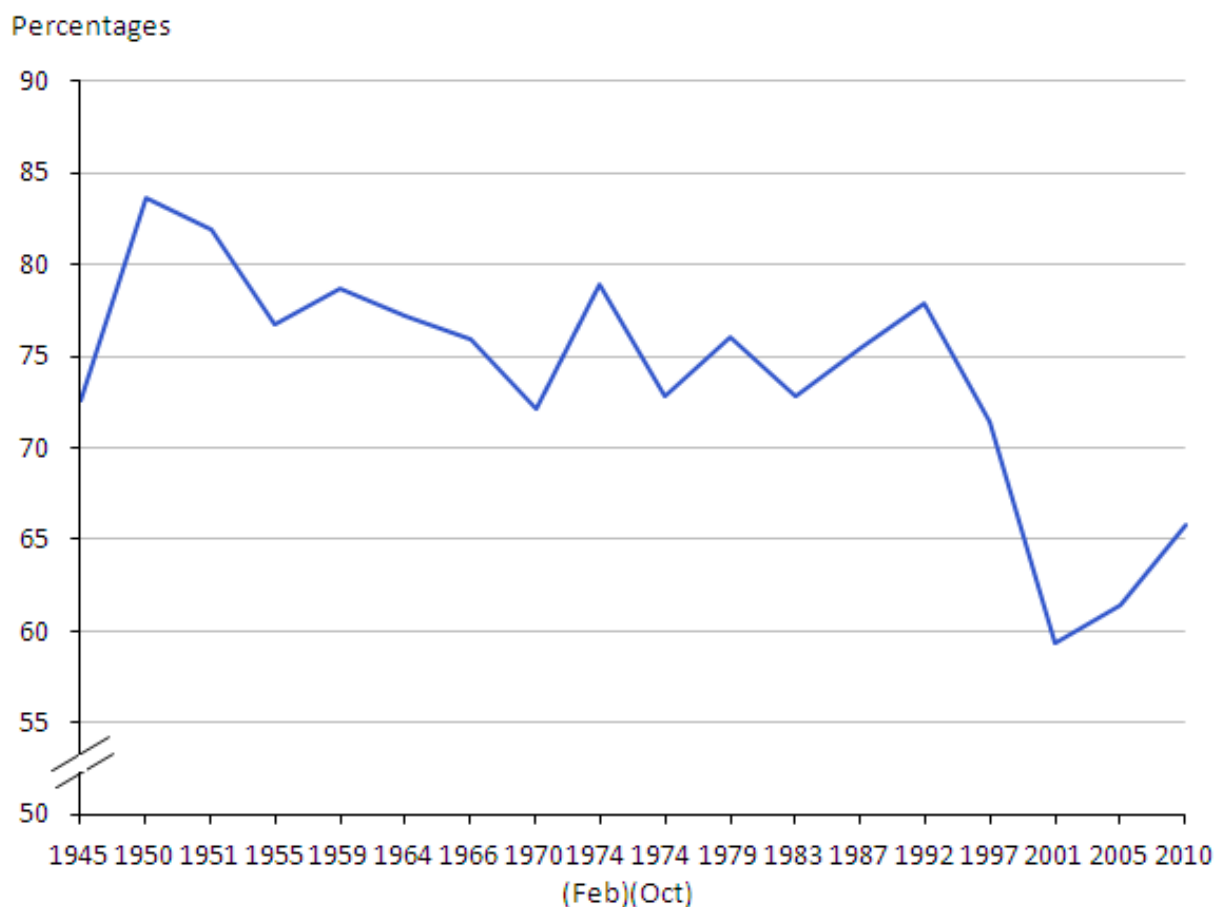
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According to the Standard Eurobarometer survey, less than a quarter (23%) of adults aged 15 and over in the UK 'tended to trust' the UK parliament in 2012, while just over a fifth (21%) 'tended to trust the government' (**Figure 19**). Since the question was first asked in 2005, trust in the UK Parliament peaked in 2007 at 41% but then declined sharply to 17% in 2009. This was mirrored by the proportion of people that 'tended to trust' the government, at over a third (34%) in 2007, falling to just over a fifth (21%) in 2009. These proportional declines coincide with the UK parliamentary expenses scandal and the start of the financial crisis (Eurobarometer).

