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# A Review of General Social Surveys

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**A REVIEW OF GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEYS**

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Lara Fleischer, Conal Smith and Carine Viac, OECD Statistics Directorate

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## ABSTRACT / RÉSUMÉ

Societal progress is about improvements in the well-being of people and households. Assessing such progress requires looking at the diverse and multidimensional experiences and living conditions of people. Measuring well-being and progress is a key priority that the OECD is pursuing through its Better Life Initiative and the *How's Life* report series that has been published bi-annually since 2011. In addition, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have created a strong need for better data on multi-dimensional outcomes. However, no statistical framework exists linking conceptual frameworks of well-being with specific measurement instruments and outputs, and a lack of harmonised data suitable for international comparisons remains a key limitation to monitoring progress across countries. This review makes a first step towards developing a system of well-being statistics. A data source that has been underutilised in assessing the multidimensionality of human well-being and the joint distribution of outcomes are General Social Surveys, which are run by the majority of national statistical agencies as part of their regular survey programme. Using the OECD well-being framework, this review systematically considers the outcome domains of *How's Life?*, taking stock of how each domain is being measured through General Social Surveys conducted in OECD countries and could be drawn upon in comparative analyses of well-being such as *How's Life?*. The paper highlights inconsistencies between General Social Surveys across countries, and makes recommendations towards harmonization.

*Keywords: well-being, quality of life, methodology for collecting and organising microeconomic data*

*JEL Classification: I30, I31, C81*

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Le progrès des sociétés passe par une amélioration du bien-être des individus et des ménages. Pour évaluer ces progrès, il convient d'examiner le vécu et les conditions de vie des personnes, dans toute leur diversité et leur multi-dimensionnalité. Mesurer le bien-être et le progrès des sociétés est l'un des principaux objectifs visé par l'OCDE dans le cadre de l'Initiative du vivre mieux et de la série de rapports « Comment va la vie ? », publiés tous les deux ans depuis 2011. En outre, les objectifs de développement durable des Nations Unies créent un fort besoin d'indicateurs plus précis sur des problématiques pluridimensionnelles. Cependant, à l'heure actuelle, il n'existe pas de cadre statistique faisant le lien entre les cadres conceptuels relatifs au bien-être, les instruments de mesure spécifiques et les résultats. En outre, le manque de données harmonisées comparables au niveau international est un frein majeur au suivi des progrès d'un pays à l'autre. Cette étude ouvre la voie à un système de statistiques du bien-être. Les enquêtes sociales générales, conduites par la majorité des offices statistiques nationaux dans le cadre de leurs programmes d'enquêtes périodiques, constituent une source de données utiles à l'évaluation du caractère multidimensionnel du bien-être et de la distribution conjointe des résultats observés dans ce domaine, source qui a été sous-utilisée jusqu'à présent. En s'appuyant sur le cadre d'évaluation du bien-être de l'OCDE, cette étude examine de manière systématique les différents domaines couverts par le rapport « Comment va la vie ? », en faisant le point sur les méthodes d'évaluation appliquées pour chacun de ces domaines dans les enquêtes sociales générales menées dans les pays de l'OCDE et sur la façon dont elles pourraient être mises à profit dans des analyses comparables du bien-être, comme celle de « Comment va la vie ? ». Ce rapport met en évidence les incohérences entre les enquêtes sociales générales menées dans les différents pays, et formule des recommandations en vue d'une meilleure harmonisation.

*Mots-clés : bien-être, qualité de vie, méthodologie pour la collecte et l'organisation des données microéconomiques*

*Classification JEL : I30, I31, C81*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This review brings together information on General Social Surveys (GSS) carried out by OECD and a number of associated countries, and assesses the potential for using GSS as a source of comparable cross-country data. In particular, the review focuses on the ability of GSS to provide a consistent picture of well-being outcomes "joined-up" at the level of the individual respondent.

### **Demand for new data on well-being is strong and continues to increase**

2. Recent years have seen a dramatic change in how social progress is assessed. Following the 2009 release of the *Report of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress* by Amartya Sen, Joseph Stiglitz, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi, it has become increasingly accepted that economic aggregates such as GDP are inadequate measures of the overall well-being of the population, and that well-being itself can be quantified, typically via a "dashboard" of indicators. Various national and international initiatives (such as the OECD's Better Life Initiative with its *How is Life?* report), as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlight the level of interest in measuring well-being. Combined with a strong need for data to assist in the evaluation of policy programmes, and to support the analysis of what drives policy-relevant outcomes, the demand for well-being data has increased immensely and will play a major role in the expectations placed on official statistics over the coming decade.

3. Currently, the demand for comparable well-being data is only partly met; available data sources are frequently ad hoc or suffer from poor international comparability. This reflects the fact that, while the conceptual framework for measuring well-being is now relatively well-developed, the statistical infrastructure is much less developed. In particular, there is no statistical framework linking the conceptual dimensions of well-being with specific measurement instruments and statistical outputs in the same way as already exists for national accounts, population statistics, or labour force statistics.

### **The potential of General Social Surveys as vehicle for well-being data collection**

4. This review makes a first step towards developing a system of well-being statistics. It considers the range of measures available to meet the needs of international monitoring within the context of a specific measurement instrument (General Social Surveys) currently available in most OECD countries, and that could be adapted to form the core of a broader system of well-being statistics.

5. This document builds on a questionnaire circulated to delegates at the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy delegates from OECD and partner countries between September 2014 and December 2014. The questionnaire requested NSOs to identify relevant surveys, detail survey content and provide general methodological information. Based on the responses received, this review systematically considers the 11 outcome dimensions of the OECD well-being framework; it takes stock of how each concept is currently measured through General Social Surveys, and which immediate steps should be taken to move towards improved international comparability between General Social Surveys.

