

# Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

**Working Paper, September 2010**

Author: **Sam Waldron**

**Office for National Statistics**

## A National Statistics publication

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are produced free from political influence.

## About us

### The Office for National Statistics

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority, a non-ministerial department which reports directly to Parliament. ONS is the UK government's single largest statistical producer. It compiles information about the UK's society and economy, and provides the evidence-base for policy and decision-making, the allocation of resources, and public accountability. The Director-General of ONS reports directly to the National Statistician who is the Authority's Chief Executive and the Head of the Government Statistical Service.

### The Government Statistical Service

The Government Statistical Service (GSS) is a network of professional statisticians and their staff operating both within the Office for National Statistics and across more than 30 other government departments and agencies.

## Contacts

### This publication

For information about the content of this publication, contact Joanne Evans  
Tel: 01633 455898  
Email: [equalitiesandwellbeing@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:equalitiesandwellbeing@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

### Other customer enquiries

ONS Customer Contact Centre  
Tel: 0845 601 3034  
International: +44 (0)845 601 3034  
Minicom: 01633 815044  
Email: [info@statistics.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info@statistics.gsi.gov.uk)  
Fax: 01633 652747  
Post: Room 1.101, Government Buildings,  
Cardiff Road, Newport, South Wales NP10 8XG  
[www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

### Media enquiries

Tel: 0845 604 1858  
Email: [press.office@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

## Copyright and reproduction

© Crown copyright 2010

Published with the permission of the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI)

You may use this publication (excluding logos) free of charge in any format for research, private study or internal circulation within an organisation providing it is used accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and you must give the title of the source publication. Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

For re-use of this material you must apply for a Click-Use Public Sector Information (PSI) Licence from:

Office of Public Sector Information, Crown Copyright Licensing and Public Sector Information, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU

Tel: 020 8876 3444

[www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm)

# Contents

Acknowledgments .....	2
List of figures and tables .....	3
Introduction and executive summary.....	4
Section 1: What is Subjective Wellbeing and why should we measure it? .....	6
Section 2: How is Subjective Wellbeing currently measured in the UK? .....	10
Section 3: What are the potential uses of Subjective Wellbeing data?.....	15
Conclusions.....	36
References.....	39
Appendix 1: Subjective Wellbeing questions on major social surveys in the UK.....	43
Appendix 2: Candidate ONS surveys for the inclusion of Subjective Wellbeing questions.....	68

# Acknowledgments

This report represents three months work undertaken by an ONS senior research officer (Sam Waldron) working in collaboration with Paul Dolan and Richard Layard of LSE and Robert Metcalfe of Oxford University. Abigail Self, Stephen Hicks, Paul Allin, and Rachel O'Brien in ONS each provided significant input along the way and useful comments on previous versions of this report. Helen Harris, also in ONS, contributed substantially to the review of candidate ONS surveys.

# List of figures and tables

Figure 1: Percentage of people reporting overall life satisfaction ratings (0-10).

Figure 2: Percentage of people reporting overall life satisfaction ratings (0-10) by socio-economic class.

Figure 3: Life satisfaction and happiness index by country.

Figure 4: Percentage of young people aged 11, 13 and 15 who rated themselves above the middle of the life satisfaction scale (a score of 6/10 or more).

Figure 5: Percentage of people fairly or very satisfied with selected aspects of life.

Figure 6: Percentage of people fairly or very satisfied with selected aspects of life by age.

Figure 7: Percentage of people fairly or very satisfied with selected aspects of life by social grade.

Figure 8: Percentage of people very worried about physical attack, burglary and theft of car 1992-2008.

Figure 9: Percentage of people (a) experiencing specified positive feelings everyday or most days, (b) never experiencing specified negative feelings in the last two weeks by social grade.

Figure 10: People's perceived control over factors that affect their emotions and mental health and wellbeing.

Table 1: Types of Subjective Wellbeing Questions Asked on Major UK, European and International Surveys

Table 2: Measuring Public Sector Agreements with Subjective Wellbeing questions

# Introduction and executive summary

This working paper reviews what is meant by the term subjective wellbeing, why it is important to measure it, how it can be measured, what subjective wellbeing questions are currently being asked on major social surveys in the UK and what the potential uses of subsequent data might be. The main purpose is to review what is already being done so that ONS, the rest of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) and others can consider their role in providing national subjective wellbeing data as highlighted by the landmark Stiglitz, Sen & Fitoussi commission report (2009). It is anticipated that a follow-up working paper will recommend which survey questions can be used to best capture subjective wellbeing and how this translates into policy. If user requirements exist that cannot be met by existing surveys, ONS may consider adding subjective wellbeing questions to appropriate household surveys. This will however be dependent on resources.

This report summarises a three month exercise specifically focussed on reviewing the measurement of subjective wellbeing. However, it is recognised that a balanced view of wellbeing includes and necessitates the measurement of objective factors as well. These are not reviewed here, but the view is taken that subjective and objective measures of wellbeing are stronger side by side. Given the time constraints, this report does not claim to be exhaustive, but does provide a framework for ONS to take this work forward further.

## **Section 1: What is Subjective Wellbeing and why should we measure it?**

---

Measures of subjective wellbeing aim to capture people's self-reported thoughts and feelings about various aspects of life (e.g. life satisfaction, happiness, work, relationships, psychological wellbeing). The main advantage of collecting this type of data is that paternalism (prescriptive questions that assume certain things are good for people's wellbeing) can be avoided and people's perceptions of their own wellbeing can be placed at the centre of policy. UK interest in this concept has grown substantially in recent years and the Stiglitz et al report published in 2009 specifically recommended that national statistics offices incorporate subjective (as well as objective) measures of wellbeing on national surveys. This, coupled with recent research findings supporting the validity and reliability of subjective wellbeing as a construct for measurement (see Dolan et al, 2008 & Layard, 2005 for useful reviews), suggests that ONS and the rest of the GSS may have a significant role to play in generating or exploiting high quality national subjective wellbeing data.

---

## Section 2: How is Subjective Wellbeing currently measured in the UK?

---

Subjective wellbeing can be measured in a number of ways, but the most common survey questions ask people to: a) evaluate one's global life satisfaction or happiness; b) evaluate various domains of one's life (e.g. work, health, relationships); c) evaluate one's experiences of positive or negative affect; or d) evaluate one's psychological wellbeing. This section provides an overview (but not an exhaustive review) of the extent to which these different types of subjective wellbeing questions are currently included on major social surveys in the UK. Sixteen surveys administered in the UK and three European and three International surveys with more than 1000 UK respondents were found to include at least one subjective wellbeing question. Currently ONS Household Surveys do not carry Subjective Wellbeing questions, although questions were commissioned on the ONS's omnibus survey in March 2010. Added to that, Eurostat have proposed an ad-hoc module on wellbeing in 2013 and it is likely that the the General Lifestyle Survey will be the vehicle to provide the information required which could include subjective measures of wellbeing.

---

## Section 3: What are the potential uses of Subjective Wellbeing data?

---

A number of examples are given in the first half of this section highlighting the different ways subjective wellbeing data can be analysed and presented to policy makers. The second half reviews how a number of major policy areas could benefit from subjective wellbeing data. Whether measured as an end to itself or as a means to an end, such data could be used to: a) monitor 'the state of play'; b) inform new policy; c) promote public wellbeing; and d) evaluate the impact of new or existing policies on wellbeing. The evidence suggests that various social and economic factors affect self-reported wellbeing, so it should be possible to influence subjective wellbeing via policy. A growing body of research also suggests that high levels of subjective wellbeing are a partial cause of various positive life events and outcomes (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

---

## Conclusions and future directions

---

Recent developments suggest that subjective wellbeing is a valid construct that can be measured reliably. Because of this, interest in measuring subjective wellbeing has grown considerably over recent years in the UK. Indeed, a number of major social surveys in the UK already include subjective wellbeing questions, and it seems that various policy areas could make use of these data. The question therefore is not *whether* to measure subjective wellbeing, but *how* to do this from now on. The balance between exploiting data that already exist and generating new data needs to be explored further, based on whether unmet user requirements exist.

Some of the next steps will involve reviewing which survey questions measure subjective wellbeing best and deciding whether the data currently available is sufficient to provide

national estimates of subjective wellbeing. If the latter is true, future work should focus on making better use of these data. If the latter is not true, future work needs to focus on collecting the subjective wellbeing data required for generating reliable national estimates. Methodological issues, funding implications and cognitive testing would need to be considered, as would the strengths and weaknesses of various social surveys for adding new subjective wellbeing questions.

In summary, this report reviews how subjective wellbeing is currently being measured in the UK and provides a strong basis from which further work can explore how best to generate national estimates of subjective wellbeing.

---

# Section 1: What is Subjective Wellbeing and why should we measure it?

## What is subjective wellbeing?

---

Subjective wellbeing concerns people's self-reported wellbeing (e.g. life satisfaction, happiness, psychological wellbeing). Survey questions of this nature aim to measure how people think and feel about their wellbeing rather than relying on more traditional objective indicators such as the level of educational achievement, employment, crime or material wellbeing. Indeed, human perception is fundamental to the definition of wellbeing and it can be argued that the only person who really knows whether a person is feeling well is the experiencing self (Layard, 2005). Survey questions that ask people to evaluate their own wellbeing allow for individual differences in terms of values and identity to be expressed. Although one person may answer a life satisfaction question by placing significant emphasis on their salary and job security, another person may answer the same question by placing significant emphasis on their family relationships and health. This means that such measures capture what people think and feel rather than focussing on observable phenomena that sometimes have little bearing on peoples' wellbeing.

Objective measures of wellbeing often fail to tap into what people think or feel, so have to assume certain observable factors influence wellbeing in certain ways. Generally speaking, objective measures focus on either objective-list or preference-satisfaction accounts, with a view to either improving objective circumstances such as health and education (Sen, 1999) or increasing the choices people have by raising average incomes (Harsanyi, 1982). Although objective measures of wellbeing are crucial, they cannot tell the whole story and the array of indicators currently available (e.g. numeracy, literacy and crime rates)

sometimes complicates the picture, with many observable factors acting as proxies for what really matters.

### Why should we measure it?

---

The main advantage of asking people to assess their own wellbeing is that paternalism (prescriptive questions that assume certain things are good or bad for wellbeing) can be avoided and people's thoughts and feelings are placed at the centre of policy. Although objective measures tend to correlate well with subjective wellbeing (Di Tella & MacCulloch, 2007; Oswald, 1997), they generally only account for a small proportion of one's life satisfaction or happiness (Galloway et al, 2005) Scottish Executive, 2005). Measures of subjective wellbeing, however, are seen by many as getting to the heart of the issue (Layard, 2005).

Although Victorian social policy emphasised the importance of promoting mental health, the rise of behaviourism in the 1950s heavily influenced disciplines such as Psychology and Economics and encouraged the measurement of what is observable (behaviour) to the exclusion of what is unobservable (the mind). By and large, UK social and economic policy since the Great War has focussed predominantly on improving the economy and meeting the material needs of the population. Mental health and psychological needs have been conceived as harder to measure, unreliable and within an individual's own responsibility. Objective measures of wellbeing have been favoured for some time because they're easier to measure and observable through behaviour.

Nonetheless, an encouraging literature is now emerging suggesting that subjective wellbeing is a valid construct that can be reliably measured. Much recent research indicates that measures of subjective wellbeing tend to correlate well with other people's views, behavioural data, brain activity and objective characteristics such as unemployment (see Layard 2005 for a useful review). Crucially, the last 10 years have seen a number of government and non-government reports begin to unpick how the UK could generate meaningful data of this nature. Political momentum has also gathered pace alongside the abundance of research now regularly published in fields as diverse as behavioural economics, psychology, neuroscience and philosophy.

### Political momentum

---

Evaluating the precise role of the State in promoting wellbeing is beyond the scope of this report. However, strong arguments are developing suggesting that now is a good time to generate national data on subjective wellbeing. The idea is that these data can then be used by policy makers alongside other measures that go beyond GDP (Dolan & White, 2007; Michaelson, Abdallah, Steuer, Thompson & Marks, 2008). The well-cited 'Easterlin Paradox' demonstrates that UK levels of life satisfaction and happiness have not risen

since the 1950s despite unprecedented economic growth, and although this research has been criticised for not taking into account the use of bounded measures to measure subjective wellbeing, it does suggest that much more than economic growth is required to elevate wellbeing.

As highlighted by the New Economics Foundation (nef) 'National Accounts of Well-Being' report (Michaelson et al, 2008), UK interest in subjective wellbeing has grown considerably in recent years. Key milestones include the Local Government Act 2000 giving power to Local Authorities to promote social wellbeing, publication of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit paper 'Life Satisfaction: The state of knowledge and implications for Government' in 2002 and the UK Sustainable Development Strategy which committed the Government to exploring the policy implications of wellbeing research. In addition, the Government's 2008 Foresight Review on mental capital and wellbeing recommended the development of "*an overarching mental capital and wellbeing measure*" and the HM Treasury working paper 'Developments in the Economics of Well-Being', also published in 2008, stated that "*well-being – both subjective and objective – is an important issue. It provides a framework with which to measure progress and analyse policy*".

The much-cited OECD Stiglitz Commission (2009) also provides international weight to the importance of measuring subjective wellbeing by recommending that national statistics offices incorporate subjective (as well as objective) measures of wellbeing on national surveys. The report states that:

*"Research has shown that it is possible to collect meaningful and reliable data on subjective as well as objective well-being. Subjective well-being encompasses different aspects (cognitive evaluations of one's life, happiness, satisfaction, positive emotions such as joy and pride, and negative emotions such as pain and worry): each of them should be measured separately to derive a more comprehensive appreciation of people's lives. Quantitative measures of these subjective aspects hold the promise of delivering not just a good measure of quality of life per se, but also a better understanding of its determinants, reaching beyond people's income and material conditions. Despite the persistence of many unresolved issues, these subjective measures provide important information about quality of life. Because of this, the types of question that have proved their value within small-scale and unofficial surveys should be included in larger-scale surveys undertaken by official statistical offices"*.

This was preceded by the OECD Istanbul declaration of 2007 encouraging national statistics offices to produce high quality information about societal wellbeing. The OECD social, employment and migration working paper by Boarini, Johansson & d'Ercole (2006) also recommends that survey-based happiness and / or life satisfaction data should be collected and used to inform policy and this is inherent within the OECD global project on measuring the progress of societies.

There also appears to be a demand from the new Government. The Conservative manifesto explicitly pledged to "*develop a measure of well-being that encapsulates the social value of state action*" and the new Coalition Government's Budget 2010 Report

stated that *“the Government is committed to developing broader indicators of well-being and sustainability, with work currently underway to review how the Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi report should affect the sustainability and well-being indicators collected by Defra, and with the ONS and the Cabinet Office leading work on taking forward the report’s agenda across the UK”*.

Despite growing demand these have not always been met with comparable action, but this has often been because of concerns over measurement techniques and the use of subjective wellbeing data to inform policy. However, a number of useful reports have since been published to help distil the debate surrounding measurement and identify how such data can be used to inform public policy (e.g. Bacon, Brophy, Mguni, Mulgan & Shandro 2010; Diener, Lucas, Schimmack & Helliwell 2009; Dolan & White, 2007; Helliwell, 2008; Michaelson et al, 2008). Section 3 provides further information about how subjective wellbeing data might be used to inform different policy areas, but prior to that, section 2 reviews how subjective wellbeing is currently being measured by major social surveys in the UK.

Ultimately, what we measure influences what we think and there is growing interest in collecting national subjective wellbeing data to help inform public policy. A GfK NOP poll carried out in 2006 on behalf of the BBC found that 81% of people supported the idea that the Government’s prime objective should be the ‘greatest happiness’ rather than the ‘greatest wealth’. Similarly, an international survey conducted by GlobeScan Incorporated on behalf of Ethical Markets Media in 2007 found that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of respondents felt that health, social and environmental data should be used alongside economic data to measure national progress. The debate has focussed on finding meaningful ways to measure subjective wellbeing and a deluge of recent research has moved us forward considerably.

### Summary

---

Given the wide acceptance that GDP is not a sufficient measure of wellbeing, the question is how can we measure wellbeing better and how does subjective wellbeing fit into this? By allowing people to assess how they think and feel about their own wellbeing, subjective measures of wellbeing avoid the need for proxy indicators and get to the heart of the issue. Interest in this concept has grown considerably in recent years, and in order to assess the potential role ONS and the GSS may have in providing national data of this nature, the following sections review what types of subjective wellbeing data are being collected by which social surveys in the UK and what the potential uses of such data might be.

## Section 2: How is Subjective Wellbeing currently measured in the UK?

Having explained what is meant by the term subjective wellbeing and reviewed why it is important to measure it (Section 1), this section focuses on how it is currently being measured in the UK. First the main conceptualisations of subjective wellbeing are introduced and then a broad coding scheme used to categorise the different types of subjective wellbeing questions currently asked on major social surveys in the UK is described. Table 1 provides a summary of this review and Appendix 1 lists every question reviewed from each survey alongside its corresponding subjective wellbeing question category.

Broadly speaking, subjective wellbeing can be broken down into what have been termed 'evaluative' and 'hedonic' accounts (Kahneman & Riis, 2005). Evaluative accounts require cognitive judgements to be made about how someone thinks and feels about something (e.g. How satisfied are you with your job?), whereas hedonic accounts measure people's experiences of emotion or affect (e.g. How sad do you feel?). The hedonic component is an unfiltered measure of 'life as it is lived' whereas the evaluative component measures 'life as remembered' (Clark, Fischer, Chapple & Senik, 2010). The majority of survey-based subjective wellbeing questions ask respondents to either recall their feelings or evaluate their satisfaction retrospectively, rather than asking respondents to note down the feelings or thoughts they are experiencing moment by moment. Typically, a vast number of subjective wellbeing survey questions give no time frame whatsoever.