According to the 2010 British Social Attitudes survey, 61% of adults aged 18 and over in Great Britain agreed strongly or agreed with the statement 'Voting is the only way people like me can have any say about how the government runs things', while a quarter (25%) of adults disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement.

Figure 20: Voting turnout in UK General Elections (1)

United Kingdom



Source: The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

Notes:

1. Valid votes as a proportion of the electorate.

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In 1950 voting turnout peaked with over 8 in 10 (83.6%) of the electorate voting¹ (**Figure 20**). By 1983, turnout was down to 72.8%. Despite an improvement in participation in both 1987 and 1992, the General Elections in 2001 and 2005 had relatively low turnouts (59.4% and 61.4% respectively). In 2010 the turnout rose to 65.8% (IDEA).

Notes

1. Voter turnout is measured by the number of people registered to vote. Non-voters are those registered but not voting.

People - Where we live

Living in local area

Adults aged 16 and over in Great Britain were asked on the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey how satisfied they were overall with their local area (15 to 20 minutes walking distance from home), where 0 was not satisfied at all and 10 was completely satisfied. In October 2011 and February 2012, nearly 8 in 10 (79.3%) people reported a medium/high satisfaction (7 to 10 out of 10) with their local area, while 20.8% reported a low satisfaction (0 to 6 out of 10).

Crime

“The biggest impact of crime on people’s well-being appears to be through the feeling of vulnerability that it causes” OECD

The 2008 Place Survey (the latest data available), run by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), asked adults aged 18 and over in England to select up to five priorities that would be important in making somewhere a good place to live. The most important factor reported was the level of crime (61%).

According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (previously known as the British Crime Survey), between 2002/03 and 2011/12 household crime and personal crime had been generally falling. Household crime (per 1,000 households) has fallen by 29.2% while personal crime (per 1,000 adults aged 16 and over) has fallen by 26.2% (ONS CSEW).

However, people’s perception of crime does not reflect the fall in actual crime. Since 1996, the Crime Survey for England and Wales asked adults aged 16 and over how much they think the level of crime has changed in their local area and in the country as a whole in the two years prior to interview (ONS CSEW).

Table 5: Perceptions of changing crime levels (1)

England and Wales (Percentages)

	National crime	Local crime
2001/02	64.6	51.0
2002/03	72.3	53.9
2003/04	65.2	48.5
2004/05	60.7	42.4
2005/06	62.7	42.0
2006/07	64.5	41.4
2007/08	65.3	38.9
2008/09	74.8	36.2
2009/10	66.4	30.6
2010/11	59.9	27.9

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Table notes:

1. Percentage of adults aged 16 and over reporting 'a little more' or 'a lot more' crime than two years ago.

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The proportion of adults in England and Wales who thought that crime had increased nationally is higher than the proportion who thought that crime had increased in their local area. In 2010/11 just under 6 in 10 (59.9%) people reported that there was a little more or a lot more crime in England and Wales as a whole than two years ago, compared to under 3 in 10 (27.9%) who reported more crime in their local area (**Table 5**). The gap between perceptions of change in national and local crime levels widened between 2003/04 and 2008/09. It then narrowed slightly in 2009/10 and 2010/11, following a sharp increase in the proportion of adults who thought that crime had gone up nationally in 2008/09 and a decrease in the proportion who thought it had gone up locally (ONS, CSEW).