6. A wide range of well-being information is currently available through existing General Social Surveys, with some topics being more developed than others. For example, questions on income, jobs and earnings (particularly labour force status), satisfaction with health status, education and skills, and subjective well-being are included in most surveys, and data from them are largely internationally comparable. Other well-being dimensions are also covered by General Social Surveys, but lack consistency in how the outcome is measured, often because no international standards provide guidance on how to do so. This is the case for housing, water quality as aspect of environmental quality, and personal security. Finally, the dimensions of work-life balance, social connections, civic engagement and governance, as well

as environmental quality other than water quality, are not yet widely included in General Social Surveys and where they are, this is done in a largely non-standardized way.

7. Despite these limitations, there is a great deal of commonality in the topics covered by General Social Surveys across OECD and partner countries, and for the majority of surveys these topics map well onto the OECD well-being framework used to frame this review. Table 1 below provides an overview of the dimensions for which information is available, with each column relating to a dimension of the *How's Life?* well-being framework. Two ticks indicate that the survey considered collects information on a given topic on a regular basis in its core module, and that this information is broadly comparable with the headline indicators used in the *How's Life?* report. A single tick indicates that the survey collects information on the relevant dimension of well-being, but that this either uses a different measure to the headline indicator in *How's Life?* or that the measure is included in an ad hoc module rather than as part of the core module. The last two columns summarize the number of well-being dimensions for which information is available for either the *How's Life?* headline indicators (column 13) or on the basis of alternative indicators (column 14).

**Table 1. GSS topic coverage**

	OECD well-being dimensions												Any measure
	Income and wealth	Jobs and earnings	Housing	Health status	Work-life balance	Education and skills	Social connection	Civic engagement	Environmental	Personal security	Subjective well-being	Headline Measures	
Australia	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√		√√	√√	9	10
Canada	√√	√√	√	√√	√	√√	√	√		√	√√	5	10
Chile	√√	√√	√√	√√		√√		√				5	6
Columbia (ECV)	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√			√	√√	√√	6	9
Costa Rica	√√	√√	√√	√	√√	√√		√		√		5	8
EU (EU-SILC)	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√	√**	8	11
Israel	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√√	9	11
Japan	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√						6	6
Korea	√√	√√		√√	√	√√	√√		√√	√	√√	7	9
Mexico			*	*		*			*			?	4
Netherlands	√	√√	√	√√	√√	√√	√	√√	√	√	√√	6	11
New Zealand	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√√	9	11
Poland	√√	√	√√	√		√√	√	√√		√	√√	5	9
Russian Federation	√		√	√√	√√	√√						3	5
United States	√√	√√	√√		√√	√√						5	5

Notes: √√ information collected in core survey, broadly comparable with *How's Life?* primary indicator; √ information available but not in core module and/or not comparable with *How's Life?* primary indicator; \* information will be available, but detailed questions not available at the time of publication; \*\* will be available from 2019 onwards.

### Next steps towards a coherent system of well-being statistics

8. A number of factors currently hamper the move toward a system of well-being statistics grounded in a consistent approach to General Social Surveys. These include limited financial resources; limited expertise within NSOs on some of the subjects covered; weaknesses in the levers connecting policy needs with the priorities of NSOs; lack of consensus on the best approach to measure a number of outcome

areas; and the tension between the need for information that is of direct relevance to a particular country and a desire for coherence across countries.

9. These challenges are not unique to General Social Surveys and can be overcome. Similar issues have faced income and labour statistics in the past, without preventing international harmonization in these areas. With this in mind, several concrete steps could be taken that would significantly enhance the quality of General Social Survey data and its consistency across countries. In particular:

- International statistical bodies such as the International Statistical Institute and inter-governmental organizations such as the OECD should **support the development of a professional community of General Social Survey statisticians**, in the same way that such communities exist for other parts of official statistics such as labour market statistics, income distribution statistics, or national accounts. In particular, opportunities for General Social Survey staff to share expertise and experience either within existing conferences or through dedicated working groups should be pursued.
- An area for particular focus on the part of inter-governmental organizations and NSOs staff should be to identify a **core set of topics** that all General Social Surveys would cover, and to reach agreement on a **parsimonious set of questions** that could be used to cover these topics.
- Guidelines setting out best practice in survey development exist for many types of official survey, including labour force surveys, time use surveys and victimisation surveys. However, no set of guidelines setting out international best practice for General Social Surveys currently exist. If progress is made on agreeing a core set of topics, international government organizations should **convene staff from NSOs and relevant experts** to draft an **initial set of guidelines for harmonising General Social Surveys**.
- One precondition for implementing a core set of multi-dimensional measures in a consistent way across countries is that there are valid instruments for measuring the relevant concepts. A key priority for the continued development of GSS is therefore the production of **guidelines on the measurement of social connections, civic engagement and governance, and aspects of environmental quality** relevant to people's current well-being.
- One advantage of GSS is the ability to analyse the joint distribution of outcomes. However, despite the existence of a number of suitable datasets (illustrated in Table 1), little has been done to allow such analysis in a comparative way. A priority for future work should be to **utilize existing GSS datasets** for exploratory **analysis of the joint distribution of well-being outcomes**.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

10. This review brings together information on General Social Surveys (GSS) carried out by OECD and a number of partner countries, and assesses the potential for using GSS as a source of comparable cross-country data situated coherently within a country's statistical infrastructure. In particular, the review focuses on the ability of GSS to provide a consistent picture of well-being outcomes "joined-up" at the level of the individual respondent. This review was included in the 2012-13 programme of work of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy (CSSP), and is part of the OECD Statistics Directorate's broader of work to improve available measures of people's well-being.