The categories used to distinguish between the types of subjective wellbeing questions found on the social surveys reviewed were developed by ONS in consultation with Paul Dolan of LSE and the New Economics Foundation (nef). '**Global evaluation**' questions are those which aim to generate overall cross-cutting measures of people's experience of life (e.g. All things considered, are you satisfied with your life?). '**Domain evaluation**' questions are those which aim to generate overall measures of people's experience with particular aspects of life (e.g. work, health, material wellbeing, relationships, social support, quality of local area, environment). '**General affect**' questions are those which aim to generate measures of peoples' experience of emotion and affect (e.g. sadness, joy, anger, affection) and '**domain-specific affect**' questions are those which aim to generate measures of peoples' experience of emotion and affect associated with particular aspects of their life (e.g. fear of crime, enjoyment at work). Finally, questions about '**psychological wellbeing**' are those which aim to measure the underlying or protective factors affecting people's mental health. These could include questions about autonomy, resilience, self-esteem, optimism etc (e.g. Would you describe yourself as a resilient person? Do you feel connected to others?). Although nef have made the distinction between psychological

resources and psychological functioning (e.g. feelings of confidence versus engagement with others), such a distinction is beyond the scope of this report.

In addition to this, each of the above categories can be broken down by whether or not a specific time frame is referred to (e.g. Have you felt happy in the past 2 weeks? versus Have you felt happy recently?). Research has found differences according to which method is chosen, but the vast majority of social surveys focus entirely on retrospective evaluations or recollections of experiences that happened some time ago. For example, research has shown that retrospective evaluations of having a colonoscopy or a mid-term break yield different results when compared with moment-by-moment records (Redelmeier & Kahneman, 1996; Wirtz, Kruger, Scollon & Diener, 2003). Kahneman and colleagues have gone on to recommend that momentary experiences are more valuable measures of subjective wellbeing than retrospective evaluations because of the somewhat volatile nature of human memory (Kahneman & Riis, 2005). However, others have argued that it is memories rather than momentary experiences that influence future decisions (e.g. medical treatment or holiday plans), and for this reason, Helliwell (2008) and others have proposed that retrospective evaluations are adequate or even superior measures. Either way, retrospective measures are considerably cheaper to implement because Kahneman's Day Reconstruction Model would rely on Time Use Surveys which are more expensive and have a higher respondent burden.

Table 1 summarises the use of these different types of subjective wellbeing question on government and recognised non-government / charity surveys. Due to time constraints, only a selection of subjective wellbeing questions used in recent surveys is provided (identified via the Survey Question Bank web resource and various survey websites). It is likely that other subjective wellbeing questions will have been asked in other versions of these surveys, but an exhaustive search through every version of each survey's lifespan was not possible. Only questions which ask for a subjective response about one's own wellbeing are reviewed. Survey questions that ask respondents to give subjective evaluations of their satisfaction with, for example, service provision or experiences / attitudes towards other people are not reviewed. This review is also limited to surveys with over 1,000 UK respondents and European and International examples are provided where this criteria is met. Details regarding sample size, survey method, age and residency of respondents can be found in Appendix 1, along with the list of all questions reviewed and their corresponding category assignments.

It is worth noting that the categories used to differentiate between the various forms of subjective wellbeing question are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Wellbeing should be seen as a dynamic process and the various aspects of subjective wellbeing will impact upon each other. For example, one's sense of resilience and / or self-esteem will almost certainly impact upon one's experience of social and working life, but one's experience of social and working life is also likely to impact on one's sense of resilience and / or self-esteem. Nef suggest a number of 'feed-back loops' when thinking about wellbeing as a dynamic process (Thompson & Marks, 2008), but discussion of these is beyond the scope of this report. For now, it is sufficient to take a broad look at how the various aspects of

subjective wellbeing are currently being measured via survey questions and the next section will consider potential uses for subsequent data.

Although the subjective wellbeing question categories used here are not mutually exclusive, this doesn't mean that measurements are necessarily unreliable or invalid. It simply means that care needs to be taken interpreting the subsequent data and information regarding each aspect of subjective wellbeing is required to make effective policy decisions. The interplay between different aspects of subjective wellbeing is important, but it is also useful to think broadly about the different types of subjective wellbeing questions that can be asked on national surveys because this helps clarify the conceptual framework. This section simply aims to review the main use of subjective wellbeing questions in recent UK, European and International surveys.

As noted at the outset, subjective wellbeing questions should be asked in conjunction with a series of objective questions so that correlations can establish which factors affect people's subjective wellbeing and how. For the purpose of this review, however, a list of which objective wellbeing questions sat alongside these subjective wellbeing questions is not provided. The interested reader can review the cited surveys to find this information.

## Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

**Table 1: Types of Subjective Wellbeing Questions Asked on Major UK, European and International Surveys**

UK	† = N <2k ‡ = N <10k † = N <25k ‡ = N >25k ‡ = longitudinal	Global evaluation		Domain evaluation		General affect		Domain-specific affect		Psychological wellbeing	
		Specific time frame	No specific time frame	Specific time frame	No specific time frame	Specific time frame	No specific time frame	Specific time frame	No specific time frame	Specific time frame	No specific time frame
Public Attitudes and Behaviours towards the Environment (DEFRA) †			1	4	9	3	1	1	1	4	7
Well? What do you think? (NHS HS) †		1			3	4		2		3	19
National Survey for Wales (WAG) †		1	1	7	7				7		10
Health Survey for England (DH) †		2		4	14		7		3		16
TellUs Survey (DCSF) †					5		1		1		
Families and Children Study (DWP) †			1		7				2		
British Crime Survey (HO) †			1						5		
Citizenship Survey (CLG) †			1		2						
Taking Part Survey (DCMS) †			1								
Opinions Survey (ONS) †			4		5					1	1
British Social Attitudes Survey (NATCEN) †			2		3						
Understanding Children's Wellbeing Survey (CS) †			10		17		1		1		1
Understanding Society Survey (ESRC) † ‡		2	2		51	5			4	11	9
English Longitudinal Study of Aging (DH) † ‡			8	15	28	5	1	1	10	5	14
1970 Cohort Study (ESRC) † ‡		1	4		3		3		1		3
National Child Development Study (ESRC) † ‡			2		2				1		2
Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (DCSF) † ‡		1		1						6	
European		Global evaluation		Domain evaluation		General affect		Domain-specific affect		Psychological wellbeing	
		Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame
European Social Survey (EC) †		4	6		20	6	1	1	9	4	8
European Quality of Life Survey (EF) †			3	4	21	1			4		2
Eurobarometer (EC) †		1	1	2	2						

## Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

<i>International</i>	Global evaluation		Domain evaluation		General affect		Domain-specific affect		Psychological wellbeing	
	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame	Specific Time frame	No specific time frame
Gallup World Poll †	4	1	0	5	8		2			
World Values Survey †		2		4						1
Health Behaviour of School-aged Children †		1		2						

Table 1 suggests that global and domain evaluation questions without specific reference to a time frame are the most common form of subjective wellbeing question currently asked by major social surveys in the UK. The most comprehensive attempts at measuring the various aspects of subjective wellbeing are provided by the Public Attitudes and Behaviours towards the Environment Omnibus Survey (DEFRA), Understanding Society (formerly BHPS), the Health Survey for England, the English Longitudinal Study of Aging and the European Social Survey (2006 wellbeing module).

Defra have been asking a series of detailed subjective wellbeing questions on their Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment survey, but the sample size is less than 2,000 respondents. The Health Survey for England asks several useful questions about subjective wellbeing, but each is focussed predominantly on health. This is also true for the English Longitudinal Study of Aging, which is also limited to people over the age of 50. The fact that the English Longitudinal Study of Aging provides longitudinal data is significant, as this allows causality to be inferred from the data.

Understanding Society also provides longitudinal data (it has kept the British Household Panel Survey element to its design) and it also boasts a sample size of 40,000 households. This, coupled with the fact that it asks a broad range of subjective wellbeing questions, suggests that this could be the front runner in terms of delivering national subjective wellbeing data in the UK. However, the subjective wellbeing data have traditionally been used by academics rather than policy makers and there is an emphasis on subjective wellbeing questions that do not refer to a specific time frame. Also, the information regarding Understanding Society contained in Table 1 combines a review of the questions found in the Wave 2 of Understanding Society and several previous waves of the BHPS. Due to time constraints it was not possible to clarify whether certain subjective wellbeing questions previously asked in the BHPS have been dropped or whether they will be included on other waves of Understanding Society. This needs further exploration.

In addition to the above, it is worth noting that Eurostat are developing an ad-hoc module looking at wellbeing for 2013. ONS envisages that the General Lifestyle Survey would be used to collect the information required and although internationally led, the UK will have an opportunity to influence which questions are asked on the survey. It is possible that subjective wellbeing could be addressed here but this also needs further exploration.

## Summary

---

Section 2 indicates that a number of major surveys in the UK are already measuring aspects of subjective wellbeing, but it also indicates that most of the surveys are vulnerable to small sample sizes and it is not clear which have committed to continue asking subjective wellbeing questions in the future. There is certainly an argument for exploiting the data that already exist, but there is also an argument for developing a more comprehensive national subjective wellbeing dataset than what is available now. Although the Whitehall Wellbeing Working group (led by Defra) has helped ensure a number of major government surveys include an overall life satisfaction question (e.g. British Crime Survey and Citizenship Survey), the use of these data is limited in policy circles because there is a limit to the number of conclusions that can be drawn by correlating answers to such headline questions with answers given to other questions on the survey. The 2006 wellbeing module included on the European Social Survey represents the most comprehensive International attempt to measure national levels of subjective wellbeing and Understanding Society is the front-runner in the UK. Any attempt to improve on what Understanding Society provides needs to meet needs that are not currently met.

---

## Section 3: What are the potential uses of Subjective Wellbeing data?

Section 2 reviewed the types of subjective wellbeing questions currently asked on major social surveys in the UK and this is summarised in Table 1. This, the final section, reproduces some examples of recent subjective wellbeing data generated by subjective wellbeing questions and highlights some potential uses of such data. The aim is not to undertake new analyses or uncover new research findings, but to provide examples of how subjective wellbeing data collected via major surveys are currently being presented to policy makers. Some initial thoughts are also provided regarding which policy areas might be able to make use of subjective wellbeing data.

### Recent examples of Subjective Wellbeing data

---

The examples of subjective wellbeing data provided in the first half of Section 3 are broken down according to the types of subjective wellbeing question reviewed in Table 1. These

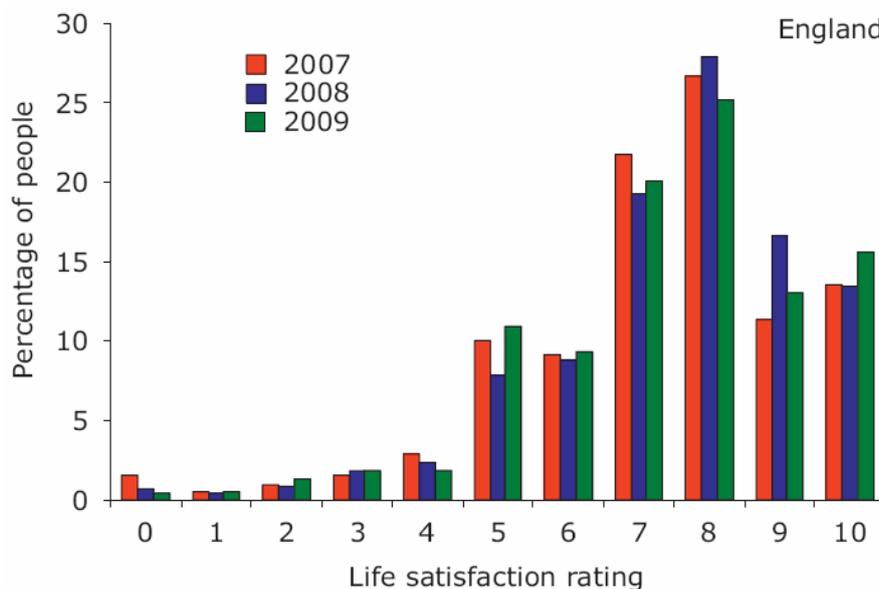
are broadly categorised as Global, Domain, Affect (including General and Domain-Specific Affect) and Psychological, and examples of questions with and without reference to specific time frames are provided where possible.

### Global measures

---

As noted in Section 2, global evaluation questions about subjective wellbeing aim to generate overall cross-cutting measures of people's life experience (e.g. All things considered, are you satisfied with your life?). Figure 1 below provides an example of such data collected by Defra asking the question: "All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Please answer on a scale of 0-10, where 0 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied".

**Figure 1: Percentage of people reporting overall life satisfaction ratings (0-10)**



Data Sources: Defra Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Survey (2007, 2009) and DH Healthy Foundations Life-Stage Segmentation Research (2008)

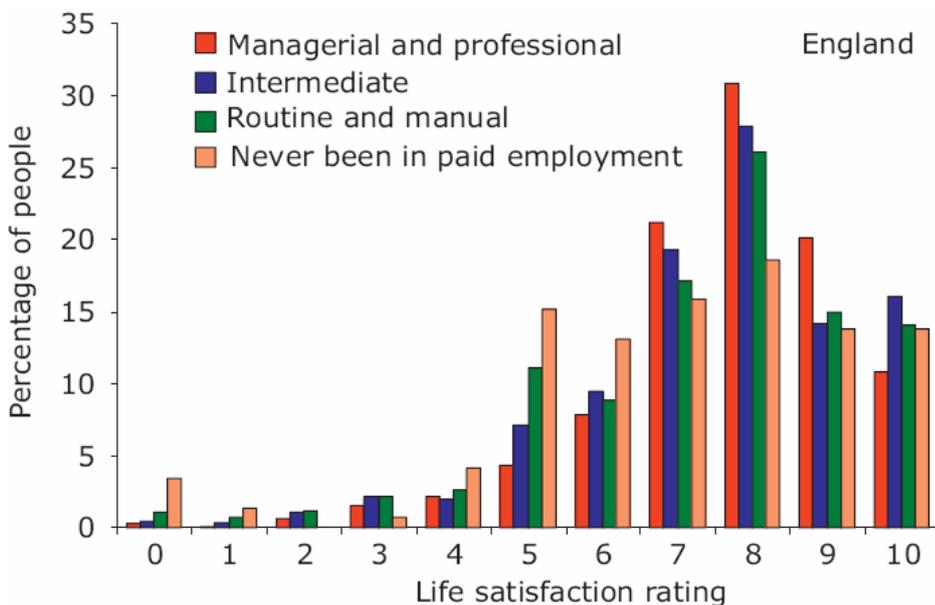
Image Source: Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009

Provided the same question is asked in the same way using a repeated cross-section survey with sufficient power, data of this nature can be compared annually to assess whether subjective assessments of life satisfaction are changing. Generally speaking, global evaluative measures of life satisfaction have remained largely stable in the UK over the last 50 years or so (Blanchflower & Oswald, 2004). Indeed, when the 2009 Defra Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Omnibus Survey asked people to rate their life satisfaction according to the above question, the average rating for

England was 7.4 out of 10, which is very close to the values of 7.5 and 7.3 generated by asking the same question in 2008 (DH Healthy Foundations Life-Stage Segmentation Research) and 2007 (the same Defra survey). The 2007 European Social Survey also asked respondents to rate satisfaction with their lives using a scale from 0–10 (with 0 very dissatisfied and 10 very satisfied) and the average for Great Britain was around 7.

Global evaluation life satisfaction data (in this case with no specific time frame attached) often becomes more informative when compared with other variables. For example, Figure 2 below reproduces a key comparison undertaken by Defra analysing life satisfaction as a function of socio-economic status (based on occupation). Although a number of reasons may explain why overall life satisfaction ratings differ according to socio-economic status, it is worth noting that overall life satisfaction has also been reported to differ as a function of educational achievement (Jones, 2010), so people’s aspirations and relative expectations may have an effect here. It is not clear what the average ratings per socio-economic status are, but it does seem that people employed in a managerial or professional capacity are less likely to polarise (i.e. select very dissatisfied or very satisfied) than people who have never been in paid employment.

**Figure 2: Percentage of people reporting overall life satisfaction ratings (0-10) by socio-economic class**



Data Source: Defra Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Survey 2009

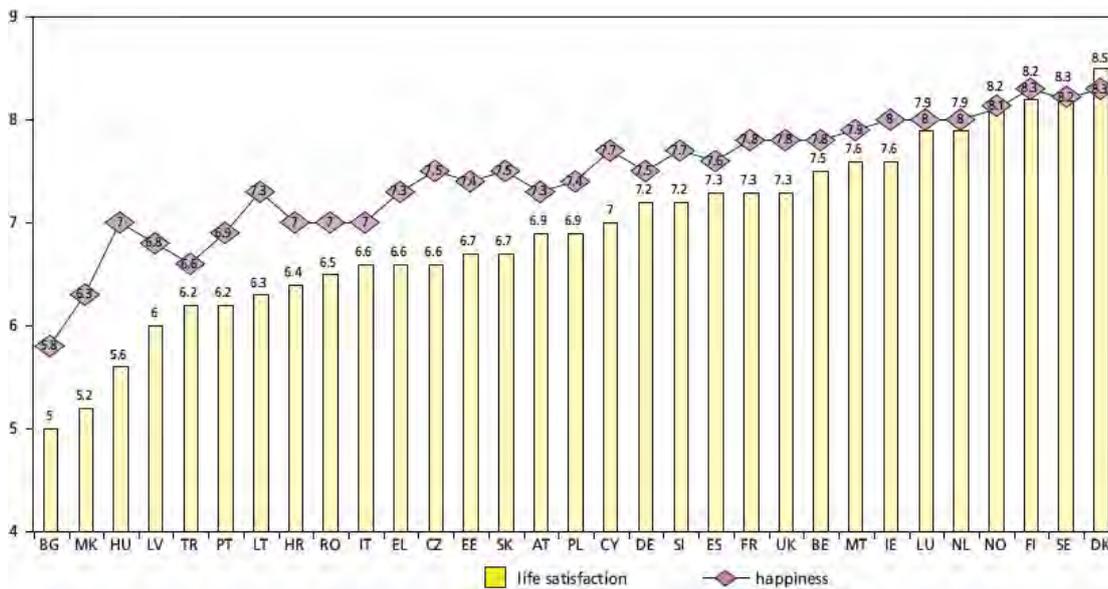
Image Source: Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009

Notes. National Statistics Socio-Economic Class is a classification system based on occupation that was developed for the 2001 Census

Other recent social surveys in the UK that have also asked global life satisfaction and / or happiness questions have tended to report similar levels. Different scales and / or wording of the question are often used, but the results (once transformed) do not generally deviate far from the data reproduced above. The General Health Questionnaire 12, which is used by several major social surveys in the UK (e.g. Well? What do you Think, Health Survey for England, Understanding Society) asks: “Have you recently (over the last few weeks) been

feeling reasonably happy all things considered?” and some surveys (e.g. Gallup World Poll, Health Behaviour of School-aged Children) use Cantril’s Ladder which is cited below. Although slight differences in the wording of global life satisfaction / happiness questions have not generally been found to impact greatly on the response given, subtle differences do sometimes appear depending on whether respondents are asked to evaluate their life satisfaction or their happiness. Figure 3 below reproduces data collected by the European Quality of Life Survey 2007 and there are consistent differences between the ratings (0-10) apportioned to life satisfaction (generally slightly lower) and happiness (generally slightly higher). There also seems to be less variation in the happiness data than the life satisfaction data. The precise questions asked were: “All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Please tell me on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied” and “Taking all things together on a scale of 1 to 10, how happy would you say you are? Here 1 means you are very unhappy and 10 means you are very happy”.