According to the 2010–11 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey, 23% of adults aged 16 and over in Scotland perceived that there had been an increase in the crime rate over the previous two years in their local area, while 9% perceived there had been a decrease in the crime rate in their local area. According to the 2010–11 Northern Ireland Crime Survey, over a third of respondents (35%) felt that crime levels in their local area had increased in the preceding two years; just under a quarter (24%) felt there was 'a little more crime', while 11% felt there was 'a lot more crime'

Feeling safe in a local area can be an important factor for a person's sense of satisfaction in the area around them. A good indicator of this is to find out whether a person feels safe walking alone after dark. According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales just over a third (34.1%) of adults aged 16 and over in 2010/11 reported that they felt very safe walking alone after dark, with 41% feeling fairly safe. However, around a quarter (24.3%) felt a bit or very unsafe (ONS, CSEW).

Housing and tenure

'We spend much of our lives in the home, our primary emotional connections are shaped in the domestic arena of the home; where we live and how we live are important determinants of our social position, physical health and individual well-being' (Rennie Short, 1999)

An individual's housing tenure and the level of their overall satisfaction with life are linked. Home ownership, either outright or through a mortgage, is the most common form of tenure in the UK. According to the 2010 General Lifestyle Survey just over two-thirds (68%) of households in Great Britain owned their own homes: with just under a third (32%) owning outright and 36% owning with a mortgage. Social renting describes those who rent from a local authority or housing association. In 2010, 10% of households rented from a council and 8% from a housing association. The remaining 13% of households rented from the private sector (ONS GLS).

Table 6: Life satisfaction (1): by selected housing tenure (2), 2011/12

United Kingdom (Percentages)

	Satisfaction with life	
	Low (0–6)	Medium/High (7–10)
Owned outright	19.0	81.0
Bought with mortgage or loan	20.1	79.9
Rented	32.2	67.8

Source: Subjective Well-being Annual Population Survey dataset, Office for National Statistics

Table notes:

1. Adults aged 16 and over were asked 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? where nought is 'not at all satisfied' and 10 is 'completely satisfied'.
2. Those who stated they were 'part renting/part mortgage', 'rent free' and 'squatting' are not included in the table due to small sample sizes.

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According to the 2011/12 Subjective Well-being Annual Population Survey dataset (which are experimental data), a higher proportion of those who owned their property, either outright or

with a mortgage, reported a medium/high level of life satisfaction (7 to 10 out of 10) than those with other tenures in the UK in 2011/12 (**Table 6**). Conversely, nearly a third (32%) of those who rented reported a low satisfaction with life (0 to 6 out of 10) compared with just under a fifth (19%) of those who owned their accommodation outright and a fifth (20%) of those who owned their accommodation with a mortgage.

The Environment - Introduction

“The environment is the basic foundation of individual wellbeing. Often referred to as natural capital, the environment functions and interacts with human systems, social systems, and the built environment. Environmental wellbeing is embedded within many of the dimensions of the wheel because of people's continual direct interaction with their physical surroundings” Washington State University.

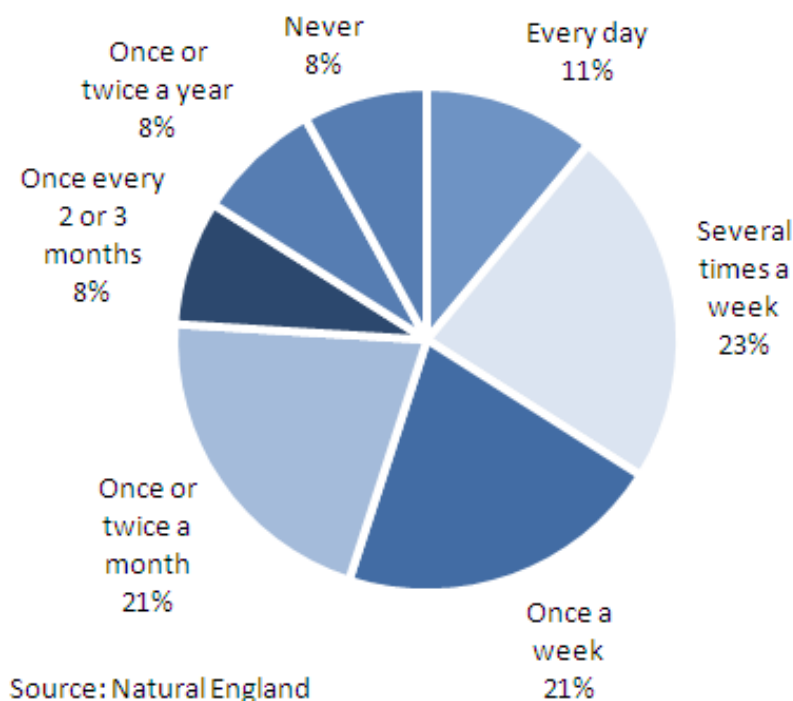
In the National Debate, just under three-quarters (73%) of respondents mentioned the environment as an important factor in well-being. Responses about the environment were for both the local environment and the global environment. Responses about the local environment included having access to open, green space within walking distance of the recipient's home and the quality of the local area. Global environment factors included air quality and climate change. The natural environment has a role to play to ensure sustainable supply of natural goods like food, water, minerals, raw materials, and to maintain intangible factors such as critical ecosystem services that provide benefits for human welfare.