### 1.1 Review outline

11. This review is organised in 13 sections. Section 1 provides a working definition of what constitutes a General Social Survey for the purposes of this review, and addresses the main drivers of current interest in GSS. In particular, it identifies the demand for multi-dimensional well-being data and outlines how GSS can assist in meeting this need and fit into a broader system of well-being statistics. This section also recalls the OECD well-being framework as conceptual anchor for this review and discusses its overlap with other international well-being measurement efforts, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This section also describes the methodology and country-coverage of the review, and provides information on the number and structure of the GSS analysed.

12. Sections 2 to 12 form the main part of the review, with each section focusing on a specific dimension of the OECD well-being framework. For each dimension, the review evaluates the degree to which GSS include one or more core measures of the outcome in question, the degree to which this information is internationally comparable, and the range of other information on the outcome available within the GSS covered by the Review.

13. The final part of this review, Section 13, examines the potential for analysis of joint distributions of well-being outcomes using GSS, and makes suggestions for steps towards greater international comparability in well-being measurement using GSS.

### 1.2 The demand for multi-dimensional well-being data

14. Recent years have seen a dramatic change in how people's well-being and social progress are assessed. An increasing focus on evidence-based assessment of the outcomes of policy programmes by various government agencies creates a strong demand for well-being data that goes well beyond people's income and labour market participation. Further, following the 2009 release of the *Report of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress* led by Amartya Sen, Joseph Stiglitz, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi, it has become increasingly accepted that economic aggregates such as GDP are inadequate measures of overall well-being of the population, and that well-being itself can be measured, typically via a "dashboard" of indicators. Government initiatives to measure well-being, such as those launched in the United Kingdom and Israel, as well as initiatives led by individual government agencies such as *Measuring Australia's Progress*, Austria's *Growth in Transition*, or Italy's *Benessere Equo e Sostenibile*, highlight the level of interest in measuring well-being. Beyond national initiatives, there have also been high-profile international efforts to measure well-being such as Eurostat's indicators of quality of life, the OECD's Better Life Initiative with its flagship *How is Life?* report. The adoption of a set of universal UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 has given further drive to these efforts.

15. One clear point that emerges from the different well-being related initiatives in the past decade is the high degree of convergence in how well-being is conceptualized. This common approach reflects both

the limits of what is possible with existing data, but also an increasing body of evidence on the structure of well-being from a number of different sources. Evidence on the determinants of subjective well-being (Boarini et al, 2013, Helliwell et al, 2015) identifies a broadly similar list of factors important to well-being as those identified by experts (Alkire, 2002), or that result from public consultations (ONS, 2012, Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2014). Kroll (2014) argues that the multi-dimensional approach to measuring well-being embodied in these recent initiatives significantly outperforms earlier attempts to go "beyond GDP" in measuring progress.

16. These developments have increased demand for well-being data. However, this demand is currently only partially met and, where it is, new data collections are frequently ad hoc or suffer from poor international comparability. This reflects the fact that, while the conceptual framework for measuring well-being is now relatively well-developed, the statistical infrastructure is much less developed. In particular, there is no *statistical* framework linking the conceptual framework for well-being with specific measurement instruments and statistical outputs.

17. This review makes a first step towards developing a system of well-being statistics. It considers the range of measures available to meet the needs of international monitoring within the context of a specific measurement instrument (General Social Surveys – see Box 1) that are currently available in most OECD countries, and that could be adapted relatively easily as the core of a broader system of well-being statistics.

#### **Box 1. What is a General Social Survey?**

For the purpose of this review, a General Social Survey is defined as having the following features:

- Being part of the official statistical system of a country (i.e. collected or overseen by the national statistical agency of the relevant country).
- Being nationally representative (rather than focused on specific population groups).
- Providing information on well-being outcomes for each person (most of the measures can be captured at the household level but analysis at the individual level should be possible).
- Covering multiple outcome areas as opposed to focusing specifically on a single dimension.
- Including fixed core content that remains the same for each wave.
- Being conducted on a regular basis do as to observe changes on well-being outcomes over time (not ad-hoc surveys)