**Figure 3: Life satisfaction and happiness index by country**



Data Source: EQLS 2007

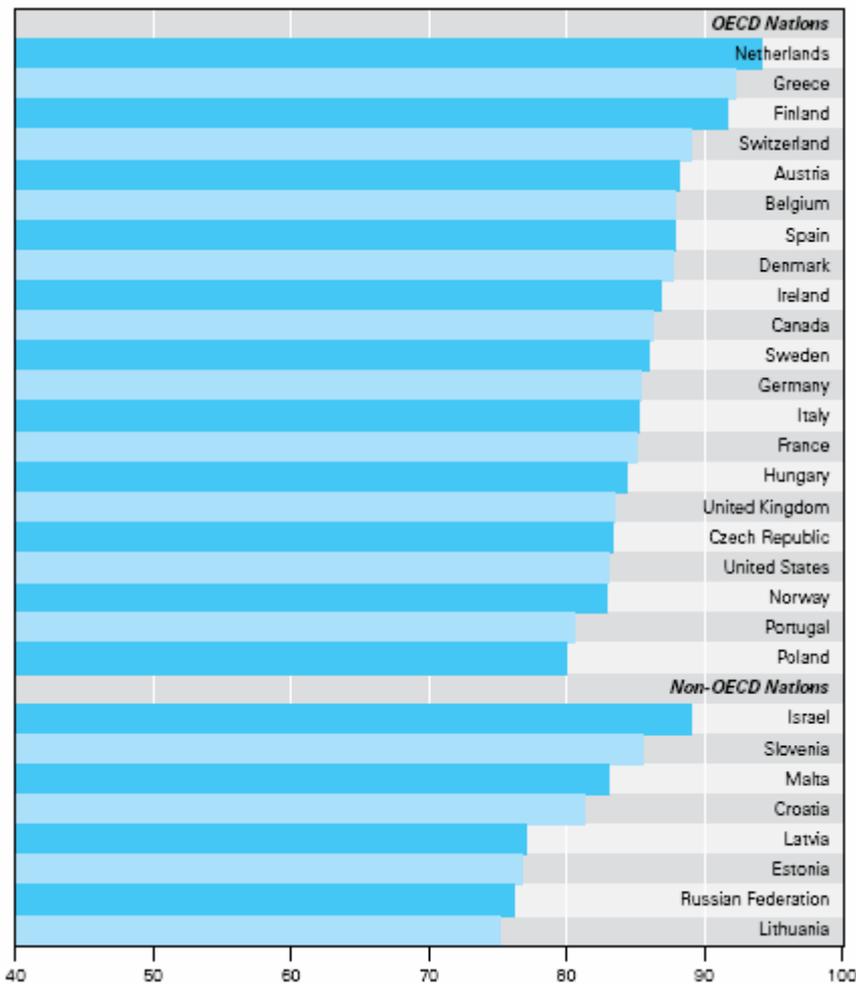
Image Source: Second European Quality of Life Survey Overview

Currently, there is no explanation as to why there seems to be less variance in happiness data than life satisfaction data. However, some studies have found answers to life satisfaction questions to be slightly more associated with income than answers to happiness questions (e.g. Leigh & Wolfers, 2005; Lelkes, 2006). Although these slight discrepancies suggest that life satisfaction and happiness questions may be measuring subtly different constructs, other more comprehensive reviews of the literature have found few instances where results deviate as a function of such differences in wording (Dolan, Peasgood & White, 2006). Correlations between different global measures of subjective wellbeing tend to be reasonable (e.g. Rees, Bradshaw, Goswami & Keung, 2010) with some estimates as high as 0.85 (Boarini, Johansson & d'Ercole, 2006), and much has been published in the field of Psychology evaluating how different measures relate to one another (e.g. Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Other factors found to be significantly associated with

life satisfaction and / or happiness include relationships, income, personal characteristics, education, health, work, employment, activities we engage in, attitudes/beliefs and the wider economic, social and political environment (see Dolan et al, 2006 for a useful review).

Although it is hard to know how much is lost in translation when assessing global subjective wellbeing measures across countries, life satisfaction and happiness data have been collected on a European and International scale for some time and the World Database of Happiness provides a useful collection of such data ([www.worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl](http://www.worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl)). Generally speaking, Scandinavian countries yield the highest subjective wellbeing scores (often as high as 8.5/10) and the UK finds itself somewhat down the 'ranking' around 7.5/10 (e.g. European Quality of Life Survey, 2003; European Social Survey, 2006). One international ranking of subjective wellbeing that has received a lot of attention in policy circles is that cited in the Unicef Report Card 7 which highlights some of the Health Behaviour of School-aged Children (HBSC) survey findings from 2001/02. The objective wellbeing and subjective life satisfaction / happiness of UK children and young people was ranked considerably below that of most other 'rich nations' and this finding is cited in a number of lobby and policy documents aimed at improving the emotional wellbeing of children and young people in the UK (e.g. Aked, Steuer, Lawlor & Spratt, 2009). One of the questions asked in the HBSC survey was: *"Here is a picture of a ladder. The top of the ladder, 10, is the best possible life for you, and the bottom, 0, is the worst possible life for you. In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment? Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand"*. The data reproduced in Figure 4 below indicate that UK children and young people were ranked 16/21 OECD nations.

**Figure 4: Percentage of young people aged 11, 13 and 15 who rated themselves above the middle of the life satisfaction scale (a score of 6/10 or more)**



Data Source: Young People’s Health in Context, Health Behaviour in School-age Children (HBSC) study: international report from the 2001/2002 survey, WHO, 2004

Image Source: Unicef Report Card 7

Global subjective wellbeing questions without a specific time reference are common (see Table 1), but some surveys have generated global evaluation measures with reference to a specific time frame. For example, the Understanding Society survey includes the question: “Would you say that you are more satisfied with life, less satisfied, or feel about the same as you did a year ago?” The fact that it constrains the time frame to the last year is an important difference because some respondents may find it difficult to evaluate their life satisfaction when no specific time frame is given. We do not know how most people answer such questions, but there may be considerable burden on memory and / or bias effects when respondents are asked to evaluate their life satisfaction without a time frame. Although asking people to evaluate their life satisfaction / happiness over the last two weeks, for example, might mean that factors apparent in the last two weeks that are not congruous with life as a whole may bias peoples’ responses, this should be cancelled out by individual variation if the sample size is large enough. Some differences have been

reported according to the time lag associated with asking subjective wellbeing questions (Redelmeier & Kahneman, 1996), which suggests that different concepts may be being measured according to how the question is asked. Most surveys employ the retrospective evaluative methodology because it is far cheaper and less labour-intensive.

### Domain measures

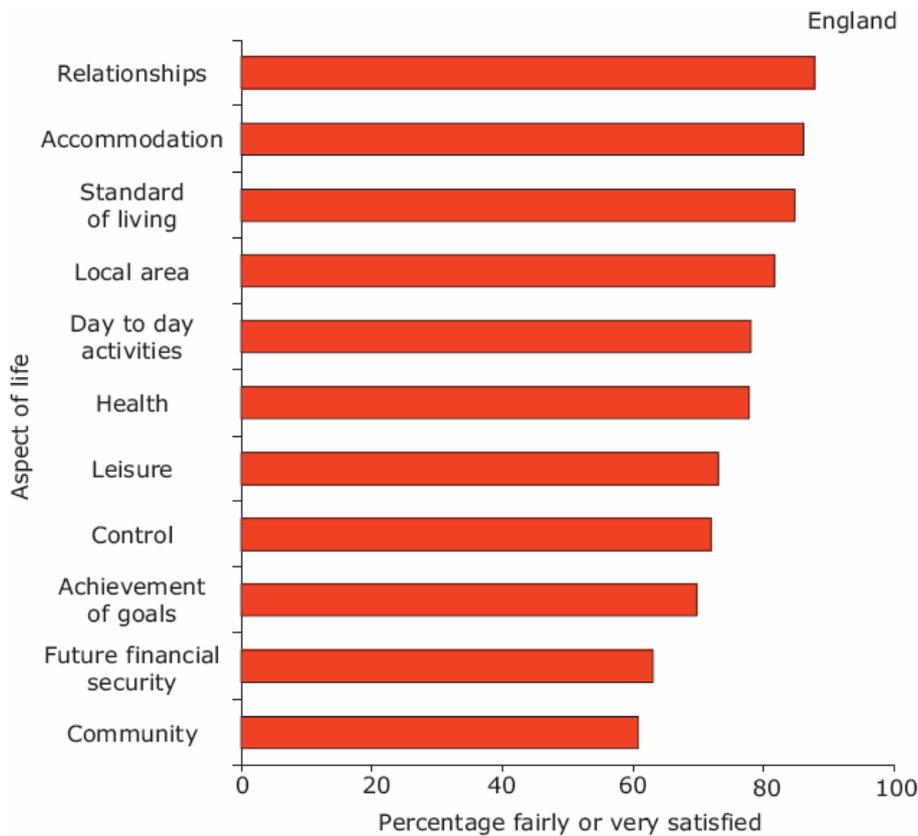
---

As summarised above, global measures of subjective wellbeing can be compared year by year, for different groups of people and against various factors (e.g. income, health, work etc). These data could be used to inform policy promoting overall life satisfaction and happiness, but more in-depth information about subjective wellbeing is often needed to inform specific policies associated with particular aspects of life.

Returning to the Defra's Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Omnibus Survey, Figure 5 below provides a good example of some domain evaluation data generated from the following question that does not include a specific time frame: *"I am now going to show you a series of different things relating to aspects of your life. For each one, please tell me how satisfied you are with each of them: Your standard of living, Your health, Your day-to-day activities (including work or studies), Your ability to influence what happens in your life, Your personal relationships, Achieving your goals, Your house / flat / accommodation, Feeling part of a community, The area in which you live, Your future financial security, Leisure activities / hobbies (Very satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Fairly dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied, Don't Know)"*.

Data of this nature could potentially be used to inform specific policies targeting particular aspects of life. Figure 5 indicates that when the cross-section of approximately 1,600 adults aged 16+ in the UK were sampled in 2007, community and future financial security were the areas people reported being least satisfied with. Respondents reported being most satisfied with their relationships and accommodation.

**Figure 5: Percentage of people fairly or very satisfied with selected aspects of life**

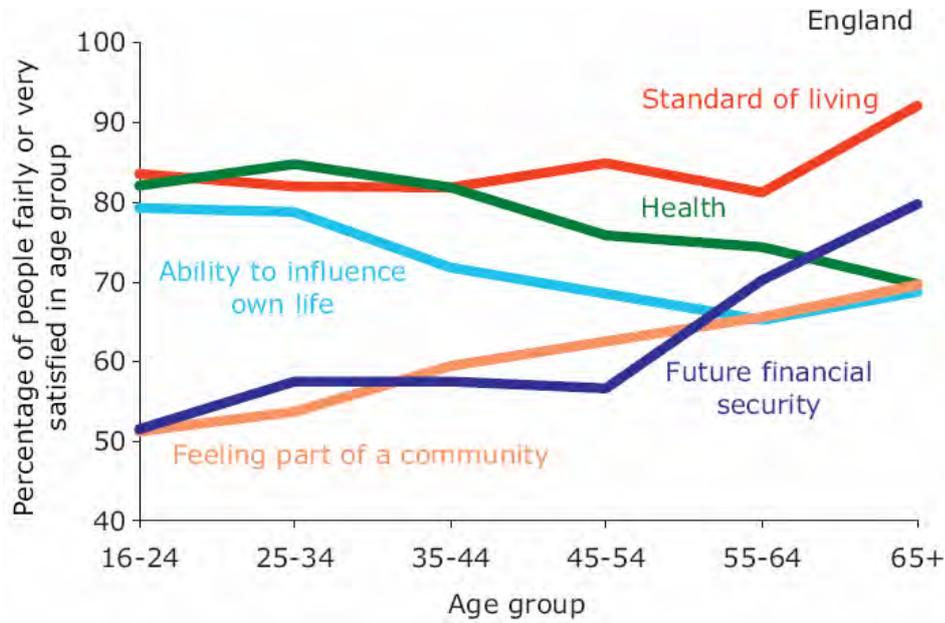


Data Source: Defra Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Survey 2007

Image Source: Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009

As with global measures, these data can become more informative when broken down by different groups of people and correlated with other (sometimes objective) factors. For example, Figures 6 and 7 below reproduce data analysed by Defra according to age and social status (measure by occupation) and substantial differences are observed with older respondents yielding higher levels of ‘feeling part of a community’ and ‘future financial security’ and the group consisting of casual labourers, state pensioners and the unemployed reporting lower levels of satisfaction with all aspects of life (except community) than two of the other three groups. Once issues surrounding causality and possible selection effects have been accounted for, this suggests that targeting specific policies aimed at improving particular aspects of people’s lives could be informed by subjective wellbeing data. Although subjective wellbeing tends to increase broadly with age, it is interesting to note that feeling part of a community and future financial security do so more than the other factors assessed in the Defra survey.

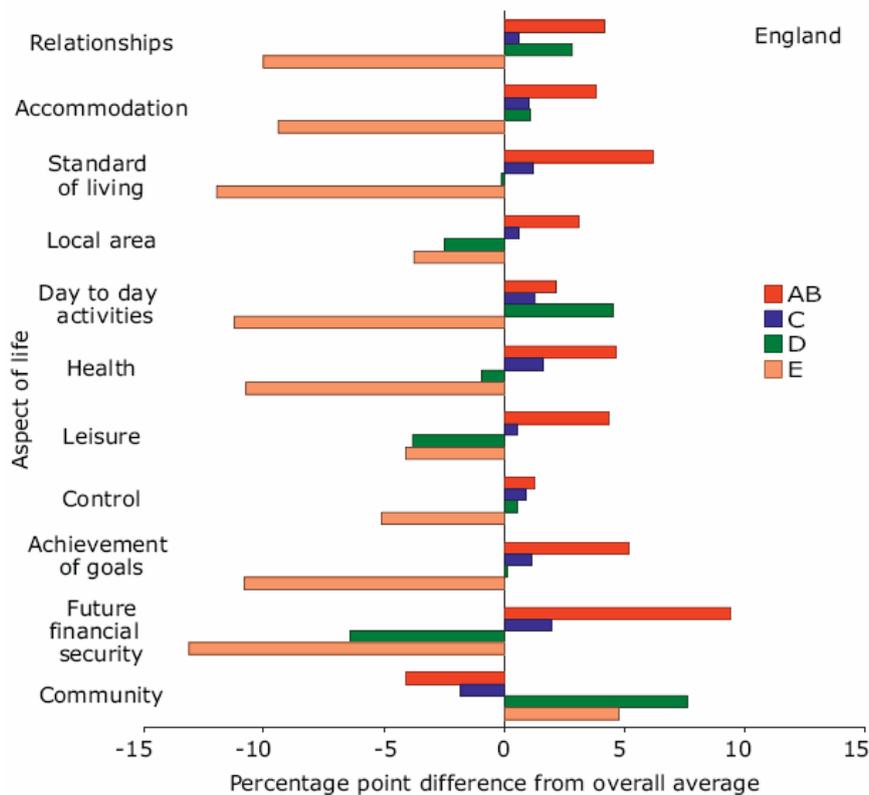
**Figure 6: Percentage of people fairly or very satisfied with selected aspects of life by age**



Data Source: Defra Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Survey 2007

Image Source: Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009

**Figure 7: Percentage of people fairly or very satisfied with selected aspects of life by social grade**



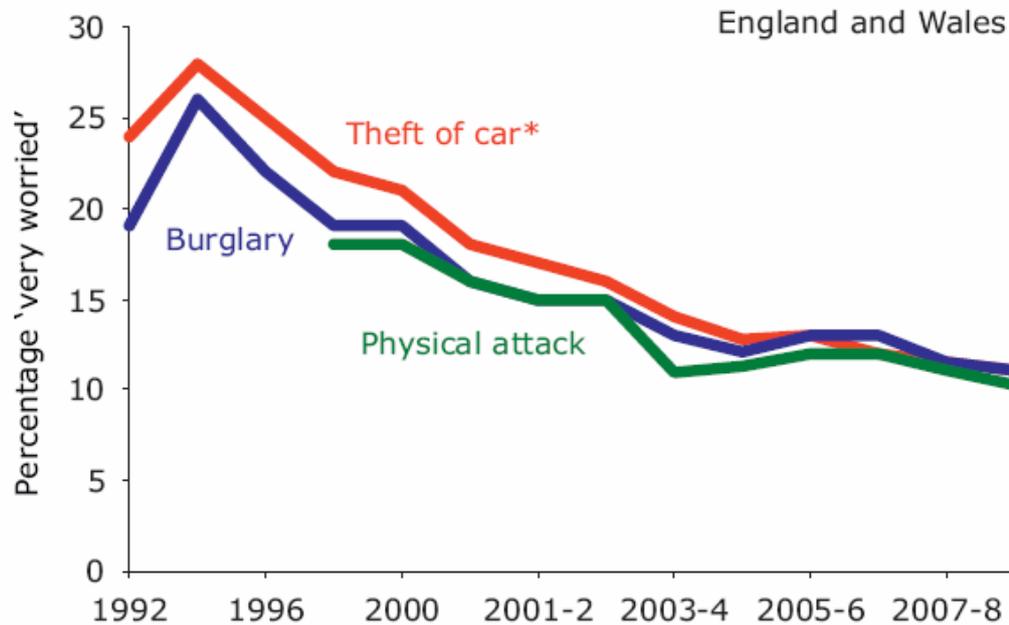
Data Source: Defra Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Survey 2007

Image Source: Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009

Notes. Notes: Social grade is a classification based on occupation developed from the National Readership Survey. Examples of occupation in each grade include: AB: Doctor, solicitor, accountant, teacher, nurse, police officer; C: Junior manager, student, clerical worker, foreman, plumber, bricklayer; D: Manual workers, shop workers, apprentices; E: Casual labourers, state pensioners, unemployed. Separate grades A and B, and C1 and C2, have been joined (to AB and C) due to very similar distributions.