The Environment - The natural environment

The 2008 Place Survey (the latest data available), run by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), asked adults aged 18 and over in England to select up to five priorities that would be important in making somewhere a good place to live. Just under a quarter (23.3%) reported that access to nature was important in making somewhere a good place to live (DCLG Place Survey).

Figure 21: Frequency of visiting the natural environment (1), 2011/12

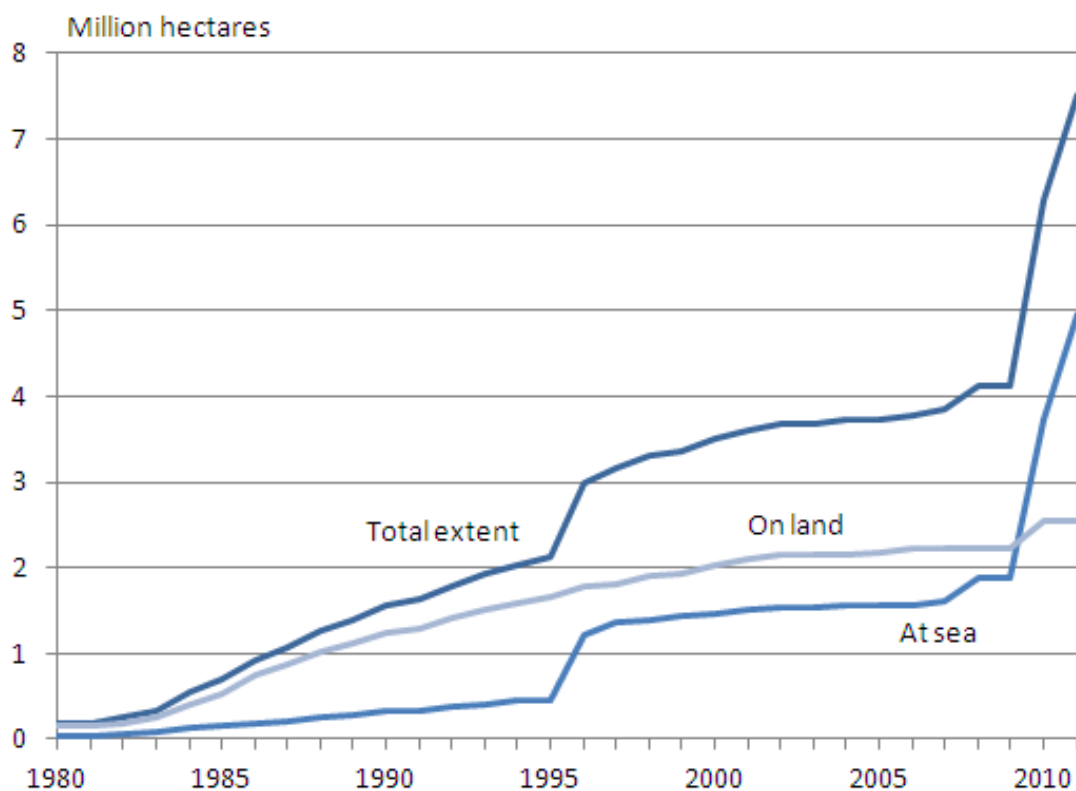
England

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In 2011/12, over half (55%) of adults aged 16 and over in England reported that on average, they visited the outdoors away from home at least once a week in the 12 months prior to interview (**Figure 21**). Just over a third (34%) reported that they visited the outdoors, away from home, several times a week or more often, while 11% reported that they visited on a daily basis. Under 1 in 10 (8%) stated that they had not visited the natural environment in the previous 12 months; this was equivalent to around 3.5 million adults. Almost 2 in 5 (38%) of those who did not take a visit to the natural environment in the last 12 months were aged 65 and over. Just over two-thirds (68%) of people who visited at least once per week were between the ages of 25 and 64, with those aged between 25 and 44 the most likely to have frequently visited the outdoors in the last 12 months (36%) (Natural England).

Figure 22: Extent of United Kingdom nationally and internationally important protected areas (1,2)



Source: Joint Nature Conservation Committee based on its own data and data from the Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage

Notes:

1. The demarcation between the protected areas on land and at sea is mean high water (mean high water spring in Scotland). The calculations to create the indicator split the terrestrial and marine components of coastal sites between the 'on land' and 'at sea' lines shown.
2. Based on calendar year of site designation.

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The UK has a responsibility to ensure the conservation and enhancement of habitats and species in both a national and international context. Designation of protected areas¹ is a key mechanism for biodiversity conservation. The overall total extent of land and sea protected in the UK through national and international protected areas has increased from just under 0.2 million hectares in 1980 to just over 7.5 million hectares in December 2011 (**Figure 22**). Since 2000 the total extent of protected areas has more than doubled, from 3.5 million hectares. A large contribution to this has been from the marine environment following the designation of inshore and offshore marine sites under the Habitats Directive² – the area of marine protected areas increased by more than 3 million

hectares between 2009 and 2011. The extent of protected areas on land has increased by more than half a million hectares since 2000 (JNCC).

Notes

1. A 'protected area' is defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values
2. For more information see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm