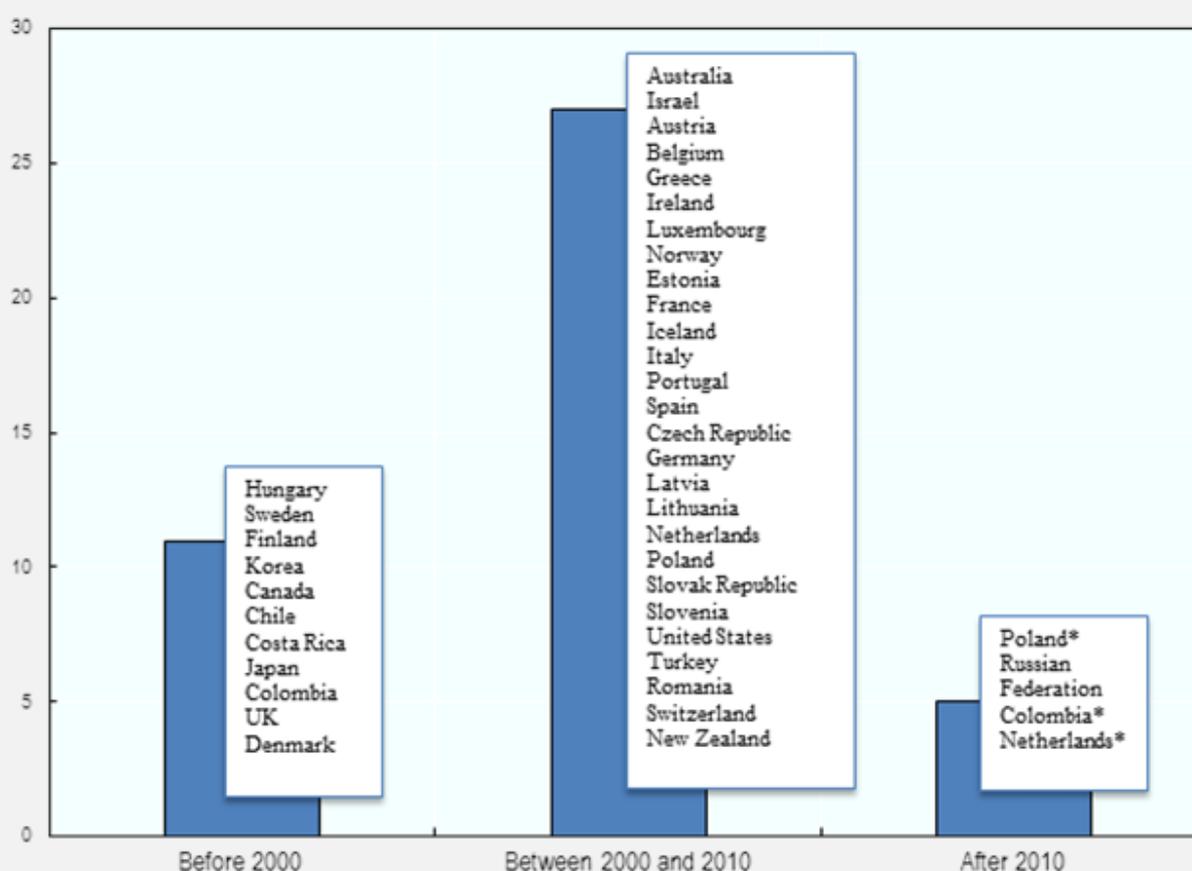
General Social Surveys are a rather recent phenomenon, apart from a few exceptions (see Figure 1). Hungary, with its 1949 Household Budget and Living Conditions Survey, was the first OECD country to launch a survey of this type in 1949. Starting in the mid-70s, a range of other countries followed suit: between 1975 and 1995, Sweden, Finland, Korea, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Japan, Colombia, the UK and Denmark all launched the first versions of their surveys. The Canadian General Social Survey, launched in 1985, has been particularly influential, serving as a model for surveys in Australia, Israel, Korea, and New Zealand. However, it was not until Eurostat's creation of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions survey (EU-SILC) in the early 2000s – which was not technically designed as a General Social Survey but covers all important aspects of one<sup>1</sup> – that surveys focusing on

<sup>1</sup> EU-SILC was designed as an income survey, and this remains its main focus. However, following the decision by Eurostat to develop quality of life indicators, EU-SILC was selected to be the main vehicle for data collection and, as a result, currently fits the criteria adopted in this review. A dedicated European Social Survey is currently planned, however, that would allow more time to be dedicated to non-income statistics compared to EU-SILC.

multiple aspects of well-being were mainstreamed across the majority of OECD countries. The EU-SILC project was launched in 2003 on the basis of a "gentlemen's agreement" between seven countries. In 2004, EU-SILC was implemented in Estonia, Iceland, Norway, and in 2005, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom were added. As of 2016, EU-SILC covers 28 European Union countries, plus Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, FYROM, Serbia and Turkey.

Other countries followed the same trend. Between 2002 and 2011, Australia, Israel, New Zealand and Russia all integrated social surveys into their national statistical systems. In 2015, Mexico launched its Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENH). Further, various countries have recently launched additional GSS-like instruments, notably Poland with its 2011 Social Cohesion Survey, Colombia with its 2012 Time Use National Survey (ENUT), as well as the Netherlands with its 2013 Social Cohesion and Well-being Survey.

**Figure 1. Inception dates for General Social Surveys in OECD and partner countries**



\* Launches of second social surveys

### 1.2.1 A system of well-being statistics

18. A statistical framework brings together a conceptual framework relating to the concept of interest, the measurement instruments required to quantify it, and the statistical infrastructure needed to ensure that data are collected in a way consistent with statistical quality standards. The best known statistical framework is the System of National Accounts (SNA), but population statistics and labour force statistics are equally supported by coherent statistical frameworks that underpin the production of high

quality, timely and internationally-comparable data. Conversely, no commonly accepted statistical framework exists for household well-being statistics, and while several national statistical offices have made steps in this direction, or signalled their intent to move in this direction (Bycroft, 2011; Dupré and Di Meglio, 2014), these efforts are still in their infancy.

19. From a measurement perspective, the primary characteristic of well-being statistics is their multi-dimensionality. Well-being statistics need to cover subjects as diverse as income, employment, health status, social contact, environmental quality, governance, and subjective well-being. This breadth of scope places a significant burden on national statistical offices. Beyond this, however, are several additional challenges. Well-being statistics need to provide information on the distribution of outcomes, both in continuous terms and for specific population sub-groups. This implies a relatively large sample size. In addition, many areas of well-being, such as health status or social contact, do not reduce easily to a single measure: hence there is a need for dedicated in-depth measurement for some areas using a range of different instruments. Finally, well-being measures need to be “joined up” at the individual unit-record level: this is important both to allow analysis of the joint distribution of outcomes (Sen, Stiglitz, Fitoussi et al, 1999), and for the analysis of the drivers of well-being.