Further data of this nature (i.e. domain evaluation) have been generated by most other surveys reviewed in Table 1 and a good example of domain data generated with an affective component is provided by Figure 8 below. These data are clearly associated with a particular domain, but are different to the examples provided above which did not have an affective component. More detailed data about people’s evaluations of particular aspects of life are available from sources such as the Citizenship Survey and the British Crime Survey. However, the purpose of this section is not to provide an exhaustive review of these findings, but highlight recent examples of each type of subjective wellbeing data. Therefore, examples of data generated by asking general affect and psychological wellbeing questions are provided next.

**Figure 8: Percentage of people very worried about physical attack, burglary and theft of car 1992-2008**



Data Source: British Crime Survey, Home Office

Image Source: Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009

\*Based on car owners

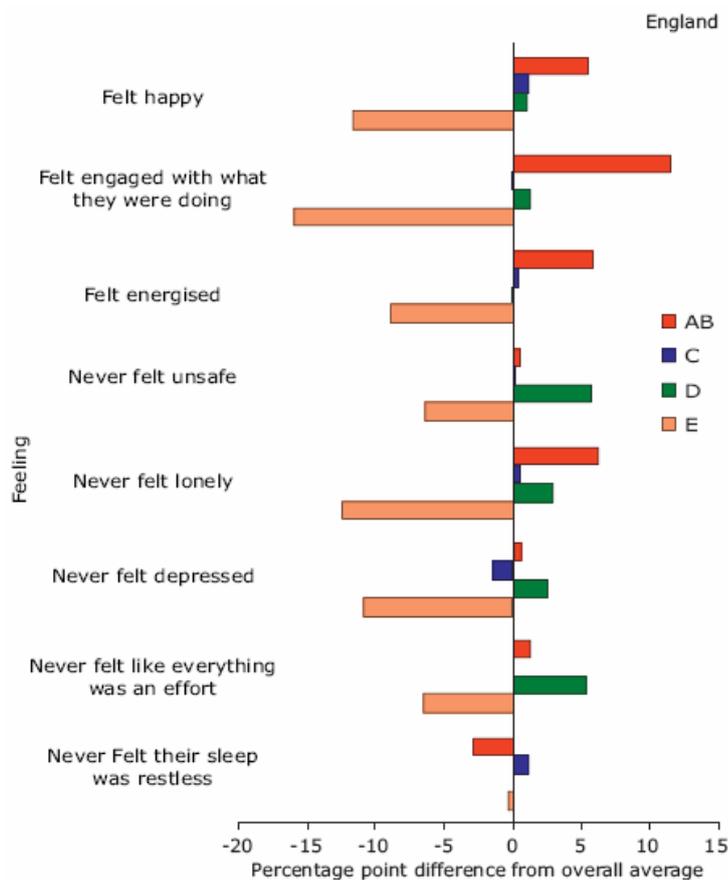
### Affect and psychological measures

Subjective wellbeing questions about general affect and psychological wellbeing are not connected to any particular domain. General affect questions ask the respondent to evaluate or record previous or momentary feelings of emotion or affect (e.g. joy, sadness, anger), whereas psychological wellbeing questions ask the respondent to evaluate or record previous or current underlying protective factors such as resilience, self-esteem or autonomy. Figure 9 below provides a good example of data generated by asking the following general affect and psychological wellbeing questions: *“I am going to show you a number of things people might say that they feel or how they might spend their time. For each one, please say how often during the past two weeks each description would have applied to you (Never, At least once, On a few days, Most days, Every day, Don't Know): You felt happy or contented, You felt depressed, You felt energised or lively, You felt everything you did was an effort, Your sleep was restless”*. The full question set represented in Figure 9 also includes a few questions that do not fit into these categories (e.g. experiences of feeling lonely would be coded as domain-specific affect), but those noted above serve as good examples.

Again, the data generated from these types of subjective wellbeing question are likely to become more useful to policy makers when broken down according to social, economic and other factors. Corresponding with some of the Defra data reproduced earlier, these

data indicate that the group of respondents identified as casual labourers, state pensioners and the unemployed reported less frequent positive affect in the last two weeks than the groups identified as ab) doctors, solicitors, accountants, teachers, nurses and police officers, and c) junior managers, students, clerical workers, foremen, plumbers and bricklayers. Implications from data of this nature may include mental health service provision and further exploration of why particular groups of people are reporting lower levels of positive affect and / or psychological wellbeing.

**Figure 9: Percentage of people (a) experiencing specified positive feelings everyday or most days, (b) never experiencing specified negative feelings in the last two weeks by social grade**



Data Source: Defra Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Survey 2007

Image Source: Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2009

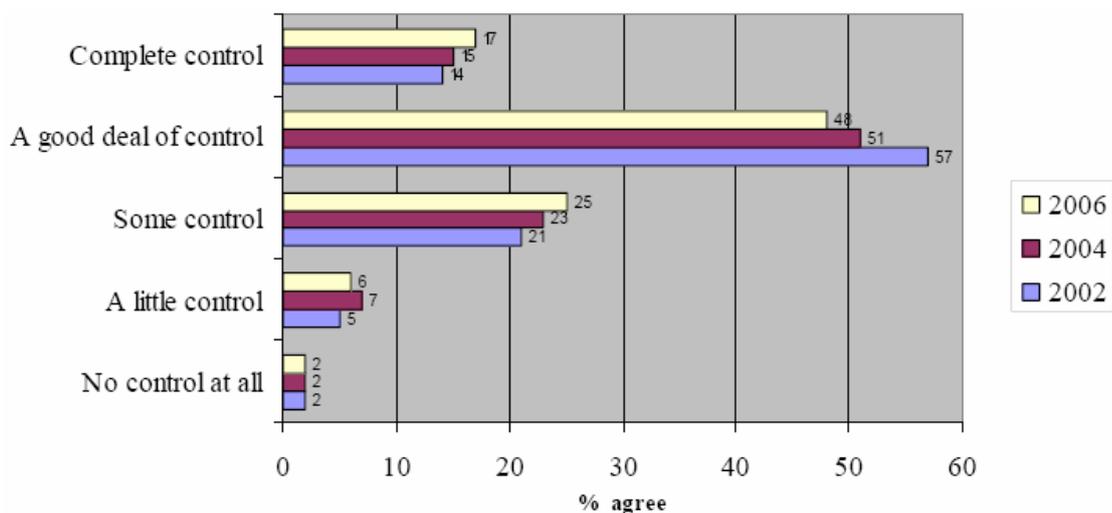
Notes: Social grade is a classification based on occupation developed from the National Readership Survey. Examples of occupation in each grade include: AB: Doctor, solicitor, accountant, teacher, nurse, police officer; C: Junior manager, student, clerical worker, foreman, plumber, bricklayer; D: Manual workers, shop workers, apprentices; E: Casual labourers, state pensioners, unemployed.

Figure 10 below, reproduces data generated from the three National Scottish Surveys of Public Attitudes to Mental Health, Mental Wellbeing and Mental Health Problems where the same question was asked on each: *“Thinking about all those things that might affect your own emotions or mental health and wellbeing, how much control, if any, do you feel you*

have over them?” Again, significant effects aren’t reported here because they are not the focus, but it is clear that such data could be used to inform policy intended to target mental health resources. These data, for example, could help a policy maker decide whether to allocate more or less resources to different types of mental health service provision year by year.

Other measures used to assess general affect and psychological wellbeing include the General Health Questionnaire 12 (GHQ-12) and the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWEBS). Amongst other things, these measures generate data regarding the extent to which people have lost sleep over worry, been able to overcome difficulties during the past few weeks and also peoples’ experience of feeling cheerful, relaxed and thinking clearly over the last two weeks. Aggregated scores can be used to determine peoples’ average experience of mental health and although the WEMWBS does not provide threshold values to determine how peoples’ mental health should be classified, the GHQ-12 does. Surveys that include subjective wellbeing questions of this nature could help determine which groups of people and which geographical areas have the highest and lowest levels experiences of positive affect and psychological wellbeing.

**Figure 10: People’s perceived control over factors that affect their emotions and mental health and wellbeing**



Data Source: Third National Scottish Survey of Public Attitudes to Mental Health, Mental Wellbeing and Mental Health Problems

Image Source: Well? What do You Think 2006 Survey report

A review of the data generated by the Understanding Children’s Wellbeing Survey that took place in 2007 also highlights the importance of checking how composite measures of affect and psychological wellbeing correlate with overall measures of global subjective wellbeing (see Rees et al, 2010). For example, the mean rating for confidence given by the 7,000 children who took part in the survey was 7/10 (based on an 11-point scale) and ratings of confidence fell more steeply with age for females (7.5 in year 6 to 6.1 in year 10) than for males (7.9 in year 6 to 7.1 in year 10). However, and perhaps surprisingly, confidence was one of the 21 factors least correlated with overall wellbeing (although still

significant). A textured analysis of how various measures of subjective wellbeing affect one another and build towards overall wellbeing is very important.

It is also worth noting that some surveys have asked respondents to define what wellbeing means to them (e.g. Opinions Survey, March 2010) and others have asked respondents to rate the importance of various factors according to how much they affect wellbeing (e.g. Well? What do you Think? survey, Understanding Children's Wellbeing Survey, 2006). For example, when respondents to the 2006 Well? What Do you Think? survey were asked the following question: *"What sorts of things, if any, have a positive or good effect on your own emotions or mental health and wellbeing?"*, 30% cited family, 28% cited leisure activities / hobbies / social life and 19% cited friends. Although this raises its own issues concerning whether or not individuals know what makes them happy (see Dolan, Peasgood & White, 2008), this is an interesting question to ask with subtly different implications for policy development. Some have also proposed surveys aimed specifically at identifying which unmet needs are most apparent in the population. For example, the Young Foundation's Sinking and Swimming report (2009) provides one example of how to utilise survey questions to predict which needs (material and psychological) may become more important in the future.

### Summary

---

The first half of Section 3 provides some examples of how subjective wellbeing data are currently being analysed and presented to policy makers. The examples used indicate that subjective wellbeing data can (and is) being analysed as a function of time, area, groups, age and various socio-economic factors. Global data on life satisfaction can be used for monitoring purposes and often becomes particularly useful via disaggregation and correlations with other (often objective) factors. Some have argued that including such global questions on lots of different surveys is as (if not more) useful than developing a new survey dedicated to asking wellbeing questions because it allows statisticians to tease apart the correlations with the different questions asked on various surveys (see Helliwell, 2008).

Data that help policy makers understand how different aspects of people's lives interact to produce overall wellbeing are important. Global, Domain, Affect and Psychological Wellbeing data need to be available to policy makers so they can be best informed about how and why subjective wellbeing measures differ across groups and places. For example, a data-set may indicate that having access to leisure, close friends and good health all contribute to positive wellbeing, but data pointing to how these factors interact and build to produce overall wellbeing is more important (Bacon et al, 2010). Understanding which factors protect individuals and communities from unhappiness and promote wellbeing and resilience is crucial to designing effective interventions and preventative schemes of work at local and national level. Subjective wellbeing questions on surveys should also be designed to provide policy makers with information regarding how current measures of subjective wellbeing might be used to predict future estimations. Indeed, some surveys do

ask respondents to estimate their subjective wellbeing in the future (e.g. 1970 British Cohort Study and Gallup World Poll).

### Policy areas that may benefit from Subjective Wellbeing data

---

The second half of Section 3 aims to build on the data examples provided earlier by providing some initial thoughts on which policy areas might be able to make use of subjective wellbeing data. This section does not claim to provide a definitive analysis of how subjective wellbeing data can be used to inform policy, but encourages the reader to consider a number of directions this could take. Reliable measurement of subjective wellbeing is a fairly recent development so there are currently few direct examples of how subjective wellbeing data are being used to inform specific policy. However, this topic is generating much interest and there seems to be an increasing knowledge about how subjective wellbeing data might be used to inform policy (either as an end to itself or as a means to an end).

Before considering how certain policy areas might be able to make use of subjective wellbeing data, it is worth briefly summarising some of the factors research has associated with subjective wellbeing. This is not a review of the research literature, but a taster of some (occasionally marginal) research findings. For a more thorough review, see Dolan et al (2006). Broadly speaking, some of the research findings have included significant correlations between subjective wellbeing (usually measured in terms of life satisfaction) and absolute income (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2002 - although diminishing returns point to a threshold at which this effect dissipates), relative income (Alesina et al, 2004; Easterlin, 2005), age (Ferrer-i-Carbonell & Gowdy, 2005), gender (Clark & Oswald, 1994), ethnicity (Thoits & Hewitt, 2001), personality (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998), genetics (Lykken & Tellegen 1996), physical characteristics such as weight and height (Cummins, Eckersley, Kai, Okerstrom, Davern, & Woener, 2004), education (Stutzer, 2004 – to a certain extent), health (Michalos, Zumbo & Hubble, 2000), unemployment (Di Tella et al, 2001), relationships (Helliwell, 2003), family life (Martin & Westhof, 2003) and a number social and political factors (Inglehart and Klingemann, 2000). Lyubomirsky, King & Diener (2005) also provide a useful review of the evidence indicating that not only do certain factors make people happy, but happiness also leads to success and a variety of positive life outcomes.

In their 'National Accounts of Wellbeing' report (2009), nef found clear differences in people's subjective wellbeing according to different factors, but report that "*the relationship between the conditions of people's lives and their subjective experiences of life is complex and demands a textured assessment of well-being to be fully understood*". Some objective factors were found to have largely the same effect across nef's assessment of the different areas of subjective wellbeing, whereas some were found to only affect certain aspects of people's subjective wellbeing. These results suggest that policy designed to improve subjective wellbeing needs to be multi-layered.

**National and Local Indicators**

---

Following the 2007 spending review, various UK government departments included targets in their Public Service Agreements (PSA) for 2008–2011 that could benefit from subjective wellbeing data. Some of these commitments included a ‘better quality of life’, ‘fairness and opportunity for all’, ‘stronger communities’ and a ‘more secure, fair and environmentally sustainable world’. Broadly speaking, it seems possible that subjective wellbeing measures could help track progress achieving each of these targets. More specifically, it would seem necessary to include subjective measures of wellbeing when tracking progress towards the following targets: ‘improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people’ (PSA 12), ‘tackle poverty and promote greater independence and wellbeing in later life’ (PSA 17), ‘promote better health and wellbeing for all’ (PSA 18) and ‘build more cohesive, empowered and active communities’ (PSA 21). Due to the time constraints of this project, it was not possible to establish the extent to which subjective measures of wellbeing were being included in the evaluation of the PSA targets noted above, but Table 2 suggests some subjective wellbeing questions that could be asked on major government surveys to help track progress related to the PSAs cited above.

**Table 2: Measuring PSAs with Subjective Wellbeing questions**

PSA	Description	3 Potential Subjective Wellbeing Questions
12	Improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people	Do you think your life is going well? How often did you feel happy yesterday? How healthy do you think you are?
17	Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and wellbeing in later life	All in all, how satisfied are you with your life? How often did you feel happy yesterday? Are you able to live independently?
18	Promote better health and wellbeing for all	All in all how satisfied are you with your life? How often did you feel happy yesterday? How healthy do you think you are?
21	Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities	How connected do you feel to your community? Are you treated with respect by your neighbours? Are you satisfied with the opportunities for activities in your local area?

Broadly speaking, the concept and language of measuring subjective wellbeing at the local level was first introduced through the Local Government Act 2000. The Act provided local authorities with the power to promote economic, social and environmental wellbeing and a

number of subjective wellbeing indicators have been developed to help local authorities measure quality of life at the local level. The National Indicator Set, for example, includes a small number of indicators which aim to measure (mainly) domain aspects of subjective wellbeing and Local Authorities are required to provide the Audit Commission and Government departments with corresponding data. NI 2 measures the percentage of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood, NI 4 measures the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality, NI 5 measures people's overall / general satisfaction with their local area, NI 50 measures the emotional health of children, NI 119 measures peoples' perception of their overall health and wellbeing, NI 137 measures healthy life expectancy at age 65 and NI 138 measures the satisfaction of people over 65 with both their home and neighbourhood. Local authorities can choose which indicators they wish to include on their Place Survey (in England at least) and other objective wellbeing questions exist on the National indicator Set that could be used to measure other aspects of subjective wellbeing if altered slightly.

### Policy Application

---

Subjective wellbeing data could be used primarily for 4 functions:

- 1) Monitoring – Collecting subjective wellbeing data need not always be done with change in mind. Monitoring subjective wellbeing could be important to ensure that other changes that effect society do not reduce overall wellbeing and / or satisfaction with life. For example, the UK Sustainable Development Indicator set includes various subjective wellbeing questions with no specific targets attached because their function is purely contextual (Thompson & Marks, 2008). Similarities can be seen here between the current use of GDP because GDP is not used directly to inform policy but is monitored carefully and sudden drops would have to be examined carefully and specific policies may be developed to ensure it rises again.
- 2) Informing new policy – Measures of subjective wellbeing could help inform new policy. For example, in a major mental health report Friedli & Parsonage (2007) cite subjective wellbeing research as a primary reason for building a new economic case for mental health promotion. More specifically, if commuting was found to adversely affect subjective wellbeing (for example), this information could be used to devise new policies aimed at reducing the negative effect of commuting on peoples lives.
- 3) Promoting behaviour change – Subjective wellbeing data could also be used to promote circumstances that have been found to lead to improved subjective wellbeing. For example, if having the option to work from home was found to improve subjective wellbeing, the Government could provide incentives for organisations to offer this option to employees who could in turn offer incentives to employees to take it up. Related to this, Gruber & Mullainathan (2002) have found that smoking taxation in the US improved the wellbeing of smokers.