The Environment - Air quality

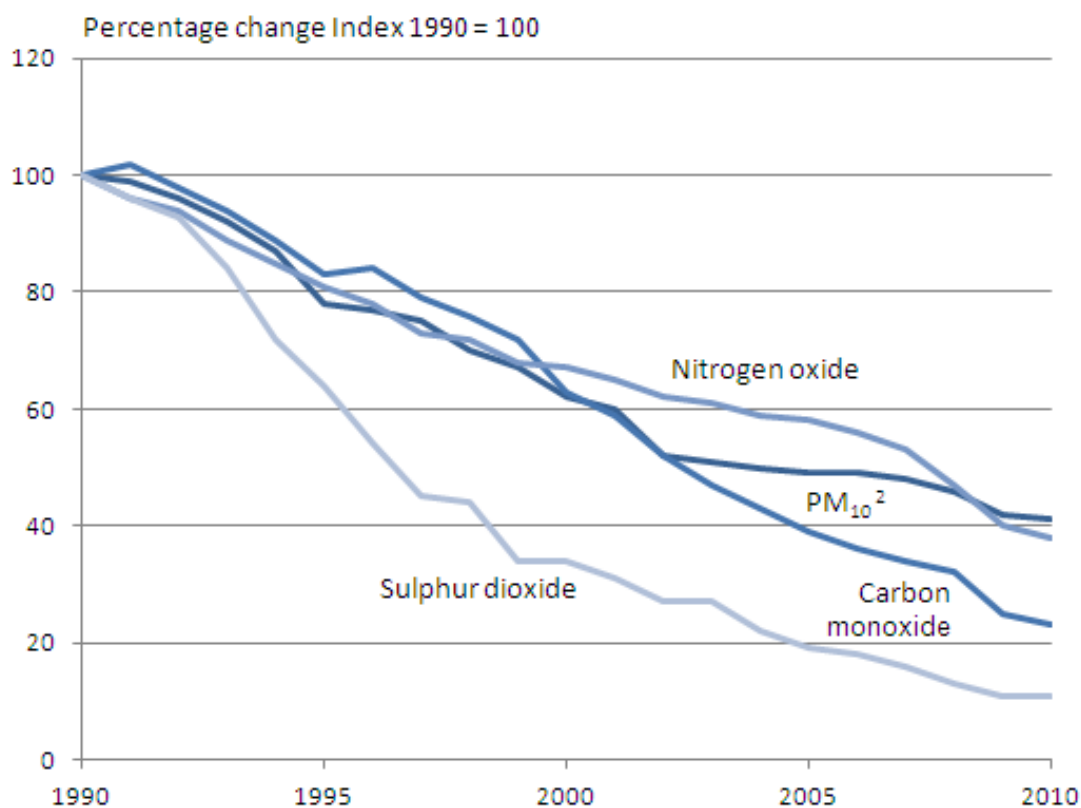
Air pollution

"Pollution can affect well being both through an awareness of the adverse health and ecosystem effects of pollution as well as through the direct health effects" (Carmen Lawrence, 2011).

Air pollutants can have a detrimental impact on the quality of the air we breathe. Many everyday activities produce air pollutants which can harm the environment and in turn affect human health.

Figure 23: Emissions of selected air pollutants (1)

United Kingdom



Source: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; AEA Energy and Environment

Notes:

1. Covered by the UK Air Quality Strategy.
2. Particulate matter that is less than 10 microns in diameter.

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Emissions of the major air pollutants in the UK have generally been falling since the 1970s, and the rate of decline has accelerated since 1989. Carbon monoxide (CO) is the most prevalent air pollutant, the largest source being road transport. Emissions of carbon monoxide fell by 77% between 1990 and 2010 (**Figure 23**). The probable reason for this was that exhaust emissions standards were introduced for petrol cars in the early 1990s, which in most cases meant fitting a catalytic converter to reduce pollutants. Road transport is the main source of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) which have similar effects to sulphur dioxide. Emissions fell by 62% between 1990 and 2010, again mainly as a result of catalytic converters being fitted on cars.

Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) is an acid gas that can affect both human and animal health, and vegetation. UK SO₂ emissions are dominated by combustion of fuels such as coal and heavy oils in power stations and refineries. Emissions fell by 89% between 1990 and 2010, largely as a result of the reduction in coal use by power stations.