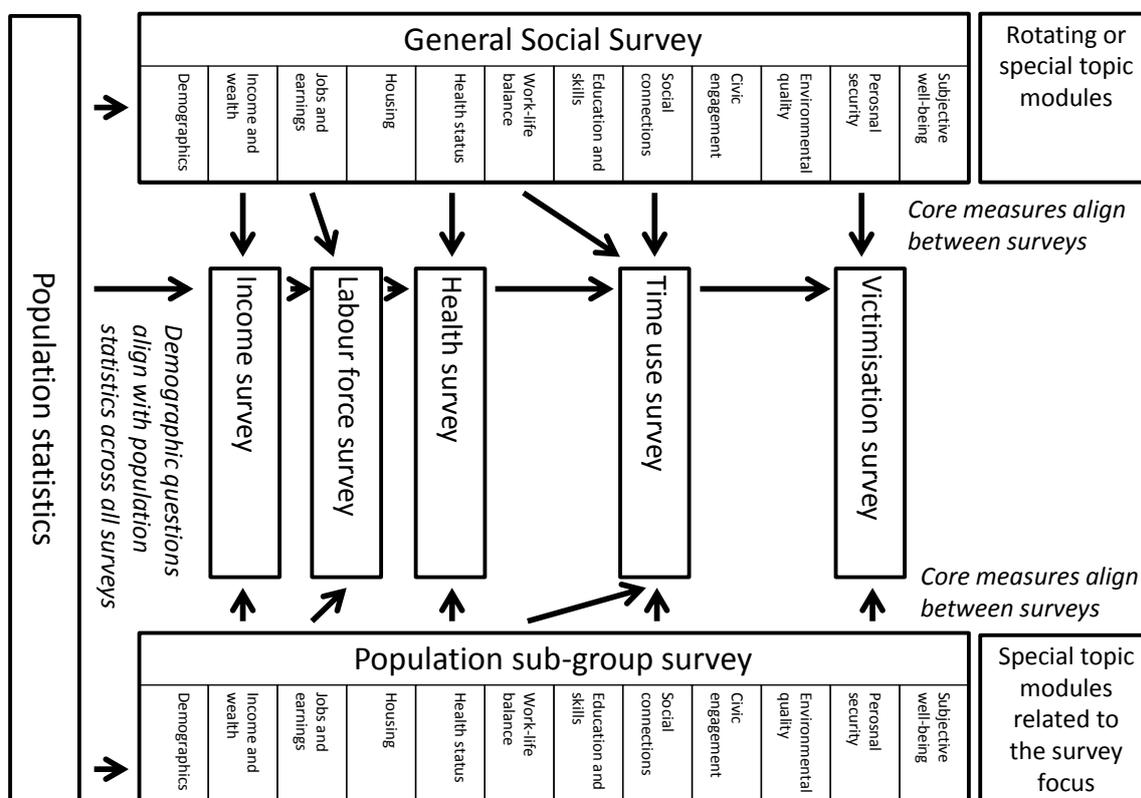
20. These issues raise conflicting priorities for well-being statistics. On the one hand, the need for joined up statistics across multiple outcomes could be met by a single multi-dimensional household survey covering all topics briefly. On the other hand, the need for in-depth measures on specific topics points towards drawing data from more detailed surveys focused on a single outcome area, such as health or the labour market. Both these priorities need to be balanced against the limited financial resources available to national statistical offices and the high demand for data on other topics.

21. One way to reconcile these conflicting demands is to make the greatest possible use of existing data sources by integrating them to provide a coherent portfolio of well-being statistics that can be joined up via a set of core indicators for each outcome domain. With standardization of the core social indicators, these core indicators would allow for cross cutting data sets to be linked to more detailed data sources that provide more specialised information on a particular topic. Such a system is outlined in Figure 2.

22. In Figure 2, a General Social Survey collects information on each domain of well-being along with core demographic information and some analytical variables. To lower respondent burden and cost, a GSS cannot collect in-depth information on each well-being domain, so data collection focuses on two or three core indicators for each domain. Beyond collecting information on a limited set of core indicators for each domain, one central role of a GSS is to allow cross-classifying respondents based on alternative outcomes, so as to allow links to specific subject matter surveys. In-depth analysis of particular outcome areas is carried out through specific subject-matter surveys. These subject matter surveys mostly already exist in national statistical systems (e.g. labour force surveys, household income surveys, health interview surveys, time use surveys, victimisation surveys) and can be linked to a GSS by a set of common core outcome indicators collected in both surveys.

23. Such an approach also allows for cross-cutting surveys focused on specific population groups of interest such as older people or specific ethnic groups. Specific surveys focused on sub-populations may be needed either because the policy issues relevant to the group require additional information that is not relevant to society more widely, or because the sub-population in question is sufficiently small that it is not well-reflected in a population survey. Using a common set of core indicators both allows the position of the population sub-group of interest to be compared to that of the population as a whole, and also allows linkages to be made with more detailed subject matter surveys.

**Figure 2. A system of well-being statistics: conceptual overview**



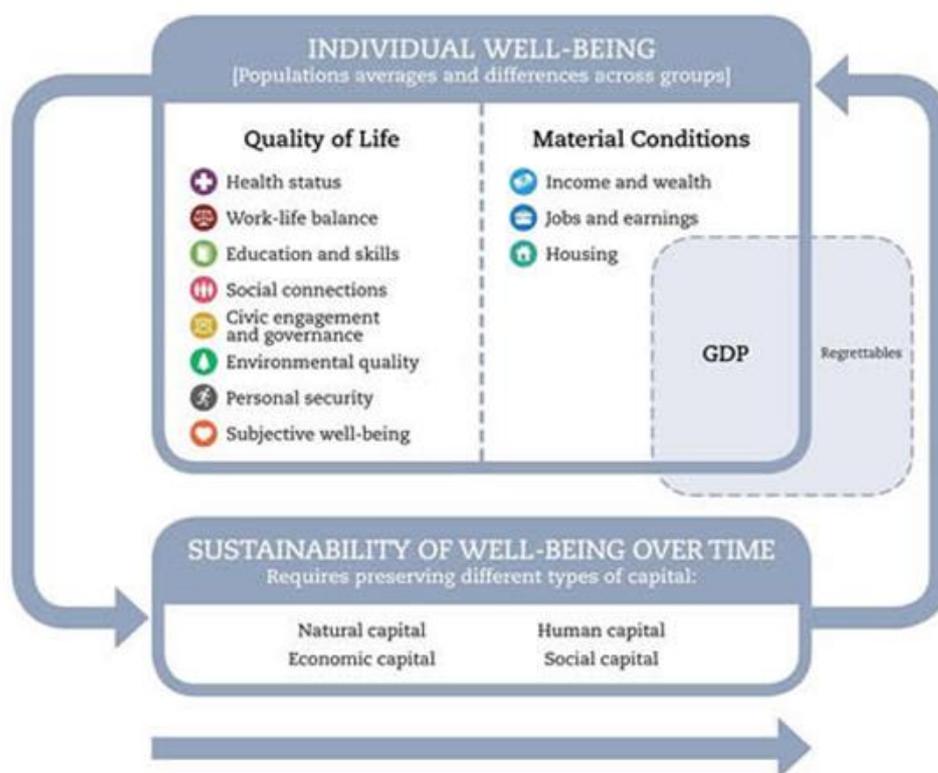
### 1.2.3 The OECD conceptual framework for measuring well-being