4) Evaluating existing policy – Subjective wellbeing data can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of services aimed at improving people’s lives. For example, if evaluating which of two social care options are better, subjective wellbeing data could be collected under each type of care provision. These data could then be used to help decide which care provision was more effective. Using subjective wellbeing data as a ‘yardstick’ could allow for the ranking of options across very different policy domains needed to choose between different Government priorities (Layard, 2005). Estimated gains in subjective wellbeing could be computed for different policy areas and policymakers could then use this information to decide which form of spending will lead to the largest increase in subjective wellbeing (Donovan & Halpern, 2002). Subjective wellbeing data may also be useful to evaluate whether the introduction of new policies (e.g. introduction of wind farms) affect subjective wellbeing. The target may be for subjective wellbeing to stay constant rather than increase or decrease.

A summary of how this might look for a number of different policy areas is provided below. For a more detailed analysis of how subjective wellbeing data might be used to inform policy, see Clark, Fischer, Chapple and Senik (2010) and Deiner et al (2009).

### Health

---

There are now a number of major social surveys in the UK that ask respondents to assess their own physical and mental health. Policy makers could make use of these data to monitor how people feel about their physical and mental health, inform new policy (e.g. based on trends), promote behaviour change and evaluate the effects of existing or new policy on health and wellbeing. Self-reported positive and negative experiences of physical and mental health can be correlated with a variety of other variables (subjective and objective) and cause and effect can be determined from longitudinal studies. Of the surveys reviewed in Table 1, the Health Survey for England, the English Longitudinal Study of Aging and Understanding Society contribute the most to this area. Self-reported health data could also be used to help understand how experiences of physical ill-health can affect different areas of people’s life and what the lower level mental health needs of the UK population are. The latter makes considerable demands on primary health care services (Bacon et al, 2010). The DH funded New Horizons framework has drawn upon subjective wellbeing data to help develop a shared vision for mental health and further data of this nature could help evaluate progress achieving a better mental health for all.

### Family and social relationships

---

Social relationships are one of the most important factors explaining the manifestation of subjective wellbeing. High-level data regarding people’s satisfaction with their family and social relationships could therefore help policy makers monitor the situation and respond to developing trends (e.g. the reduction in trust observed in recent years). The time people spend with their family and friends and the enjoyment they get out of these interactions will

often be constrained by work commitments and psychological wellbeing. Therefore, further data unpicking these issues on a national scale could help inform policy designed to support successful long-term family, personal and social relationships (e.g. through the provisions of marriage counselling). If certain groups of people or certain geographical areas were found to have particular needs in terms of wellbeing, parenting programmes could be utilised to emphasise particular aspects of parent and child wellbeing.

### Communities

---

Many cultures live side by side in the UK and subjective wellbeing data regarding how respected people feel by their community could help policy makers understand related issues in more depth. Higher community engagement is often associated with higher life satisfaction (Donovan & Halpern, 2002), both for the individual and for others in the community. Subjective wellbeing data have also pointed to striking differences according to age for trust and belonging, with low scores for the youngest and high scores for the oldest (e.g. Michaelson et al, 2009). Policy makers working in this field might be able to use such data to develop strategies aimed specifically at building feelings of trust and belonging amongst young people. Subjective wellbeing data regarding peoples' feelings of engagement with their community and their ability to influence local decisions could also be utilised by initiatives designed to help build social networks and avoid measures that damage community connectedness, such as major roads built through the middle of communities (Bacon et al, 2010).

### Education

---

Monitoring educational achievement is important, but monitoring children's experiences of education and school life could be seen as equally important. Tapping into this via subjective measures of children's experiences at school could inform policy beyond the more traditional measurement of educational achievement. The TellUs survey, currently funded by DCSF, collects some data of this nature (e.g. experiences of bullying) and the Health Behaviour of School-aged Children survey measures the percentage of pupils who report 'liking school'. Indeed, some recent initiatives led by nef and the Young Foundation have begun to explore how classes in schools could teach children about life skills such as resilience, confidence and self-esteem (Bacon et al, 2010). Subjective wellbeing data were instrumental in developing this work and such measures are also being used to evaluate the success of these pilots. Exploiting the currently available subjective wellbeing data and generating further where needed could provide policy makers with the information needed to harness the education system to promote wellbeing in children and young as far as possible.

### Work

---

High-level data regarding the proportion of people who are satisfied with their job could be used to complement the existing data regarding employment rates. Subjective wellbeing data have previously demonstrated that unemployment is associated with significantly lower levels of life satisfaction and this effect is largely because of the lack of social engagement rather than the loss of income. Therefore, these data can and have been used by policy makers to develop *“active welfare policies that prioritise fast-tracking the unemployed back to employment rather than just boosting their financial support”* (Donovan & Halpern, 2002). Recent subjective wellbeing data regarding commuting suggest that workers overestimate the benefits of commuting to earn higher wages and underestimate the negative effect this has on wellbeing (Stutzer & Frey, 2006). These data could be used to promote behaviour change via flexible working entitlements.

### Material wellbeing

---

Subjective wellbeing data regarding the proportion of people who feel they are struggling ‘to make ends meet’ could be used to complement existing objective data related to wealth and assets. People’s satisfaction with their income, for example, tends to be mediated by comparisons made with significant others. Aggregated measures of actual income often miss this important detail so redistributive policies could be adjusted to reflect the impact of relative, as well as absolute, income on life satisfaction.

### Local area and environment

---

Research (e.g. Newton, 2007) has shown that satisfaction with one’s local area and environment (e.g. opportunities to engage in activities and leisure, access to green spaces) is associated with subjective wellbeing. Given the UK’s ever changing rurality and urbanity and the number of policies designed to improve access to activities and leisure in local areas, it seems plausible that policy makers could make good use of data monitoring people’s satisfaction with their local area and environment. Significant deviations from the mean in certain geographical areas or groups of people might inform new policy and factors known to lead to better wellbeing (e.g. participation in leisure activities) could be encouraged via incentives to promote behaviour change. The example of evaluating the effect of introducing wind farms on people’s subjective wellbeing was given earlier and other related examples could include evaluating the impact of changes to town planning, access to parks and places to participate in hobbies.

### Crime

---

Fear of crime has been measured for some time and has been dropping for a number of years. It is of course also essential to measure and monitor objective levels of crime, and these have also gone down in line with fear of crime (indicating that subjective measures

can be closely related to their objective counterpart). Headline data indicating that fear of crime is reducing year by year is useful, but disaggregation makes these data more useful to policy makers because groups of people and geographical locations may reveal particular trends. In terms of promoting behaviour change, fear of crime data may be able to direct policies to the most needy people and / or places, and such data could help evaluate whether the introduction of new measures (e.g. CCTV) reduce people's fear of crime. The literature suggests that fear of crime is often disproportionately higher than actual crime levels (Walker, Flatley, Kershaw & Moon, 2009) so reducing people's anxiety about crime can be beneficial to their wellbeing and help develop social trust.

### Public Information

---

On a slightly different note, and with particular focus on promoting behaviour change, is the argument that the State could provide better public information regarding life satisfaction / happiness. StatCan, for example, have added life satisfaction measures to all of their major surveys and the results generated are made available to the public to inform lifestyle choices. This is similar to how information regarding physical ill-health is currently made available to the public in the UK.

There are numerous other policy areas that could make use of subjective wellbeing data (e.g. parental leave, family support, retirement) and the recently published book 'Wellbeing for Public Policy' and the OECD report 'Subjective Wellbeing and Social Policy' both provide more detailed discussions. A number of local authority examples can also be found in Bacon et al (2010) and selected international examples can be found in Levett-Therivel (2007).

### Summary

---

Although the translation of subjective wellbeing data into policy is only just beginning, the second half of Section 3 provides some initial thoughts on which policy areas might be able to make use of such data (e.g. Health, Relationships, Work, Education, Crime). There are of course determinants of subjective wellbeing that policy cannot influence. For example, genetics, gender and age have been found to have large effects on subjective wellbeing, as have religious and political values. Early upbringing is also something largely beyond the realms of policy that will continue to affect people's subjective wellbeing. However, it seems that a number of policy areas could make good use of subjective wellbeing data, so some crucial next steps will include determining just what these user requirements are. There seems to be an unprecedented interest in using subjective wellbeing data to inform policy, but given the time constraints of this project, it was not possible to find concrete examples of how subjective wellbeing data can directly shape specific policies. Future work would benefit from asking policy makers what subjective wellbeing data would be of

most use. Indeed, many academics and policy makers are already writing about the possibilities (see Clark et al, 2010 and Deiner et al, 2009 for useful reviews).

---

## Conclusions

There is no doubt that interest in measuring subjective wellbeing has grown in the UK over recent years and few would argue against collecting national data of this nature. Indeed, a large number of social surveys in the UK already include subjective wellbeing questions (see Section 2) or are likely to in the near future (e.g. General Lifestyle Survey – 2013). The question therefore is not *whether* the UK should be collecting national subjective wellbeing data but *how* this should be undertaken from now on.

Subjective wellbeing questions get to the heart of the wellbeing agenda by listening to people's views about their own wellbeing. By doing so, paternalism (prescriptive questions that assume certain things are good or bad for wellbeing) can be avoided and the views of the experiencing self can be placed at centre stage. Although the translation of data into policy is only just beginning (see Section 3), much recent research indicates that subjective wellbeing is a valid construct that can be measured reliably (see Dolan et al, 2008 and Layard, 2005 for useful reviews). The Stiglitz, Sen & Fitoussi commission report (2009) provides international weight to the importance of measuring subjective wellbeing by recommending that national statistics offices incorporate subjective measures of wellbeing on national surveys.

Despite the fact that numerous social surveys in the UK include measures of subjective wellbeing, the lack of an agreed metric, generally small sample sizes and unclear commitments to collecting these data in the future suggests that there may be a role for ONS and the GSS to support the delivery of subjective wellbeing data on a national scale. Although Defra include a number of subjective wellbeing questions on their Public Attitudes and Behaviours Towards the Environment Omnibus Survey, the sample size is less than 2,000 and restricted to England, thus limiting its use as a national (and regional) measure of subjective wellbeing. Other social surveys (e.g. the British Crime Survey) focus on particular domains of subjective wellbeing (often to the exclusion of other important factors) and some rely heavily on the headline life satisfaction question (e.g. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?). Due to its large sample size and longitudinal element, Understanding Society (formerly BHPS) provides the highest quality subjective wellbeing data available in the UK. Therefore, any attempts to improve on this need to fulfil a user requirement that is not already met.

Assessing whether there are unmet user requirements for subjective wellbeing data in the UK will be an important next step, as will achieving the right balance between exploiting the data that already exist and generating new data if required. Although it is clear that subjective wellbeing data could be used to inform a number of policy areas (see Section

3), there are few concrete examples of how such data is being used to inform specific policies. Therefore any further consideration taken by ONS to add subjective wellbeing questions to existing surveys would need to be initiated by consultation with potential users. Appendix 2 should act as a useful catalyst to reviewing what data is already available regarding the various subjective wellbeing domains (e.g. health, material wellbeing, psychological wellbeing), but future work needs to decide which questions are best for measuring the various aspects of subjective wellbeing.

A number of methodological issues will also need to be explored. Although none of these are sufficient to prevent the measurement of subjective wellbeing (i.e. there are solutions to all of them), careful consideration will need to be given to the use of bounded measures, scale design, difficulty determining cause and effect, generality across the lifespan and individual and cultural differences in the interpretation of subjective wellbeing questions. There will likely be a tension between building on the existing data (by asking questions that have been utilised on other surveys) and generating new data by asking novel questions that don't appear elsewhere. Section 2 points to an over-reliance on subjective wellbeing questions that don't refer to a specific time frame, so the pros and cons of constraining questions to a particular time frame (e.g. yesterday) will need to be explored.

If it becomes apparent that there are unmet subjective wellbeing data needs, the strengths and weaknesses of various candidate surveys will need to be weighed up with regard to their suitability for generating national subjective wellbeing data. Firm decisions regarding whether ONS surveys will be utilised to this end are beyond the scope of this report, but Appendix 2 provides some preliminary information regarding the main candidates. While none of these surveys directly ask questions about wellbeing as standard, surveys which are part of the Integrated Household Survey (IHS, the General Lifestyle Survey (GLF), the Living Cost and Food Survey (LCF), the English Housing Survey (EHS), the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Annual Population Survey (APS) and the Life Opportunities Survey (LOS)) all ask about health in general, as does the Opinions Survey (OPN). These questions also provide a wide range of information such as basic demographics, living situation, employment and socioeconomic status.

Some surveys include access to other data which may be useful for comparison or provide indicators of wellbeing. The GLF includes questions on health, social exclusion and poverty, the EHS collects data on living conditions, LOS collects disability related information, the Wealth and Assets Survey (WAS) and the Family Resources Survey (FRS) collect data on assets and the LFS collects data on employment. The LCF and FRS do not collect data directly relevant to wellbeing. It is worth noting that not all surveys provide the full dataset of questions they ask to sponsors of a module of questions. Sample sizes and other relevant information can be found in Appendix 2.

The question review provided in Section 2 and the data examples reproduced in Section 3 highlight the main methods of collecting subjective wellbeing data on social surveys. However, there are other ways of doing this that have not been reviewed here. For example, the Young Foundation 'Sinking and Swimming' report published in 2009 proposes a method of surveying the population on met and unmet material and

psychological needs. Such an approach could provide policy makers with the data needed to prioritise needs and service provision. Although the UK does not have its own regular time use survey, Kahneman and colleagues (e.g. Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz & Stone, 2004) have pointed to the strengths of such methods. Although the Day Reconstruction Method is expensive and labour intensive, cheaper options do exist and their potential benefit should be explored.

In summary, this report reviews how subjective wellbeing is currently being measured in the UK and provides a strong basis from which further work can explore how best to generate national estimates of subjective wellbeing. This work will need to continue in consultation with the GSS and relevant government departments and non-government organisations. It is anticipated that a follow-up report will recommend which survey questions can be used to best capture subjective wellbeing and how this translates into policy. If user requirements exist that cannot be met by existing surveys, ONS may consider adding subjective wellbeing questions to appropriate household surveys. This will however be dependent on resources.

# References

- Aked, J., Steuer, N., Lawlor, E. & Spratt, S. (2009). *Backing the future: Why investing in children is good for us all*. London: nef.
- Alesina, A., Di Tella, R. & MacCulloch, R. (2004). Inequality and happiness: are Europeans and Americans different? *Journal of Public Economics*, 88, 2009–2042.
- Bacon, N., Brophy, M., Mguni, N., Mulgan, G. & Shandro, A. (2010). *The state of happiness: Can public policy shape people's wellbeing and resilience?* London: Young Foundation.
- Blanchflower, D. G. & Oswald, A. J. (2004). Well-Being over Time in Britain and the USA. *Journal of Public Economics*, 88, 1359-1386.
- Boarini, R., Johansson, Å. and d'Ercole, M. (2006). Alternative Measures of Well-Being. *OECD Economics Department Working Papers*, No. 476, OECD Publishing. doi: 10.1787/832614168015.
- Blanchflower, D. G. and Oswald, A. J. (2004). Well-being over time in Britain and the USA. *Journal of Public Economics*, 88, 1359-1386.
- Clark, A., Fischer, J., Chapple, S., & Senik, C. (2010). *Subjective Well-Being and Social Policy*. OECD.
- Clark, A. & Oswald, A. (1994). Unhappiness and Unemployment. *The Economic Journal*, 104, 648-59.
- Cummins, R. A., Eckersley, R., Kai, L. S., Okerstrom, E., Davern, M. & Woener, J. (2004). *Australian Unity Well-being Index Survey 11, report 11.0, The Well-being of Australians – Personal Financial Debt*, Australian Centre on Quality of Life.
- DeNeve, K.M. & Cooper, H. (1998). The happy personality: A meta-analysis of 137 personality traits and subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 124, 197-229
- Di Tella, R. & MacCulloch, R. (2007). Happiness, Contentment and Other Emotions for Central Banks. *NBER Working Papers*, 13622.
- Di Tella, R., MacCulloch, R. & Oswald, A. (2001). Preferences over inflation and unemployment. Evidence from surveys of happiness. *The American Economic Review*, 91, 335-341.
- Diener, E. & Biswas-Diener, R. (2002). Will money increase subjective well-being? A literature review and guide to needed research. *Social Indicators Research*, 57, 119-69.