Particulate matter is derived from both human-made and natural sources and are small enough to be inhaled into the deepest parts of the lung. In the UK the biggest human-made sources are fuel combustion and transport. Total emissions of particulate matter fell by 59% between 1990 and 2010, partly because of the reduction in emissions from power stations, the installation of equipment to reduce or eliminate airborne pollutants and increased efficiency and use of natural gas for electricity generation (Defra 2010).

Greenhouse gases

The Earth's climate is driven by energy from the Sun, which is absorbed by the planet's surface. Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, mainly water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, help to keep the Earth warmer by preventing some of this energy from escaping. Without this natural 'greenhouse' effect the Earth would be around 33°C colder than it is, with a global average temperature of about -18°C. Extra greenhouse gases are emitted by human activities and are dominated by carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. Of these, carbon dioxide has the largest long-term effect on the climate. The overwhelming scientific consensus is that man-made greenhouse gases are very likely responsible for most of the global warming seen over the 20th century.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) accounted for about 83% of the UK's man-made greenhouse gas emissions in 2010. In 2011, an estimated 40% of carbon dioxide emissions were from the energy supply sector, 26% from transport, and 15% from each of the business and residential sectors. Between 2010 and 2011, provisional estimates indicate that CO₂ emissions decreased in the residential sector by 22% (19 million tonnes), 6% (12 million tonnes) from the energy supply sector, 8% (6 million tonnes) from the business sector, and 1% (2 million tonnes) in the transport sector.