24. Conceptually, as it is focused on the measurement of well-being internationally, this review builds on the OECD framework for measuring well-being and progress. First introduced in *How's Life? 2011*, the framework draws on a range of international and national initiatives for measuring societal progress, as well as on the recommendations by the 2009 Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi Report and of the guidance by the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy. Conceptually based on the capabilities approach (Sen, 1985; Alkire and Sarwar, 2009; Anand, Durand and Heckman, 2011), the framework focuses on well-being 'outcomes' (e.g. health status) rather than 'inputs' (e.g. the size of the health budget) and 'outputs' (e.g. number of operations performed), and puts individuals and households rather than macro-economic metrics at the centre of assessment.

25. The OECD framework for measuring well-being is built around three distinct domains shown in Figure 3: material conditions, quality of life and sustainability. This review focuses on the two domains of current well-being, namely material conditions and quality of life, and on the 11 dimensions included in these. For each of the eleven dimensions identified in Figure 3, the OECD has specified a set of 'headline indicators' on the basis of their relevance, availability, and quality in terms of frequent and internationally comparable data collection (see OECD 2011 for further details). While the *How's Life 2013* and *2015* reports focus on this core set of primary indicators, the OECD also uses several 'secondary indicators' that provide complementary evidence (e.g. indicators covering more specific aspects of the dimension at hand, or that have a more limited country coverage, or that are based on sources that are deemed to be less robust than in the case of headline indicators).

26. Both the primary and secondary indicators are used as a starting point for evaluating the degree to which GSS provide adequate coverage of each well-being dimension. This reflects the fact that the *How's Life?* indicators were selected on the basis of the degree to which they provide internationally comparable summary measure of the outcome in question, and are commonly used and accepted. In some cases, the *How's Life?* indicators may be appropriate for use as a common measure, linking GSS to more detailed data collections. However, in other cases the *How's Life?* indicators are less suitable for direct use in a GSS (e.g. indicators derived from the system of national accounts). In these cases, the *How's Life?* indicators provide a guide as to concept that the relevant core measure in a GSS should measure.

**Figure 3 The OECD Well-being Framework**



Source: OECD, 2013c

#### 1.2.4 Well-being and the Sustainable Development Goals

27. One important factor driving the demand for data on various well-being outcomes over the next decade will be the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The number and diversity of the SDGs reflect the holistic nature of development with its many dimensions (health, decent work, climate, etc.), and generates a need for multi-dimensional measures. The OECD well-being framework and the SDGs are highly consistent, not only in their general features – focusing on people, multidimensionality, today and tomorrow, here and elsewhere – but even in their specific dimensions. This is illustrated in Figure 4, drawn from *Measuring Distance to the SDGs Targets* (OECD, 2016), and serves as further evidence that the available well-being initiatives tend to converge conceptually.

28. Of the 16 SDGs:

- 9 Goals map directly onto one of the 11 dimensions in the OECD well-being framework;
- Of the remaining SDGs not listed in Figure 4 (see Appendix B for a full list), the majority (Goal 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15) relate to the OECD domain of sustainability at the bottom of Figure 3;
- Goals 1, 5 and 10 (“reduce poverty”, “achieve gender equality” and “reduce inequalities within and among countries”) capture aspects of the distribution of well-being that are considered within domains in the OECD well-being framework;
- Only SDG 17 – “strengthen the means of implementation” – has no direct counterpart in the OECD well-being framework, while only two well-being dimensions used by the OECD – “social connections” and “subjective well-being” – have no direct parallel in the SDGs.

29. A consequence of the large overlap between the SDGs and the OECD well-being dimensions is that the data needed to monitor the SDGs covers largely the same ground as the OECD well-being framework. Therefore, although this report is structured around the OECD framework, it should be kept in mind that GSS are also one of the key tools for collecting data for monitoring of the SDGs.

