



Big questions

- What is national well-being?
- Why measure national well-being?
- How to measure national well-being?
- Who will use measures, for what?

What is national well-being?

<i>Well-being</i>	<i>Quality of life</i>	<i>Happiness</i>
<i>Life satisfaction</i>	<i>Welfare</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>

- Multi-dimensional measure of progress of society
- Economic, environment and social dimensions (and stocks and flows)
- Difficult to theorise, define and measure
- Big picture stuff (potentially linked to lots of detail!)

Why measure national well-being?

Well known problem

- National Accounts at best measure economic welfare
- More to life than GDP
- Descriptive statistics e.g. Social Trends, Sustainable Development Indicators

Why national well-being now?

New impetus

- Academic,
- International – e.g. Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report
- Political

“Government has the power to help improve well-being”



“From April next year we will start measuring our progress as a country not just by how our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving, not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life. ...”

PM 25.11.10

Vision for National Well-being work programme

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

How to measure national well-being?

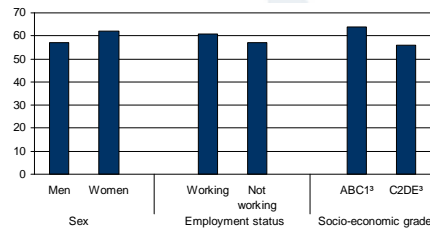
- Adjusted/improved National Accounts
- Environmental measures
- Quality of life
 - Objective indicators
 - Subjective measurement

Why measure subjective well-being?

- Increased demand for these measures
- Complement objective measures
- Avoid paternalism
- ONS surveys – large sample sizes
- Because we can now – valid measures associated with objective factors

Factors associated with subjective well-being measures (1)

Life satisfaction: by sex, employment status and socio-economic grade, 2010



Source: Omnibus Survey, Data (2010)
 1 Respondents, aged 16 or over, asked 'All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays?'.
 2 Percentage of people rating themselves as 8, 9 or 10 on a scale of 0 to 10 where 10 is 'extremely satisfied'

Factors associated with subjective well-being measures (2)

- Age
- Sex
- Socio-Economic group
- Health status – self reported and objective status
- Employment status - Unemployment
- Income
- Hours worked

ONS approach to measuring Subjective Well-being

- Balanced approach:
 - Evaluation
 - Experience
 - 'Eudemonic'
- Four questions in IHS (large sample), further questions in Opinions Survey (flexible)
- 'Experimental Statistics' – further testing & development planned

Overall Monitoring questions for IHS

- Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
- Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?
- Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

Who will use measures and for what?

- General Public
- Policy formulation and appraisal
- International organisations
- Others?

The National debate

- National and local media
- On-line and social media
 - Website area and consultation
 - Online consultation – around 6,000 responses to date
 - Twitter
- National debate events, seminars etc

Join the debate

Join the debate:
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/well-being>
Follow us on
<http://twitter.com/statisticsONS>
#ukwellbeing