- Diener, E., R. Lucas, U. Schimmack & J.F. Helliwell (2009) *Well-Being for Public Policy*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Donovan, N. & Halpern, D. (2002). *Life Satisfaction: The state of knowledge and implications for Government*. London: Prime Minister's Strategy Unit.
- Dolan, P. & White, M. P. (2007). How can measures of subjective well-being be used to inform public policy? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 2, 71-85.
- Dolan, P., Peasgood, T., & White, M.P. (2006). *Review of research on the influences on personal well-being and application to policy making*. London: DEFRA Publications.
- Dolan, P., Peasgood, T. & White, M. (2008). Do we really know what makes us happy? A review of the economic literature on the factors associated with subjective well-being. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 29, 94-122.
- Easterlin, R. (2005). A puzzle for adaptive theory. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 56, 513-521.
- Foresight. (2008). *Mental Capital and Wellbeing: Making the most of ourselves in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. London: Government Office for Science.
- Ferrer-i-Carbonell, A. & Gowdy, J. M. (2005). Environmental awareness and happiness. *Rensselaer Working Papers in Economics*, 0503.
- Galloway, S., Bell, D., Hamilton, C. & Scullion, A (2005). *Quality of life and well-being: Measuring the benefits of culture and sport: a literature review and thinkpiece*. Scotland: Scottish Executive Social Research.
- Gruber, J. & Mullainathan, S. (2002). Do Cigarette Taxes Make Smokers Happier? *NBER Working Paper*, No. 8872, 2002.
- Harsanyi, J. C. (1982). *Morality and the theory of rational behaviour*. In A. Sen & B. Williams (Eds.), *Utilitarianism and beyond* (pp. 39–63). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Helliwell, J. F. (2003). How's life? Combining individual and national variables to explain subjective well-being. *Economic Modelling*, 20, 331-360.
- Helliwell, J. F. & Barrington-Leigh, C. P. (2008). Measuring and Understanding Subjective Well-Being. *NBER Working Paper Series*, 15887.
- Inglehart, R. & Klingemann, H-D. (2000). Genes, Culture, Democracy and Happiness. In: *Culture and Subjective Wellbeing*, Diener, E. & Suh, E. M. (eds). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

- Jones, R. (forthcoming). Human Capital and Subjective Wellbeing. *Economic & Labour Market Review*.
- Kahneman, D., Krueger, A. B., Schkade, D. A., Schwarz, N., & Stone, A. A. (2004). A Survey Method for Characterizing Daily Life Experience: The Day Reconstruction Method. *Science*, 306, 1776 – 1780.
- Kahneman, D. & Riis, J. (2005). Living and thinking about it: Two perspectives on life. In F. A. Huppert, N. Baylis & B. Keverne (Eds.), *The science of well-being* (pp. 285-304). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Layard, R. (2005). *Happiness: Lessons from a new science*. London: Penguin.
- Leigh, A. & Wolfers, J. (2005). Happiness and the Human Development Index: Australia Is Not a Paradox. *The Australian Economic Review*, 39, 176–84.
- Lelkes, O. (2006). Tasting Freedom: Happiness, Religion and Economic Transition. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 59, 173-194.
- Lepper, J., & McAndrew, S. (2008). *Developments in the economics of well-being*. Treasury Economic Working Paper 4. London: HM Treasury.
- Lykken, D. & Tellegen, A. (1996). Happiness is a stochastic phenomenon. *Psychological Science*, 7, 186-189.
- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L. A., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin*, 131, 803-855.
- Martin, M. & Westerhof, G. J. (2003). Do you have to have them or should you believe you have them? Resources, their appraisal, and well-being in adulthood. *Journal of Adult Development*, 10, 99-112.
- Michaelson, J., Abdallah, S., Steuer, N., Thompson, S. & Marks, N. (2008). *National accounts of well-being: bringing real wealth onto the balance sheet*. London: nef.
- Michalos, A. C., Zumbo, B. D., & Hubble, A. (2000). Health and the Quality of Life. *Social Indicators Research*, 51, 245-286.
- Oswald, A. J. (1997). Happiness and Economic Performance. *The Economic Journal*, 445, 1815-1831.
- Ryff, C. D. & Keyes, L. M. (1995). The Structure of Psychological Well-Being Revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 719-727.

Redelmeier, D. A. & Kahneman, D. (1996). Patients' memories of painful medical treatments: real-time and retrospective evaluations of two minimally invasive procedures. *Pain*, 66, 3-8.

Rees, G., Bradshaw, J., Goswami, H. & Keung, A. (2010). *Understanding Children's Well-being: A national survey of young people's well-being*. London: The Children's Society.

Ryff, C. D. & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 719–727.

Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A. & Fitoussi, J. P. (2009). Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress. OECD.

Stutzer, A. (2004). The role of income aspirations in individual happiness. *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organisation*, 54, 89-109.

Thoits P.A., & Hewitt, L.N. (2001). Volunteering work and well-being. *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*, 42, 115-31

Thompson, S. & Marks, N. (2008). *Measuring Well-being in Policy: Issues and Applications*. London: nef.

Walker, A., Flatley, J., Kershaw, C. & Moon, D. (2009). *Crime in England and Wales 2008/09, Volume 1*. Findings from the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime.

Wirtz, D., Kruger, J., Scollon, C. N. & Diener, E. (2003). What to do on spring break? The role of predicted, on-line and remembered experience in future choice. *Psychological Science*, 14, 520-524.

Young Foundation. (2009). *Sinking and Swimming*. London: Young Foundation.

# Appendix 1: Subjective Wellbeing questions on major social surveys in the UK

UK examples



<b>Public Attitudes and Behaviours towards the Environment Omnibus Survey</b> <i>2007 survey questions (N= 1600, 16+, England, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q4.	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Please answer on a scale of 0-10, where 0 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied (Don't know, Refused).	GE, NT
Q5.	I am now going to show you a series of different things relating to aspects of your life. For each one, please tell me how satisfied you are with each of them (Very satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Fairly dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied, Don't Know, Refused): Your standard of living, Your health, Your day-to-day activities (including work or studies), Your ability to influence what happens in your life, Your personal relationships, Achieving your goals, Your house / flat / accommodation, Feeling part of a community, The area in which you live, Your future financial security, Leisure activities / hobbies.	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT PS, NT DE, NT PS, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT
Q6.	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements (Definitely agree, Tend to agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Tend to disagree, Definitely disagree, Don't know, refused): In general I feel very positive about myself, I spend a lot of time worrying about things, I feel optimistic about my future, I generally feel that what I do in life is valuable and worthwhile, I generally plan and prepare for the future, I find it hard to be hopeful about the future of the world, I draw comfort and strength from my religious beliefs.	PS, NT GA, NT PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT DA, NT
Q7.	I am going to show you a number of things people might say that they feel or how they might spend their time. For each one, please say how often during the past two weeks each description would have applied to you (Never, At least once, On a few days, Most days, Every day, Don't Know, Refused): You felt happy or contented, You felt depressed, You felt engaged or focused in what you were doing, You felt energised or lively, You felt lonely, You felt everything you did was an effort,	GA, TF GA, TF PS, TF PS, TF DA, TF PS, TF

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

	Your sleep was restless, You spent time together with family, You spent time together with friends, You felt unsafe or threatened, You were involved in social activities in your local area, You were involved in leisure activities / hobbies.	PS, TF DE, TF DE, TF GA, TF DE, TF DE, TF
--	---	--

<b>Well? What do you think? The 3rd National Scottish Survey of Public Attitudes to Mental Health, Mental Wellbeing and Mental Health Problems</b> <i>2006 survey questions (N = 1200, 16+, Scotland, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q1.	How is your health in general? Very good, good, fair, bad, very bad, don't know.	DE, NT
Q2.	Do you have any long standing illness, disability or infirmity? By longstanding, I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of time, or that is likely to affect you over a period of time? Yes/No	DE, NT
Q6.	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this neighbourhood as a place to live? Very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither, fairly dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, don't know.	DE, NT
Q14	What sorts of things, if any, have a positive or good effect on your own emotions or mental health and wellbeing?	PS, NT
Q15	And what, if any, things have a negative or bad effect on your own emotions or mental health and wellbeing?	PS, NT
Q16	Thinking about all those things that might affect your own emotions or mental health and wellbeing, how much control, if any, do you feel you have over them? Complete, a good deal, some, a little, none, don't know.	PS, NT
Q17 -31	(Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale). Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks (none of the time, rarely some of the time, often, all of the time): I've been feeling optimistic about the future, I've been feeling useful, I've been feeling relaxed, I've been feeling interested in other people, I've had energy to spare, I've been dealing with problems well, I've been thinking clearly, I've been feeling good about myself, I've been feeling close to other people, I've been feeling confident, I've been able to make up my own mind about things, I've been feeling loved, I've been interested in new things, I've been feeling cheerful.	PS, TF PS, TF PS, TF PS, TF PS, TF PS, TF PS, TF PS, TF DA, TF PS, TF PS, TF DA, TF PS, TF GA, TF
Q32 -43.	(General Health Questionnaire 12). We should like to know how your health has been in general over the past few weeks. Please answer all the questions by ticking the box below the answer which you think most applies to you. Have you recently: Been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing? Lost much sleep over worry? Felt you were playing a useful part in things? Felt capable of making decisions about things?	PS, TF GA, TF PS, TF PS, TF

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

Felt constantly under strain?	PS, TF
Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?	PS, TF
Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?	GA, TF
Been able to face up to your problems?	PS, TF
Been feeling unhappy and depressed?	GA, TF
Been losing confidence in yourself?	PS, TF
Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?	PS, TF
Been feeling reasonably happy all things considered?	GE, TF

<b>National Survey for Wales</b>		
<i>2009/2010 adult survey questions (N = 3000, 16+, Wales, self-completion)</i>		
Q7.	<p>How safe or unsafe do you feel in the following situations? (Very safe, Fairly safe, A bit unsafe, Very unsafe):</p> <p>At home in the daylight,                      At home after dark,                      Walking in your local area in daylight (please consider your local area to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home),                      Walking in your local area after dark,                      Walking in your nearest town or city centre in daylight,                      Walking in your nearest town or city centre after dark,                      Travelling by public transport.</p>	<p>DA, NT                      DA, NT                      DA, NT</p> <p>DA, NT                      DA, NT                      DA, NT                      DA, NT</p>
Q8.	<p>In the past 12 months have you experienced harassment, abuse or violence from anyone because of:</p> <p>Your gender,                      Your race,                      Your religion,                      Disability/Impairment,                      Your age,                      Your sexual orientation,                      Other.</p>	<p>DE, TF                      DE, TF                      DE, TF                      DE, TF                      DE, TF                      DE, TF</p>
Q11.	<p>How often in the past 12 months have you experienced harassment, abuse or violence from anyone? (Every day, At least once a week, At least once a month, Less than once a month, Only once or twice)</p>	<p>DE, TF</p>
Q12.	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to improving the self-esteem and wellbeing of the people of Wales. To assist us we would be grateful if you could complete the following grid (Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree):</p> <p>I feel that I am a person of worth at least on an equal plane with others.                      I feel that I have a number of good qualities.                      All in all I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.                      I am able to do things as well as most other people.                      I feel I do not have much to be proud of.                      I take a positive attitude toward myself.                      On the whole I am satisfied with myself.                      I wish I could have more respect for myself.                      I certainly feel useless at times.                      At times I think I am no good at all.</p>	<p>PS, NT</p> <p>PS, NT                      PS, NT</p>

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

Q13.	Here are some questions about how you feel about your life. Please tick the number which you feel best describes how dissatisfied or satisfied you are with the following aspects of your current situation (where 1 = not satisfied at all and 7 = completely satisfied). The income of your household Your house / flat Your social life The amount of leisure time you have The way you spend your leisure time Your husband / wife / partner Your job (if in employment)	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT
Q14.	How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with your life overall? (Very Satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Neither Satisfied nor dissatisfied, Fairly dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied).	GE, NT
Q15.	Would you say that you are more satisfied with life, less satisfied or feel about the same as you did a year ago? (More satisfied, Less satisfied, About the same, Don't know).	GE, TF

<b>Health Survey for England</b>		
<i>2007 individual survey questions (N = 11000, 16+, England, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q1.	How is your health in general? Would you say it was very good, good, fair, bad or very bad.	DE, NT
Q2.	Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of time, or that is likely to affect you over a period of time? Yes, No?	DE, NT
<i>2006 adult survey questions (N = 14000, 16+, England, self-completion)</i>		
Q1-5	By ticking one box for each question below, please indicate which statements best describe your own health state today: I have no problems in walking about, I have some problems in walking about, I am confined to bed. I have no problems with self-care, I have some problems washing or dressing myself, I am unable to wash or dress myself. I have no problems with performing my usual activities (e.g. work, study, housework, family or leisure activities), I have some problems with performing my usual activities, I am unable to perform my usual activities. I have no pain or discomfort, I have moderate pain or discomfort, I have extreme pain or discomfort. I am not anxious or depressed, I am moderately anxious or depressed, I am extremely anxious or depressed.	DE, TF DE, TF DE, TF DE, TF GA, TF
Q6-18	(General Health Questionnaire 12). We should like to know how your health has been in general over the past few weeks. Please answer all the questions by ticking the box below the answer which you think most applies to you. Have you recently: Been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing? (Better than usual, Same as usual, Less than usual, Much less than usual). Lost much sleep over worry? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual). Felt you were playing a useful part in things? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than usual, much less useful). Felt capable of making decisions about things? (more so than	PS, TF GA, TF PS, TF PS, TF

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

	<p>usual, same as usual, less so than usual, much less capable).  Felt constantly under strain? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).  Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).  Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than useful, much less useful).  Been able to face up to your problems? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than useful, much less useful).  Been feeling unhappy and depressed? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).  Been losing confidence in yourself? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).  Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).  Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than useful, much less useful).</p>	<p>PS, TF  PS, TF  GA, TF  PS, TF  GA, TF  PS, TF  PS, TF  GE, TF</p>
Q18-24.	<p>Here are some comments people have made about their family and friends. We would like you to say how far each statement is true for you (not true, partly true, certainly true).  There are people I know – amongst my family or friends – who do things to make me happy.  There are people I know – amongst my family or friends – who make me feel loved.  There are people I know - amongst my family or friends - who can be relied on no matter what happens.  There are people I know – amongst my family or friends – who would see that I am taken care of if I needed to be.  There are people I know - amongst my family or friends - who accept me just as I am.  There are people I know – amongst my family or friends – who make me feel an important part of their lives.  There are people I know - amongst my family or friends - who give me support and encouragement.</p>	<p>DA, NT  DA, NT  DE, NT  DE, NT  DE, NT  DE, NT  DE, NT</p>
Q26.	<p>We are interested to find out about how life in your local area is related to health. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree):  This area is a place I enjoy living in,  This area is a place where neighbours look after each other,  This area has good local transport,  This area has good leisure things for people like myself - leisure centres or community centres for example.</p>	<p>DA, NT  DE, NT  DE, NT  DE, NT</p>
Q32.	<p>Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful in dealing with people? (can be trusted, can't be too careful, don't know).</p>	<p>DE, NT</p>
Q33.	<p>Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or just look out for themselves? (try to be helpful, look out for themselves, don't know).</p>	<p>DE, NT</p>
Q34.	<p>Do you think most people would take advantage of you if they got the chance or would they try to be fair? (take advantage, try to be fair, don't know).</p>	<p>DE, NT</p>
<p>2006 youth survey questions (N = approx. 1500, 13-15, England, self-completion)</p>		

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

Q11	Given your age and height, would you say that you are about the right weight, too heavy, too light or not sure.	DE, NT
Q21-32	<p>(General Health Questionnaire 12 – see above).</p> <p>We should like to know how your health has been in general over the past few weeks. Please answer all the questions by ticking the box below the answer which you think most applies to you. Have you recently:</p> <p>Been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing? (Better than usual, Same as usual, Less than usual, Much less than usual).</p> <p>Lost much sleep over worry? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).</p> <p>Felt you were playing a useful part in things? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than useful, much less useful).</p> <p>Felt capable of making decisions about things? (more so than usual, same as usual, less so than useful, much less capable).</p> <p>Felt constantly under strain? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).</p> <p>Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).</p> <p>Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than useful, much less useful).</p> <p>Been able to face up to your problems? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than useful, much less useful).</p> <p>Been feeling unhappy and depressed? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).</p> <p>Been losing confidence in yourself? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).</p> <p>Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person? (Not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual).</p> <p>Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered? (more so than usual, same as usual, less useful than useful, much less useful).</p>	<p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GE, TF</p>

<b>TellUs Survey</b>		
<i>2009 core survey questions (N = 250000, 11=15, England, self-completion in school)</i>		
Q8.	How safe do you feel? Very safe, Quite safe, A bit unsafe, Very unsafe, Don't know.	DE, NT
Q14.	Which of these things do you often worry about? Being bullied, School work and exams, Being healthy, Money, Friendships, My parents or family, Being a victim of crime, The way I look, Something else, Don't know, Nothing worries me.	DA, NT
Q15.	<p>Please read each sentence below and tick the box next to it to show if it is true for you or not true for you. (True, Neither true nor not true, Not true, Don't know)</p> <p>I feel happy about life at the moment,</p> <p>I have one or more good friends,</p> <p>When I'm worried about something I can talk to my mum or dad,</p> <p>When I'm worried about something I can talk to my friends,</p> <p>When I'm worried about something I can talk to an adult who isn't my mum or dad.</p>	<p>GA, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p>

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

<b>Families and Children Study</b> <i>2006 youth survey questions (N = 7500 families, 11-15, Britain, self-completion)</i>		
Q10.	Please say how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about where you live (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree): This area is a place I enjoy living in, I worry about being robbed or mugged on the street in this area, I would be afraid to walk alone in this area after dark, Most people in this area are friendly.	DE, NT DA, NT DA, NT DE, NT
Q16-20.	Please tick the box that best describes how you feel about (7 smiley/sad faces): School work, Appearance, Health, Family, Life as a whole	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT GE, NT
Q21.	In the last year, has anyone bullied you in a way that frightened or upset you? Please include bullying in or out of school (never, once or twice, three times or more).	DE, NT

<b>British Crime Survey</b> <i>2008 survey questions (N = 50000, 16+, England and Wales, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q.	How much is your own quality of life affected by [fear of crime/crime], on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is no effect and 10 is a total effect on your quality of life?	DA, NT
Q.	How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark? Would you say you feel Very safe, Fairly safe, A bit unsafe, or very unsafe?	DA, NT
Q.	How safe do you feel walking alone in this area during the day? Would you say you feel Very safe, Fairly safe, A bit unsafe, or very unsafe?	DA, NT
Q.	How safe do you feel when you are alone in your own home at night? Would you say you feel Very safe, Fairly safe, A bit unsafe, or very unsafe?	DA, NT
Q.	How worried are you about having your home broken into and something stolen? Very worried, Fairly worried, Not very worried, Not at all worried (Not applicable).	DA, NT
<i>2010 drug module survey question (N = 50000, 16+, England and Wales, self-completion)</i>		
Q1.	Firstly, a question about yourself. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? (Very satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Neither satisfied or dissatisfied, Fairly dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied).	GE, NT

N.B. The same question was asked in the 2009 face-to-face interview, but has since moved to the self-completion survey because feedback suggested interviewers and respondents felt uncomfortable asking and answering this question aloud.

N.N. B. Several questions also relate to worries about other crimes (e.g. attack, theft, rape etc) and several questions ask about perceptions of anti-social behaviour (e.g. vandalism/graffiti, drug use/dealing, drunk/rowdy in public). 2009 survey included 4000 surveys with 10-15 year olds.

<b>Citizenship Survey</b> <i>2009/10 survey questions (N = 11000, 16+, England and Wales, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q.	Would you say that many of the people in your neighbourhood can	

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

	be trusted, some can be trusted, a few can be trusted or that none of the people in your neighbourhood can be trusted? (Just moved here – spontaneous.)	DE, NT
Q.	Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? Very satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Fairly dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied. (Don't know – spontaneous.)	DE, NT
Q.	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Very satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Fairly dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied (Don't know – spontaneous).	GE, NT

<b>Taking Part Survey</b> <i>2007/8 survey question (N= 29,000, 16+, England, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q.	Taking all things together how happy would you say you are? On a scale of 1 - 10, 10 = Extremely Happy and 1 = Extremely Unhappy.	GE, NT

N.B. This question has since been removed from the Taking part survey.