**Figure 4 OECD well-being measures and the SDGs**

OECD Well-being Framework		Sustainable Development Goals
<i>Individual well-being</i>	<i>Well-Being dimensions</i>	Income & wealth  SDG1 (poverty); SDG2 (food)
		Jobs and earnings  SDG8 (decent work & economy)
		Housing  SDG11 (cities)
		Health status  SDG3 (health)
		Work-life balance  SDG8 (decent work & economy)
		Education & skills  SDG4 (education)
		Civic engagement & governance  SDG16 (institutions)
		Environmental quality  SDG6 (water); SDG 11 (cities)
		Personal security  SDG16 (institutions)
	<i>Differences across groups</i>	SDG1 (poverty); SDG5 (women); SDG10 (inequality)
<i>Sustainability of well-being over time</i>	Natural capital  SD13 (climate); SDG14 (oceans); SDG15 (biodiversity); SDG12 (sustainable production);	
	Economic capital  SDG7 (energy); SDG8 (decent work & economy); SDG9 (infrastructure); SDG12 (sustainable production);	
	Human capital  SDG3 (health); SDG4 (education)	
	Social capital  SDG16 (institutions)	
<i>OECD dimensions of individual well-being not covered by SDGs</i>	Subjective well-being Social connections	
<i>Elements of SDGs not covered by the OECD well-being framework</i>	SDG17 (implementation) “Global contributions, trans-boundary effects, international efforts”	

Source: OECD, 2016

### 1.3 Review Methodology

30. This document builds on a questionnaire circulated to the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy delegates (national statistical offices) from OECD and partner countries between September 2014 and December 2014. The questionnaire requested countries to identify relevant surveys, detail survey content and provide more general methodological information.

31. Based on the responses received, this review systematically considers the 11 outcome dimensions of the OECD well-being framework (Income and wealth; Jobs and earnings; Housing; Health status; Education and skills; Social connections; Work-life balance; Civic engagement and governance; Environmental quality; Personal security; Subjective well-being) and takes detailed stock of how each concept is currently measured through GSS.

32. Each section of this review follows a consistent structure covering three sub-sections:

- **Concept:** This addresses the scope and nature of the concept that is to be measured, and why it is important. The main indicators, both headline and secondary, used in *How's Life?* are set out and form the starting point for comparisons. In some cases these indicators are suitable for use within GSS and form the basis for the subsequent analysis. In other cases, where the *How's Life?* indicators require more detailed data that are not suitable for a GSS, a simpler measure capturing the same dimension of well-being is identified.
- **Coverage and coherence:** The second sub-section addresses three core questions: (1) how many countries have measures for this well-being dimension in their GSS (regardless of whether the exact indicator is featured in *How's Life?*); (2) how many of the *How's Life?* indicators, both headline and secondary, are available for each country, and which of these are available on an annual basis; and (3) whether additional indicators that are not used in *How's Life?* are already available in these GSS. The first question provides information on whether there is relevant information on the outcome domain available for each country, while the second question addresses the more specific issue of whether it is possible to make meaningful international comparisons using the indicators from *How's Life?* The last question considers whether there is data that might allow the indicators used in *How's Life?* to be improved upon either by adopting a better primary indicator or with the addition of a secondary indicator that adds valuable information.
- **The statistical agenda ahead:** The final sub-section identifies immediate steps to move towards improved international comparability between GSS. The emphasis here is on practical steps – often identifying a core set of common questions that could be included in national GSS – that would improve international comparability in an incremental way as opposed to large scale changes to survey structure.

#### 1.3.1 Interpretation of the questionnaire

33. The questionnaire sent out to NSOs (Appendix A1) investigates the following areas:

- Existence of a General Social Survey or equivalent in the country (fitting the GSS criteria noted in Box 1);
- Structure and content of the survey;

- Methodology of the survey, including frequency, time lag, coverage, sample size and data collection.

34. As the questionnaire was sent out in 2014, this review focuses on the most recent version of the GSS available at this date in each country. In some cases there may have been revisions or changes to the survey following the OECD questionnaire, and these are not reflected in this review. Further, more recently launched GSS (for example the Danish Quality of Life Survey from 2015/2016) are not included in this work.

35. Some countries provided information on several GSS-type surveys that are conducted on a regular basis, resulting in a compilation of 52 questionnaires in total (see Appendix A.1). This study considers only the 43 survey instruments that fall under the general definition of a GSS used for the purpose of this review. For instance, the German NSOs provided information for three surveys: EU-SILC, Zeitverwendungserhebung – ZVE (Time Use Survey), and Einkommens- und Verbrauchsstichprobe - EVS (Sample Survey on Income and Expenditure). However, only the EU-SILC survey adheres to the definition of a GSS provided in Box 1. Similarly, out of the three survey instruments provided by the Chilean NSOs, only the Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional – Casen – was taken into account. Henceforth, unless otherwise specified, the term General Social Survey refers to the questionnaires considered that adhere to the above definition.

36. In a number of cases, questions were left unanswered by respondents or answers were contradictory. Whenever possible, NSOs were directly contacted to complete the missing information or to clarify the questions. All available survey instruments (in English, German, Dutch, Spanish or French) have been directly assessed for relevant question items that might have been overlooked by the respondents. Indeed, in most instances, even though respondents indicated that a certain dimension was not covered in their survey, the authors were able to identify items that showed the contrary. This is an indication that GSS are currently not being utilized to their fullest potential by NSOs and highlights the importance of the task addressed in this paper. The review therefore presents the revised answers and changes made by the OECD Secretariat to preserve consistency and to take, wherever possible, the complete questionnaires into account.

### *1.3.2 Country coverage*

37. Overall, 38 countries provided answers to the OECD questionnaire, i.e. 33 OECD countries and 5 non-OECD countries: among the latter, three are on the OECD accession path (Colombia, Costa Rica, and Lithuania), one is a strategic partner (Russian Federation) and one has expressed the intention to become an OECD member (Romania). Ireland and Italy did not answer the questionnaires but as they participate in the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), they are covered by discussion of EU-SILC for the purpose of this study. Therefore, this study covers, by extension, all the OECD countries. Latvia was not an OECD member at the time the questionnaire was sent out, but has since acceded to the OECD and is counted as an OECD country in this survey.

38. Henceforth, “countries” refers to the 40 countries that are considered in this review. Of these, 28 European countries (26 OECD members plus Romania and Lithuania) participate in EU-SILC and are covered by one General Social Survey. Appendix A.1 lists the participating countries; Appendices A.2 – A.16 contain the detailed answers of participating countries including history, methodology and how data is disseminated for each General Social Survey.

