Measuring National Well-being in the UK

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Measuring National Well-being Programme, ONS

22 May 2013

www.ons.gov.uk/well-being
Presentation

• Background to MNW programme
• Programme aims
• Achievements so far
• Some results
• What’s next
• Questions
Background

1970 - ONS has been reporting on developments in society in the UK for over 40 years in the Social Trends publication

2007 - ONS started looking in more depth at existing datasets and how these could be used to help build a clear picture of societal well-being

Nov 2010 – Prime Minister David Cameron asked National Statistician Jil Matheson to take forward work to measure national well-being


“We must measure what matters - the key elements of national well-being. We want to develop measures based on what people tell us matters most.”
What are we trying to achieve?

An accepted and trusted set of National Statistics to help people understand and monitor national well-being.

The ‘triple bottom line’

- Economy
- Social
- Environment & Sustainability
What’s been published to date..

What matters to you? From consultation 10 domains and measures. First annual report.

Analysis of first annual experimental subjective well-being dataset from the APS, 4/11 – 3/12

Articles covering each of the domains – health, economy, where we live, personal finance, etc.

Interactive wheel, bar charts and maps highlighting distributions & sub-regional estimates
UK experimental subjective Well-being estimates

Worthwhileness – HIGH (score 7-10)
UK by County and Local Authority, Province of Northern Ireland

Map shows: Worthwhileness - HIGH (score 7-10)

Proportion with medium or high worthwhileness (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>per cent</th>
<th>number of map areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86.9 to 88.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 86.8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.2 to 84.9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81.4 to 83.1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.5 to 81.3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.7 to 79.4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.8 to 77.6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 to 75.7</td>
<td>12</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Tyne and Wear (2011–12) – 78.4 per cent.
1.6 LESS than the UK mean of 80 per cent

Worthwhileness
HIGH (score 7-10)

This is the percentage of UK adults (aged 15 and over) who gave a rating of seven to ten on an eleven point scale (where zero was “not at all” and ten “completely”) when asked “Overall, how worthwhile are the things that you do in your life?” and therefore reported relatively high feelings that the things they do are worthwhile.


Graphic by: ONS Data Visualisation Centre
UK experimental subjective Well-being estimates

UK countries and regions

United Kingdom
Great Britain
England
North East
North West
Yorkshire and The Humber
East Midlands
West Midlands
East of England
London
South East
South West
Wales
Scotland
Northern Ireland

Select data type below to view UK countries and regions:

- Life Satisfaction
- Worthwhile
- Happy Yesterday
- Anxious Yesterday

Click bar segment to hold results:

Respondents used ratings from 0 to 10 where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely.

UK figure: 80.0
of which Medium / High (7-10) 80
Not just subjective well-being...other outputs

**Economy**
- Human Capital stock estimates
- Economic position of households
- Developing non-market estimates

**Social**
- Experimental subjective well-being data
- Consultation on domains and measures
- Cross-cutting analyses e.g. UK sub-groups of population

**Environment & Sustainability**
- UK Env Accts – Blue book
- Contributions to development of international standards for international accounting
- Consultation on measuring natural capital and ecosystems
Domains of National Well-being

- Sustainability Issues over time
- Equality/Fairness
- More contextual domains
- The Economy
- Natural Environment
- Governance
- Where we live
- What we do
- Our relationships
- Personal Finance
- Health
- Education and skills
- Factors directly affecting individual well-being

Individual Well-Being
People’s own Assessment of their own well-being (SWB)

Individual Well-Being

Sustainability Issues over time
National Well-being wheel

Measuring what matters:
Understanding the nation’s well-being

More data and interactive version available at: www.ons.gov.uk/well-being

Data are the latest available at September 2012
What’s next...

30 May 2013:
• Update domains and measures – update the ‘wheel’
• First results of regression analysis – What matters most to personal well-being

July:
• 2\textsuperscript{nd} year of SWB data – national

September:
• Next update of domains and measures – update the ‘wheel’
• Consult on measuring change – getting better/worse

October:
• Local area SWB data

March 2014:
• Update domains and measures – update the ‘wheel’
• 2\textsuperscript{nd} annual report – ‘Life in the UK’
Key messages

• **NOT** a ‘happiness index’

• Importance of distributions not just the averages

• Not a single measure – need both objective **and** subjective data

• Supplements – not supplants GDP

• Use to help target scarce resources

• Long-term development project
Questions and discussion

• Any questions about the MNW Programme?

• What would be most useful at a local level?
• How would this information be used?