Since 1990, there has been a decrease in UK carbon dioxide emissions of around 23%. This fall in emissions has been accompanied by a decrease in overall energy consumption over the period, of around 5%. On a temperature corrected basis¹, energy consumption has fallen by around 6% between 1990 and 2011. A number of factors explain this effect, such as changes in the efficiency in electricity generation and switching from coal to less carbon intensive fuels such as gas (DECC, 2010).

Notes

1. The temperature corrected series of total inland fuel consumption indicates what annual consumption might have been if the average temperature during the year had been the same as the average for a long term period

The Environment - Renewable energy

“With consistent climate and energy policy support, renewable energy sources can contribute substantially to human well-being by sustainably supplying energy and stabilizing the climate”. (Professor Ottmar Edenhofer, Co-Chair of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group III in 2011).

Renewable energy is seen as environmentally friendly and may add to the well-being of future generations.

Use of energy from renewable and waste sources has more than doubled between 2000 and 2010, from 2.7 million tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe) to 7.1 Mtoe, an average of 10% each year. This was due to an increase in road transport biofuels and wood energy consumption, driven by increases in direct energy use in the electricity, water and waste, and consumer expenditure industry groups.

In 2010, use of renewable and waste energy increased by 0.5 Mtoe (6.8%) compared with 2009. As a result, 3.2% of total energy consumption was from renewable sources in 2010. Of the renewable and waste energy used in 2010, 45% was from waste sources such as landfill gas, sewage gas, municipal solid waste (MSW) and poultry litter, 20% from wood and straw, 18% from liquid bio-fuels, bioethanol and biodiesel, and 17% from renewable generation from hydroelectric power, solar photovoltaic, geothermal aquifers and energy from wind, wave and tide (ONS MNWB Environment).

About the ONS Measuring National Well-being Programme

NWB logo 2



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. It is about looking at 'GDP and beyond' and includes:

- greater analysis of the national economic accounts, especially to understand household income, expenditure and wealth
- further accounts linked to the national accounts, including the UK Environmental Accounts and valuing household production and 'human capital'

- quality of life measures, looking at different areas of national well-being such as health, relationships, job satisfaction, economic security, education environmental conditions
- working with others to include the measurement of the well-being of children and young people as part of national well-being
- measures of 'subjective well-being' - individuals' assessment of their own well-being
- headline indicators to summarise national well-being and the progress we are making as a society

The programme is underpinned by a communication and engagement workstream, providing links with Cabinet Office and policy departments, international developments, the public and other stakeholders. The programme is working closely with Defra on the measurement of 'sustainable development' to provide a complete picture of national well-being, progress and sustainable development.

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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This document is also available on our website at www.ons.gov.uk.

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Annex A: Measuring National Well-being Programme Domains and Measures

The Domains and Measures

Table 1 shows a list of the current domains and measures being used by the Measuring National Well-being Programme.

Table 1: List of Domains and Measures, November 2012

[RFT- Annex A Table 1 \(38 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The measures are largely the same as those published in July, however some minor amends have been made which are listed in table 2.

Table 2: Summary of amendments to measures since July 2012

[RFT Annex A Table 2 \(31.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

How the measures were selected

The domains and measures were developed based on responses to the National Debate, which took place between November 2010 and April 2011, existing research and international initiatives. After identifying approximately 3,000 potential measures, a number of criteria, as set out in Measuring What Matters¹, the National Statistician's report on the findings from the National Debate were applied. These specified that measures must be:

- statistically robust - that is they meet the standard statistical requirements of accuracy, reliability and validity;
- available for the UK;
- policy relevant;
- internationally comparable;
- have a time series and are likely to be available in the future;
- shown and compared for countries in the UK, regions of England, and smaller geographic units where required;
- able to be analysed in ways which show distribution of outcomes for individuals or households, e.g. analysis for poorest and richest households, by age group or by marital or employment status

The measures were then grouped into sensible domains and a number of other considerations were employed. These included;

- effective coverage of the domains; without overlap or duplication;
- provision of a coherent and consistent picture within the domains;
- relevance for measuring well-being or an aspect that can be shown to be related to well-being;
- relevant stakeholder endorsement;
- whether they are rated highly against other potential measures for measuring well-being;
- sensitivity to effective policy interventions without being readily susceptible to manipulation; and
- likely to receive public acceptance, interest and understanding.