<b>Opinions Survey</b> <i>March 2010 survey questions (N = 1000, 16+, UK, telephone interviews)</i>		
Q1.	The next set of questions are about well-being. Government policy aims to promote improved well-being in older age and the following questions ask what the term well-being means to you and how you think it can be improved in older age. Please tell me, what does the term 'well-being' mean to you?	Other
Q2.	Overall, how would you rate your own well-being? (Very good, good, alright, bad, very bad, spontaneous only - it depends, don't know, refusal).	GE, NT
Q3.	How would you rate your mental well-being? (Very good, good, alright, bad, very bad, spontaneous only - it depends, don't know, refusal).	PS, NT
Q4.	In your opinion, how can the general and mental well-being of older people be improved?	Other
Q5.	In general, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please rate your satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low and 10 being high.	GE, NT
Q6.	All things considered, how happy would you say you are? (Very happy, Quite happy, Not very happy, Not at all happy, Spontaneous only - It depends, Don't Know, Refusal)	GE, NT
Q7.	Thinking about both the good and bad things that make up your quality of life, how would you rate the quality of your life as a whole? (Very good, Good, Alright, Bad, Very bad, Spontaneous only - It depends, Don't Know, Refusal).	GE, NT
Q8.	In general, compared with other people your age, how would you rate your current health? (Excellent, Very good, Good, Fair, Poor, Spontaneous only - It depends, Don't Know, Refusal).	DE, NT
Q9-12.	Are you able to walk at least 400 yards? Are you able to do heavy housework? Are you able to go shopping and carry heavy bags? Are you able to go up and down stairs or steps? (I have no difficulty doing this, I have some difficulty doing this, I can do this with the help of an aid or appliance, I am unable to do	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

	this).	
Q13.	In the last four weeks, have you suffered from: Anxiety, nerves or depression at all? (No, not at all, Yes slightly, Yes moderately, Yes extremely).	PS, TF

<b>British Social Attitudes Survey</b>		
<i>2008 main survey questions (N = 2000-4000, 18+, Britain, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q49 8. (N=3333)	How is your health in general for someone of your age? Would you say that it is very good, fairly good, fair, bad or very bad (don't know or refusal).	DE, NT
Q10 45. (N=3395)	Do you think you should have more say in decisions affecting your work or are you satisfied with the way things are? (Don't know, Refusal).	DE, NT
Q10 46. (N = 3395)	Thinking about the number of hours you work including regular overtime, would you prefer a job where you worked more hours per week, fewer hours per week, or are you happy with the number of hours you work at present? (Don't know, Refusal).	DE, NT
Q11 06. (N=2239)	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Please answer using the scale where 1 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied (Don't know, Refusal).	GE, NT
<i>2008 individual survey questions (N = 2000, 18+, Britain, self-completion)</i>		
Q1. (N=1975)	If you were to consider your life in general these days, how happy or unhappy would you say you are on the whole? Very happy, Fairly happy, Not very happy, Not at all happy (Can't choose, Not answered).	GE, NT

<b>Understanding Children's Wellbeing Survey</b>		
<i>2008 survey questions (N = 7000, 10-15, England, face-to-face interview)</i>		
Q.	Here is a picture of a ladder. The top of the ladder '10' is the best possible life for you and the bottom '0' is the worst possible life for you. In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment? Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand.	GE, NT
Q.	Huebner's Multi-Dimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale. For these questions, please say how much you agree or disagree with each of the sentences (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know). Please tick one box on each line. My life is going well, My life is just right, I would like to change things in my life, I wish I had a different kind of life, I have a good life, I have what I want in life, My life is better than most young people's	GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT



Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

	<p>Been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing? Better than usual, Same as usual, Less than usual, Much less than usual</p> <p>Lost much sleep over worry? Not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual</p> <p>Felt that you were playing a useful part in things? More so than usual, Same as usual, Less so than usual, Much less than usual</p> <p>Felt capable of making decisions about things? More so than usual, Same as usual, Less so than usual, Much less capable</p> <p>Felt constantly under strain? Not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual</p> <p>Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties? Not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual</p> <p>Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities? More so than usual, Same as usual, Less so than usual, Much less than usual</p> <p>Been able to face up to problems? More so than usual, Same as usual, Less able than usual, Much less able</p> <p>Been feeling unhappy or depressed? Not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual</p> <p>Been losing confidence in yourself? Not at all, Not more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual</p> <p>Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person? Not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual</p> <p>Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered? More so than usual, About the same as usual, Less so than usual, Much less than usual</p>	<p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GE, TF</p>
Q31	<p>Here are some questions about how you feel about your life. Please tick the number which you feel best describes how dissatisfied or satisfied you are with the following aspects of your current situation (1 = Completely dissatisfied, 2 = mostly dissatisfied, 3 = somewhat dissatisfied, 4 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 5 = somewhat satisfied, 6 = mostly satisfied, 7 = Completely satisfied):</p> <p>Your health,</p> <p>The income of your household,</p> <p>The amount of leisure time you have,</p> <p>Your life overall.</p>	<p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>GE, NT</p>
Q32	<p>Please say how much you agree or disagree with the following statements (Strongly agree, moderately agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree, moderately disagree, strongly disagree):</p> <p>At home I feel I have control over what happens in most situations,</p> <p>I feel that what happens in life is often determined by factors beyond my control,</p> <p>In general I have different demands on me that are hard to combine,</p> <p>In general I have enough time to do everything,</p> <p>Considering the things I have to do at home I have to work very fast.</p>	<p>DE, NT</p> <p>PS, NT</p> <p>PS, NT</p> <p>PS, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p>
Q34	<p>We would now like to ask you some questions about your spouse or partner. Please tick the box which best shows how you feel about each statement (A little, Somewhat, Not at all, A lot):</p> <p>How much do they really understand the way you feel about things?</p> <p>How much can you rely on them if you have a serious problem?</p> <p>How much can you open up to them if you need to talk about your worries?</p> <p>How much do they criticise you?</p> <p>How much do they let you down when you are counting on them?</p>	<p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p> <p>DE, NT</p>

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

	How much do they get on your nerves?	DE, NT
Q36	Same as above for family members.	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT  DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT
Q38	Same as above for friends.	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT  DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT
<i>2010/11 youth survey questions (N = 40000 households, 10-15, Britain, self-completion)</i>		
Q13.	Please say whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree, that the following statements apply to yourself: I feel I have a number of good qualities, I feel that I do not have much to be proud of, I certainly feel useless at times, I am able to do things as well as most other people, I am a likeable person, I can usually solve my own problems, All in all, I am inclined to feel I am a failure, At times I feel I am no good at all.	PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT
Q20.	Below each face is a number where '1' is completely happy and '7' is not at all happy. Please tick the box which comes closest to expressing how you feel about each of the following things: Your school work, Your appearance, Your family, Your friends, The school you go to, Which best describes how you feel about your life as a whole.	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT GE, NT
Q32.	In general, would you say your health is? Excellent, Very good, Good, Fair, Poor.	DE, NT
<i>Previous BHPS survey questions not included in Wave 2 Understanding Society.</i>		
Q D2.	Overall, do you like living in this neighbourhood? (yes, no).	DE, NT
Q E18.	I'm going to read out a list of various aspects of jobs, and after each one I'd like you to tell me from this card which number best describes how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with that particular aspect of your own present job (1 = completely dissatisfied; 7 = completely satisfied; 4 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied): The total pay including any overtime or bonuses, Your job security, The actual work itself, The hours you work.	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT
QMF 53.	Overall do you think your neighbourhood is a good or a bad place to live? (good, bad, mixed).	DE, NT
QM V29	I feel like I belong to this neighbourhood (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree).	DA, NT

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

A.		
QM V29 B.	The friendships and associations I have with other people in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree).	DE, NT
QM V29 C.	If I needed advice about something I could go to someone in my neighbourhood (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree).	DE, NT
QM V29 D.	I borrow things and exchange favours with my neighbours (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree).	DE, NT
QM V29 G.	I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this neighbourhood (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree).	DE, NT
QRD 24.	How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark? (Very safe, Fairly safe, A bit unsafe, Very unsafe, N/A. N.B. There other questions related to graffiti, attacks, racist insults, vandalism.	DA, NT
QRD 22.	Do you ever worry about the possibility that you or anyone else who lives with you could be the victim of crime? (yes, no).	DA, NT
QRD 23.	Is this a big worry, and bit of a worry or an occasional doubt?	DA, NT
QS3 C.	How dissatisfied/satisfied are you with your house/flat? (1-7).	DE, NT
QS3 D.	How dissatisfied/satisfied are you with your spouse/partner? (1-7)	DE, NT
QS3 F.	How dissatisfied/satisfied are you with your social life? (1-7)	DE, NT
QS3 H.	How dissatisfied/satisfied are you with the way you spend your leisure time? (1-7)	DE, NT
QS4 B.	Would you say that you are more satisfied with life less satisfied or feel about the same as you did a year ago? (more, less, about the same).	GE, TF
QS6 A.	Is there anyone you could rely on to help you from outside your own household, if you were feeling depressed? (yes, no, not sure).	DE, NT
QS7 A.	Is there anyone who you can really count on to listen to you when you need to talk? (yes more than one person, yes one person, no).	DE, NT
QS7 B.	Is there anyone who you can really count on to help you out in a crisis? (yes more than one person, yes one person, no).	DE, NT
OS7 C.	Is there anyone who you can totally be yourself with? (yes more than one person, yes one person, no).	DE, NT
OS7 D :	Is there anyone who you feel really appreciates you as a person? (yes more than one person, yes one person, no).	DE, NT
OS7 E :	Is there anyone who you can really count on to comfort you when you are very upset? (yes more than one person, yes one person, no).	DE, NT

<b>English Longitudinal Study of Aging</b>		
<i>2007 psychosocial health module (N = 12000, 50+, England, face-to-face interview)</i>		
Q1.	Now think about the past week and the feelings you have experienced. Please tell me if each of the following was true for you much of the time during the past week (yes, no): you felt depressed, you felt that everything you did was an effort, your sleep was restless,	GA, TF PS, TF PS, TF

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

	you were happy, you felt lonely, you enjoyed life, you felt sad, you could not get going.	GA, TF DA, TF GA, TF GA, TF PS, TF
<i>2007 individual survey questions (N = 12000, 50+, England, self-completion)</i>		
Q1.	Overall in the last 30 days, what degree of aches and pains have you had? (None, Mild, Moderate, Severe, Extreme).	DE, TF
Q2.	In the last 30 days, how much difficulty have you had with sleeping, such as falling asleep, waking up frequently during the night or waking up too early in the morning?	PS, TF
Q3.	Overall in the last 30 days, how much of a problem have you had with moving around?	DE, TF
Q4.	Overall in the last 30 days how much difficulty have you had with concentrating or remembering things?	PS, TF
Q5.	In the last 30 days, how much of a problem have you had because of shortness of breath?	DE, TF
Q6.	Overall in the last 30 days, how much of a problem have you had with feeling sad, low, or depressed?	GA, TF
Q7.	How much are you limited in the kind or amount of work that you can do due to an impairment or health problem?	DE, NT
N.B. In the 2007 self-completion survey, sub-samples were also asked to complete questionnaires with vignettes; these give an 'external' assessment of thresholds people apply when assessing health and work disability. This information is then used to see whether differences in self-reports between groups are partly the consequence of differences in thresholds.		
<i>2008 individual survey questions (N = 12000, 50+, England, self-completion)</i>		
Q11	(Diener Satisfaction With Life Scale). Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree. In most ways my life is close to my ideal. The conditions of my life are excellent. I am satisfied with my life. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT GE, NT
Q12.	Here are some questions about how you feel about your life in general. Please say how much you agree or disagree with the following statements (Strongly agree, Moderately agree, Slightly agree, Slightly disagree, Moderately disagree, Strongly disagree): At home I feel I have control over what happens in most situations, I feel that what happens in life is often determined by factors beyond my control, In general I have different demands that I think are hard to combine, In general I have enough time to do everything, Considering the things I have to do at home I have to work very fast	DE, NT PS, NT  PS, NT  PS, NT DE, NT
Q13.	The next questions are about how you feel about different aspects of your life. For each one, please say how often you feel that way (Hardly ever or never, Some of the time, Often): How often do you feel you lack companionship? How often do you feel left out? How often do you feel isolated from others?	DA, NT DA, NT DA, NT

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

	How often do you feel in tune with the people around you? How often do you feel lonely?	PS, NT DA, NT
Q14	(CASP 19). Here is a list of statements that people have used to describe their lives or how they feel. How often, do you feel like this (Often Sometimes, Not often, Never)? My age prevents me from doing the things I would like to, I feel that what happens to me is out of my control, I feel free to plan for the future, I feel left out of things, I can do the things that I want to do, Family responsibilities prevent me from doing what I want to do, I feel that I can please myself what I do, My health stops me from doing things I want to do, Shortage of money stops me from doing the things I want to do, I look forward to each day, I feel that my life has meaning, I enjoy the things that I do, I enjoy being in the company of others, On balance I look back on my life with a sense of happiness, I feel full of energy these days, I choose to do things that I have never done before, I feel satisfied with the way my life has turned out, I feel that life is full of opportunities, I feel that the future looks good for me.	DE, NT PS, NT PS, NT DA, NT PS, NT DE, NT PS, NT DE, NT DE, NT PS, NT PS, NT GA, NT DA, NT GE, NT PS, NT PS, NT GE, NT PS, NT PS, NT
Q16.	We would now like to ask you some questions about your spouse or partner. Please tick the box which best shows how you feel about each statement (a lot, some, a little, not at all): How much do they really understand the way you feel about things? How much can you rely on them if you have a serious problem? How much can you open up to them if you need to talk about your worries? How much do they criticise you? How much do they let you down when you are counting on them? How much do they get on your nerves?	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DA, NT
Q17.	How close is your relationship with your spouse or partner? Very close, Quite close, Not very close, Not at all close.	DE, NT
Q19.	We would now like to ask you some questions about your children. Please tick the box which best shows how you feel about each statement (a lot, some, a little, not at all): How much do they really understand the way you feel about things? How much can you rely on them if you have a serious problem? How much can you open up to them if you need to talk about your worries? How much do they criticise you? How much do they let you down when you are counting on them? How much do they get on your nerves?	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DA, NT
Q23.	Same as above for family members.	DE, NT  DE, NT DE, NT  DE, NT

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

		DE, NT DA, NT
Q27.	Same as above for friends.	DE, NT  DE, NT DE, NT  DE, NT DE, NT DA, NT
Q32.	Here are some statements people might use to describe their work. We would like to know how strongly you think these apply to the paid employment you did in the last month (Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree): All things considered I am satisfied with my job, My job is physically demanding, I receive the recognition I deserve for my work, My salary is adequate, My job promotion prospects are poor, My job security is poor, I am under constant time pressure due to a heavy workload, I have very little freedom to decide how I do my work, I have the opportunity to develop new skills, I receive adequate support in difficult situations, At work I feel I have control over what happens in most situations, Considering the things I have to do at work I have to work very fast.	DE, TF DE, TF
Q34.	Think of this ladder as representing where people stand in our society. At the top of the ladder are the people who are the best off – those who have the most money, most education and best jobs. At the bottom are the people who are the worst off – who have the least money, least education, and the worst jobs or no jobs. The higher up you are on this ladder, the closer you are to the people at the very top and the lower you are, the closer you are to the people at the very bottom. Please mark a cross on the rung on the ladder where you would place yourself.	GE, NT

<b>1970 British Cohort Study</b> <i>2004 main survey questions (N= 17000, born 1970, Great Britain, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q.	All things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job overall? (Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied).	DE, NT
Q.	Would you say your current job is very secure, fairly secure or not very secure?	DE, NT
<i>2004 adult survey questions (N= 17000, born 1970, Great Britain, self-completion)</i>		
Q.	The last few questions are to do with how you feel about your life so far. Which of these two statements is more true for you? I never really seem to get what I want out of life or I usually get what I want out of life. I usually have a free choice and control over my life or whatever I do has no real effect on what happens to me. Usually I can run my life more or less as I want to or I usually find	GE, NT  PS, NT  PS, NT

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

	life's problems just too much for me.	
Q.	Here is a scale from 0 to 10, where '0' means that you are completely dissatisfied and '10' means that you are completely satisfied. Please enter the number which corresponds with how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the way life has turned out so far.	GE, NT
Q.	And finally, please use the scale once more to show how you expect to be in ten years' time.	GE, TF
<i>2004 young person survey questions (N= all natural and adopted children, Great Britain, self-completion)</i>		
Q.	How do you feel about the time you spend at school? Read the sentences below and choose the one that best describes you: I always or nearly always enjoy school, I sometimes enjoy school, I don't enjoy school very often, I never enjoy school, Don't know, I don't go to school.	DA, NT
Q20-30	(Perceived Competence Scale for Children). When you have decided which of the two types of young people is most like you, tick the box that says how true that description is for you: is it really true or sort of true for you? Some young people are often unhappy with themselves or some young people are usually pleased with themselves. Some young people don't like the way they are leading their lives or some young people like the way they are leading their lives. Some young people are usually happy with themselves or some young people are often not happy with themselves. Some young people like the kind of person they are most of the time or some young people often wish they were like someone else. Some young people are very happy with the way they are or some young people wish they were different from the way they are. Some young people aren't very happy with the way they do most things or some young people think the way they do most things is fine.	GA, NT GE, NT GA, NT PS, NT GE, NT GA, NT
Q36.	Have you ever been picked on or bullied by another school pupil?	DE, NT

<b>National Child Development Study</b>		
<i>2004 survey questions (N = 17000, born 1958, Great Britain, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q.	All things considered, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your present job (Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied)?	DE, NT
Q.	How much do you trust people in your local area? Would you say you generally trust people a lot, a fair amount, not very much or not at all?	DE, NT
Q.	How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark? Would you say you feel very safe, fairly safe, and bit unsafe, very unsafe or I never go out alone after dark?	DA, NT