In October 2011, ONS published a set of proposed domains measures of national well-being for consultation², and received nearly 1,800 responses. Overall there was broad support for the domains and measures proposed. Suggestions received were mainly concerned with the placement of measures within domains and the adoption of additional measures to complement those already included. For a more detailed account please refer to the Report on the Consultation on Proposed Domains and Measures³.

Future development

The domains and measures will continue to be developed throughout the programme. The next steps which will further consider the findings from the consultation and include a review of both the measures and the criteria used to select them will be published in Spring 2013.

Should you wish to feedback on the domains and measures or any element of the Measuring National Well-being programme please email: nationalwell-being@ons.gov.uk

Notes

1. [Measuring National Well-being index](#)
2. [Measuring National Well-being - Discussion paper on domains and measures](#)
3. [Measuring National Well-being index](#)

Annex B: Measuring National Well-being programme publications

Below is a list of outputs released by the Measuring National Well-being programme since November 2010. Publications are grouped under the area to which they relate and are listed with the most recent first. They are published here [Measuring National Well-being](#)

The Economy

The effects of taxes and benefits on household income 2010/11 (Jun 2012)

Comparisons of UK and EU at risk Poverty Rates 2005-2010 (Jun 2012)

Quarterly Household Release, Q4 2011 (Apr 2012)

Human Capital estimates 2010 (Dec 2011)

People

First Annual ONS Experimental Subjective Well-being Results (Jul 2012)

Subjective well-being survey user guide (12 month dataset) (Jul 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Households and families (Apr 2012)

Analysis of experimental subjective well-being data from the Annual Population Survey, April - September 2011 (Feb 2012)

Subjective well-being survey user guide (Feb 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Population (Jan 2012)

Initial investigation into Subjective Well-being data from the ONS Opinions Survey (Dec 2012)

Measuring subjective well-being (Jul 2011)

The Environment

UK Environmental Accounts 2012 (Jun 2012)

World Environment Day article 2012 (May 2012) UK Environmental Accounts

Developments in Environmental Protection Expenditure Accounts (Jan 2012)

Domain articles

Measuring National Well-being - The Natural Environment, 2012 (Nov 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Governance, 2012 (Oct 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - The Economy (Oct 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Personal finance (Sep 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Health (Jul 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Where we live (Jul 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Education and skills (Jul 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - What we do (Mar 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Our relationships (Feb 2012)

Measuring economic well-being (Jul 2011)

Domains and measures

Measuring National Well-being - summary of proposed domains and measures (Jul 2012)

Report on the Consultation on Proposed Domains and Measures (Jul 2012)

Consultation on proposed domains and measures of national well-being: responses received (Jun 2012)

Initial findings from the consultation on proposed domains and measures of national well-being (Feb 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Discussion paper on domains and measures (Oct 2011)

Cross-programme

Measuring National Well-being - Children's well-being, 2012 (Oct 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Measuring young people's well-being, 2012 (Oct 2012)

Is there more to life than GDP and happiness (Feb 2012)

Measuring what Matters: National Statistician's Reflections on the National Debate on Measuring National Well-being (Jul 2011)

Findings from the National well-being debate (Jul 2011)

Developing a framework for understanding and measuring national well-being (Jul 2011)

Measuring children's and young people's well-being (Jul 2011)

Measuring National Well-being - the Contribution of Longitudinal Studies (Jul 2011)

Interactive content

Measuring National Well-being - Interactive wheel of measures (Nov 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Interactive graphs (Nov 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Interactive tool (Jul 2012)

Measuring National Well-being - Interactive map (Jul 2012)