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

Q.	<p>The last few questions are to do with how you feel about your life so far. I'm going to read you two statements and I want you to tell me which of them is more true for you. First, which of these two statements is more true for you:</p> <p>I never really seem to get what I want out of life or I usually get what I want out of life?</p> <p>I usually have a free choice and control over my life or whatever I do has no real effect on what happens to me?</p> <p>Usually I can run my life more or less as I want to or I usually find life's problems just too much for me?</p>	<p>GE, NT</p> <p>PS, NT</p> <p>PS, NT</p>
Q.	<p>On a scale from 0 to 10, where '0' means that you are completely dissatisfied and '10' means that you are completely satisfied, what number corresponds with how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the way life has turned out so far?</p>	<p>GE, NT</p>

<b>Longitudinal Study of Young People in England</b>		
<i>2007/8 wave 4 survey questions (N = 15000, born 1989, England, self-completion)</i>		
Q1.	<p>In the last 12 months would you say your health has been very good, fairly good, not very good or not good at all? Very good, Fairly good, Not very good, Not good at all, Don't know, Don't want to answer.</p>	<p>DE, TF</p>
Q2-14	<p>(General Health Questionnaire 12).</p> <p>We should like to know how your health has been in general over the past few weeks. Please answer all the questions by ticking the box below the answer which you think most applies to you.</p> <p>Have you recently been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing? Better than usual, Same as usual, Less than usual, Much less than usual, Don't know, Don't want to answer.</p> <p>Have you recently lost much sleep over worry? No not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual, Don't know, Don't want to answer.</p> <p>Have you recently felt you were playing a useful part in things? More so than usual, Same as usual, less so than usual, much less than usual.</p> <p>Have you recently felt capable of making decisions about things? More so than usual, Same as usual, less so than usual, much less capable.</p> <p>Have you recently felt constantly under strain? No not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual.</p> <p>Have you recently felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties? No not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual.</p> <p>Have you recently been able to enjoy your normal day to day activities? More so than usual, Same as usual, less so than usual, much less than usual.</p> <p>Have you recently been able to face up to your problems? More so than usual, Same as usual, less so than usual, much less than usual.</p> <p>Have you recently been feeling unhappy and depressed? No not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual.</p> <p>Have you recently been losing confidence in yourself? No not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual.</p>	<p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p> <p>GA, TF</p> <p>PS, TF</p>

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

	Have you recently been thinking of yourself as a worthless person? No not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual.	PS, TF
	Have you recently been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered? More so than usual, Same as usual, less so than usual, much less than usual.	GE, TF

*European examples*

<b>European Social Survey</b>		
<i>2008/9 survey questions (N = 1500, 15+, UK, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
QA 8.	Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? 0 means you can't be too careful and 10 means that most people can be trusted.	DE, NT
QA 9.	Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?	DE, NT
QB 24.	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? 0 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied.	GE, NT
QC 1.	Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are? (0 - Extremely unhappy, 10 -Extremely happy, don't know).	GE, NT
QC 6.	How safe do you – or would you - feel walking alone in this area after dark? Do – or would – you feel very safe, safe, unsafe, or very unsafe? (Don't know).	DA, NT
QC 15.	How is your health in general? Would you say it is very good, good, fair, bad, or very bad? (Don't know).	DE, NT
QC 16.	Are you hampered in your daily activities in any way by any longstanding illness, or disability, infirmity or mental health problem? Yes a lot, Yes to some extent, No, (Don't know).	DE, NT
QC 24.	Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against in this country? Yes, No, Don't know.	DE, NT
<i>2006/07 wellbeing module on behalf of NEF (N = 1500, 15+, UK, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
QA 8.	Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? Please tell me on a score of 0 to 10, where 0 means you can't be too careful and 10 means that most people can be trusted.	DE, NT
QB 24.	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Please answer using this card, where 0 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied.	GE, NT
QC 1.	Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are? (0 – 10).	GE, NT
QC 2.	How often do you meet socially with friends, relatives or colleagues? (never, less than once a month, once a month, several times a month, once a week, several times a week, every day, don't know).	DE, NT
QC 3.	Do you have anyone with whom you can discuss intimate and personal matters? (yes, no, don't know).	DE, NT
QC 15.	How is your health in general? (very good, good, fair, bad, very bad, don't know).	DE, NT

Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

QE 4- E7.	Please say how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements (agree strongly, agree, neither, disagree, disagree strongly, don't know). I'm always optimistic about my future (agree – disagree) In general I feel very positive about myself (agree – disagree) At times I feel as if I am a failure (agree – disagree) On the whole my life is close to how I would like it to be (agree – disagree)	PS, NT PS, NT PS, NT GE, NT
QE 8- E22 .	I will now read out a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved during the past week. Please tell me how much of the time during the past week you have: (none or almost none of the time, some of the time, most of the time, all or almost all of the time, don't know). How much of the time during the past week have you felt depressed? How much of the time during the past week have you felt that everything you did was an effort? How much of the time during the past week has your sleep been restless? How much of the time during the past week were you happy? How much of the time during the past week have you felt lonely? How much of the time during the past week have you enjoyed life? How much of the time during the past week have you felt sad? How much of the time during the past week could you not get going? How much of the time during the past week have you had a lot of energy? How much of the time during the past week have you felt anxious? How much of the time during the past week have you felt tired? How much of the time during the past week have you been absorbed in what you were doing? How much of the time during the past week have you felt calm and peaceful? How much of the time during the past week have you felt bored? How much of the time during the past week have you felt rested when you woke up in the morning?	GA, TF PS, TF PS, TF GA, TF DA, TF GA, TF GA, TF PS, TF PS, TF GA, TF DE, TF DE, TF GA, TF DE, TF DE, TF
QE 23- E30 .	Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: (agree strongly, agree, neither, disagree, disagree strongly, don't know). I feel I am free to decide how to live my life (agree – disagree) In my daily life I seldom have time to do the things I really enjoy (agree – disagree) In my daily life I get very little chance to show how capable I am (agree – disagree) I love learning new things Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from what I do (agree – disagree) I like planning and preparing for the future When things go wrong in my life, it generally takes me a long time to get back to normal (agree – disagree) My life involves a lot of physical activity (agree – disagree)	PS, NT DA, NT DE, NT PS, NT GA, NT PS, NT PS, NT DE, NT
QE 31.	How satisfied are you with how your life has turned out so far (0-10)?	GE, NT
QE 32.	How satisfied are you with your present standard of living (0-10)?	DE, NT

## Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

QE 33.	How much of the time spent with your immediate family is enjoyable (0 – none of the time, 6 – all of the time)?	DA, NT
QE 34.	How much of the time spent with your immediate family is stressful (0 – none of the time, 6 – all of the time)?	DA, NT
QE 35- E39	Please tell me to what extent: (0 – not at all, 6 – a great deal). You get a chance to learn new things? You feel that people in your local area help one another? Do you feel that people treat you with respect? Do you feel that people treat you unfairly? Do you feel that you get the recognition you deserve for what you do?	DE, NT DE, NT DA, NT DA, NT DA, NT
QE 40- E45	Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following Statements: (agree strongly, agree, neither, disagree, disagree strongly, don't know). I generally feel that what I do in my life is valuable and worthwhile (agree – disagree) If I help someone I expect some help in return The way things are now, I find it hard to be hopeful about the future of the world There are people in my life who really care about me (agree – disagree) For most people in [Country] life is getting worse rather than better I feel close to the people in my local area (agree – disagree)	PS, NT  Other Other  DE, NT Other
QE 46.	Do you ever feel frustrated by having watched too much television? (yes often, yes sometimes, occasionally, no never, never watch TV, don't know).	Other
QE 48.	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job? (0-10)	DE, NT
QE 49.	How satisfied are you with the balance between the time you spend on your paid work and the time you spend on other aspects of your life? (0-10)	DE, NT
QE 50.	How much of the time do you find your job interesting? (0 – none of the time, 6 – all of the time).	DA, NT
QE 51.	How much of the time do you find your job stressful? (0 – none of the time, 6 – all of the time).	DA, NT
QE 52.	How likely would you say it is that you will become unemployed in the next 12 months? (very likely, likely, not very likely, not at all likely, don't know).	DE, NT
QE 53.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Considering all my efforts and achievements in my job, I feel I get paid appropriately? (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know).	DE, NT
QE 54.	How important is it for you to compare your income with other people's incomes? (0 – not important at all, 6 – very important).	DE, NT
QE 55.	Whose income would you be most likely to compare your own with? (work colleagues, family members, friends, others, don't compare, don't know).	Other

N.B. All except questions E17, E20, E26, E28, E41, E42, E44, E46, E48, E54, E55 have subsequently been incorporated into NEF's National Accounts of Wellbeing framework (see 'Policy Implications' section).

<b>European Quality of Life Survey</b>	
<i>2007 survey questions (N = 1500, 18+, UK, face-to-face interview)</i>	
Q9.	How likely do you think it is that you might lose your job in the next

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

	6 months? Very likely, quite likely, neither, quite unlikely, very unlikely, don't know.	DE, TF
Q10.	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements (strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know)? My work is too demanding and stressful, I am well paid, I have a great deal of influence in deciding how to do my work, My work is dull and boring, My job offers good prospects for career advancement, I constantly work to tight deadlines, I work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions.	DA, NT DE, NT DE, NT DA, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT
Q11.	How often has each of the following happened to you during the last year? I have come home from work too tired to do some of the household jobs which need to be done, It has been difficult for me to fulfil my family responsibilities because of the amount of time I spend on the job, I have found it difficult to concentrate at work because of my family responsibilities.	DE, TF  DE, TF  DE, TF
Q23.	Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? Please tell me on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means that you can't be too careful and 10 means that most people can be trusted.	DE, NT
Q28.	Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with each statement. I am optimistic about the future, On the whole my life is close to how I would like it to be, I feel left out of society, Life has become so complicated today that I almost can't find my way, I don't feel the value of what I do is recognised by others, Some people look down on me because of my job situation or income.	PS, NT GE, NT DA, NT PS, NT  DA, NT DE, NT
Q29.	All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Please tell me on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied.	GE, NT
Q39.	I am going to read out some areas of daily life in which you can spend your time. Could you tell me if you think you spend too much, too little or just about the right amount of time in each area: Job/paid work, Contact with family members living in this household or elsewhere, Other social contacts (not family), Own hobbies/interests, Taking part in voluntary work or political activities.	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT
Q40.	Could you please tell me on a scale of 1 to 10 how satisfied you are with each of the following items, where 1 means you are very dissatisfied and 10 means you are very satisfied? Education, Present job, Standard of living, Accommodation, Family life, Health, Social life.	DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT DE, NT

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

Q42.	Taking all things together on a scale of 1 to 10, how happy would you say you are? Here 1 means you are very unhappy and 10 means you are very happy.	GE, NT
Q43.	In general, would you say your health is very good, good, fair, bad, very bad, don't know?	DE, NT
Q44.	Do you have any chronic (long-standing) physical or mental health problem, illness or disability? (yes, no, don't know).	DE, NT
Q46.	Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the last two weeks: I have felt cheerful and in good spirits, I have felt calm and relaxed, I have felt active and vigorous, I woke up feeling fresh and rested, My daily life has been filled with things that interest me.	GA, TF

<b>Eurobarometer</b>		
<i>2009 survey questions (N = 1300, 15+, UK, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
QA1.	On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the life you lead?	GE, NT
QA2.	How would you judge the current situation in each of the following: Your personal job situation? The financial situation of your household?	DE, NT DE, NT
QA4.	What are your expectations for the next 12 months? Will the next 12 months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to: Your life in general? The financial situation of your household? Your personal job situation?	GE, TF DE, TF DE, TF

*International examples*

<b>Gallup World Poll</b>		
<i>Core worldwide survey questions (N = 1000, 15+, UK, telephone interviews)</i>		
Q.	Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your freedom to choose what you do with your life?	DE, NT
Q.	Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your personal health?	DE, NT
Q.	Did you experience physical pain during a lot of the day yesterday?	DE, NT
Q.	Did you have enough energy to get things done yesterday?	DE, NT
Q.	Do you have any health problems that prevent you from doing any of the things people your age can normally do?	DE, NT
Q.	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days (0-10)?	GE, NT
Q.	Did you experience anger during a lot of the day yesterday?	GA, TF
Q.	Did you experience depression during a lot of the day yesterday?	GA, TF
Q.	Did you experience enjoyment during a lot of the day yesterday?	GA, TF
Q.	Did you experience happiness during a lot of the day yesterday?	GA, TF
Q.	Did you experience sadness during a lot of the day yesterday?	GA, TF
Q.	Did you experience stress during a lot of the day yesterday?	GA, TF
Q.	Did you experience worry during a lot of the day yesterday?	GA, TF
Q.	Now please think about yesterday, from the morning until the end of the day. Think about where you were, what you were doing, who you were with and how you felt. Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday? Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?	DA, TF GA, TF

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

	Were you treated with respect all day yesterday? Would you like to have more days just like yesterday?	DA, TF GE, TF
Q.	Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. Suppose we say the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time, assuming that the higher the step the better you feel about your life, and the lower the step the worse you feel about it. Which step comes closest to the way you feel? On which step of the ladder would you say you stood five years ago? On which step of the ladder would you say you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?	 GE, TF GE, TF GE, TF

<b>World Values Survey</b> <i>2006 survey questions (N= 1000, 15+, Great Britain, face-to-face interviews)</i>		
Q2.	Taking all things together, would you say you are very happy, rather happy, not very happy or not at all happy?	GE, NT
Q3.	All in all, how would you describe your state of health these days? Would you say it is very good, good, fair or poor?	DE, NT
Q5.	All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? If 1 means you are "completely dissatisfied" and 10 means you are "completely satisfied", where would you put your satisfaction with your life as a whole?	GE, NT
Q6.	Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?	DE, NT
Q.	Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. Please use this scale where 1 means "no choice at all" and 10 means "a great deal of choice" to indicate how much freedom of choice and control you feel you have over the way your life turns out.	PS, NT
Q.	Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair? Please show your response on this card, where 1 means that "people would try to take advantage of you," and 10 means that "people would try to be fair".	DE, NT
Q.	How satisfied are you with the financial situation of your household (1-10)?	DE, NT

<b>Health Behaviour of School-aged Children Survey</b> <i>2001 survey questions (N= 1500, 11 + 13 + 15, UK, self-completion)</i>		
Q.	Would you say that your health is excellent, good, fair or poor?	DE, NT
Q.	How do you feel about school at present? (I like it a lot, I like it a bit, I don't like it very much, or I don't like it at all).	DE, NT
Q.	Here is a picture of a ladder. The top of the ladder, 10, is the best possible life for you and the bottom, 0, is the worst possible life for you. In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment? Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand.	GE, NT



## Appendix 2: Candidate ONS surveys for the inclusion of Subjective Wellbeing questions

Survey	Description	Topics covered	Household and achieved sample size	Respondents	Sampling methods and design	Can subjective wellbeing questions be included?	Funding new questions	Process for including questions
Opinions (OPN)	Collects monthly data from sample of 2,010. Data is provided 14 weeks after confirmation of questions	Any, including a set of broad core variables	1k household sample	Selected household respondents 16+ in Great Britain	Stratified clustered postcode sampling. Monthly	Yes. Client has freedom to design the question set	Questions are funded by clients on a per question basis	Approach the survey manager at least 6 weeks before going to field
General Lifestyle Survey (GLF)	Collects lifestyle information from private households in Great Britain	Including health, social exclusion and poverty. Also accommodation, housing costs, pensions, employment, financial information, smoking and drinking	9K households, approx 16K achieved	All household residents in Great Britain	Stratified clustered postcode sampling, longitudinal rotational (4-year) design	Yes, it is likely to run a European Module on wellbeing in 2013. It may be possible to consult with Eurostat	Questions are funded by Government Departments	A proposal should be made no later than March the year before to the GLF steering group

## Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK

Labour Force Survey (LFS)	Provides information about the UK labour market	Employment, training, qualifications, income and disability	52K households per quarter. 120K achieved	All adults in household Great Britain & NI	Postcode sampling. Quarterly. Longitudinal element	With a strong business case it may be possible to add new questions	Questions are funded by Government Departments	Consultation to inclusion is approximately 14 months, including steering group negotiation and cognitive testing
Integrated Household Survey (IHS)	Combines data from many surveys to give high precision estimates and enable lower geographic analysis	Economic activity, education, health, identity, income	190k households. 470K achieved	All adults in household Great Britain	Great Britain.	With a strong business case it may be possible to add new questions	The IHS has a pricing structure	Approach the survey manager who will refer it to the steering group
Annual Population Survey (APS)	Gives high precision estimates and enables lower geographic analysis of population variables	Housing, education, employment, ethnicity and health	150K households. 360k achieved	All adults in household Great Britain	Postcode sampling. Continuous	With a strong business case it may be possible to add new questions	Uses the IHS pricing structure	Approach the survey manager who will refer it to the steering group
Life Opportunities Survey (LOS)	Survey is sponsored by the Office of Disability Issues (ODI). LOS focuses primarily on households	Information about people's opportunities and barriers in areas such as work, education, social	37.5k Household (wave 1).	Wave 1 = household respondent. Wave 2 = impairment and comparison group.	Stratified unclustered longitudinal sample	It isn't an intention to include new questions, but this may help fund the survey in the future	There is no costing model, but this could be discussed	Approach the survey manager who would consult ODI

**Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK**

	with at least one 'disabled' resident, although a sample of non-disabled respondents is included	participation and their use of public services		Great Britain				
Family Resources Survey (FRS)	Continuous survey of private households	Income and circumstances of private households	48K household	All adults in household UK	Postcode sampling continuous	This is unlikely as the survey is sponsored by DWP	Survey is funded by DWP until 2011	DWP consult their stakeholders about questions annually
Household Assets Survey (HAS)	Collects information on economic wellbeing	Collects data on assets and liabilities to estimate wealth	32K household	All adults in household. Great Britain	Postcode sampling continuous	No. The survey has been confirmed for the next two years	NA	NA
Living Costs and Food Survey	Continuous survey of household expenditure	Income and expenditure	12k household	All adults in household UK	Postcode sampling continuous	Unlikely as the topic isn't relevant	There is an existing pricing structure	Approach the survey manager
English Housing Survey (EHS)	National survey of housing in England	Housing tenure, type and condition of housing	32K households 40K achieved	England	Postcode sampling	Unlikely as the topic isn't relevant	Communities and Local Government fund the survey	Approach the survey manager