### *1.3.3 Structure and frequency of General Social Surveys*

39. The structure and frequency of GSS are important factors to consider for data quality and analysis purposes, as they determine the comparability and availability of well-being information. For example, while rotating and ad hoc modules are important to dive into specific topics in greater depth, core modules deliver data at regular intervals. Core modules are therefore what this review is most interested in, although all survey content is considered. The majority of GSS considered here feature only a core module of questions asked at every survey round (see Table 2). Two surveys contain additional rotating modules that focus on specific content and are repeated at specific rounds, and two additional ones contain additional one-off ad hoc modules. Finally, four surveys include both rotating and ad hoc modules.

Table 2. Structure of General Social Surveys across countries

Structure of social surveys across countries			
Core module	Core + rotating modules	Core + ad-hoc modules	Core+ rotating + ad-hoc modules
<b>8 social surveys</b>	<b>2 social surveys</b>	<b>2 social surveys</b>	<b>4 social surveys</b>
Chile (Casen) Colombia (ENUT) Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions) Korea (Social Survey) Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being) Poland (Social Cohesion Survey) Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions) United-States (ACS)	Australia (General Social Survey) Canada (General Social Survey)	Colombia (ECV) Mexico (ENH)	European countries (EU-SILC) Costa Rica (ENAHO) Israel (Social Survey) New-Zealand (New-Zealand General Social Survey)

40. Data collection at regular intervals is essential to determine changes in well-being in a timely and policy-actionable manner. Core modules are implemented annually in nine of the surveys considered, and every two years for another three surveys (see Table 3); a few countries, namely Australia, Colombia (ENUT survey) and Poland, have much longer intervals between survey rounds.

Table 3. Frequency of General Social Surveys across countries

Frequency of core social surveys across countries			
Yearly	Every 2 years	Every 3 years	Other
<b>9 General Social Surveys</b>	<b>3 General Social Surveys</b>	<b>1 General Social Survey</b>	<b>3 General Social Surveys</b>
Canada (General Social Survey) Colombia (ECV) Costa Rica (ENAHO) European countries (EU-SILC) Israel (Social Survey) Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions) Yearly, except housing and health content Mexico (ENH) Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being) United-States (ACS)	Korea (Social Survey) Yearly, with 5 out of 10 sections switching each year New-Zealand (New-Zealand General Social Survey) Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)	Colombia (ENUT)	Australia (General Social Survey) – every 4 years Chile (Casen) – data collection at different intervals, last every 2 years Poland (Social Cohesion Survey) – every 4-5 years

## 2. MATERIAL CONDITIONS: INCOME AND WEALTH

### 2.1 Concept

#### 2.1.1 Why are income and wealth important for well-being?

41. Income and wealth measure peoples' command over resources in the market, and are thus fundamentally important indicators of well-being. The ability to command resources is important for meeting people's basic needs and for enabling them to pursue the goals and make the choices they deem important to their lives. A cushion of income and household wealth also allows people to protect themselves from economics shocks and personal risks as well as to smooth their consumption over time.

#### 2.1.2 Measuring income and wealth

##### 2.1.2.1 OECD well-being indicators

Table 4. OECD well-being indicators: Income and wealth

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household net adjusted disposable income</li> <li>Household net financial wealth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household final consumption</li> <li>Subjective evaluation of material well-being</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

42. The OECD well-being framework captures income and wealth through two headline and two secondary indicators. The first headline indicator, **household net adjusted disposable income per capita**, is obtained by adding to people's gross income (earnings, self-employment and capital income, as well as current monetary transfers received from other sectors) the value of social transfers in-kind that households receive from government (such as education and health care services), and then subtracting taxes on income and wealth as well as the social security contributions paid by households. This indicator is drawn from the OECD annual national accounts database and is based on well-established standards (SNA) for all OECD countries.

43. The second headline indicator, **household net financial wealth per capita**, consists of currency and deposits, securities other than shares, loans, shares and other equity, insurance technical reserves, and other accounts receivable or payable, net of household financial liabilities, as defined by and drawn from the SNA. This wealth measure excludes a range of assets that are critical for household material well-being, such as dwellings, land, and other non-financial assets – data on which is currently available only for a minority of OECD countries. In order to contribute to closing these measurement gaps, the OECD has recently published guidelines for the measurement of the distribution of household wealth (OECD, 2013d), as well as a framework for the integrated analysis of income, consumption and wealth (OECD, 2013a).

44. *How's Life?* includes two secondary indicators to complement the headline indicators: **Household final consumption expenditure** covers all purchases made by resident households to meet their everyday needs based on SNA data, and a measure of **subjective evaluation of material well-being** (i.e. the share of the population who declare that they are "having great difficulty or difficulty to make their ends meet") drawn from EU-SILC and limited to European countries.. Although contextual and cultural effects may affect comparisons, this indicator is deemed to be broadly comparable across countries.

### 2.1.2.2 *The role of General Social Surveys in measuring income and wealth*

45. With the exception of the subjective evaluation of material well-being, all of the income and wealth indicators used in *How's Life?* are derived from the SNA. Because of this, the data cannot be disaggregated at the individual level and it is not possible to investigate the relationship between income and other well-being measures at the individual level using these indicators. While there are good reasons for using SNA data for the *How's Life?* indicators – notably consistency of measurement across countries and the timeliness of data collection – it would be desirable to have indicators of income and wealth that can be disaggregated to look at distributional issues and that can be linked to other well-being outcomes.

46. The primary data sources for investigating the distribution of income and wealth are household income surveys and household wealth surveys. Dedicated income and wealth surveys are important, as collecting accurate information on these topics is a time consuming process and imposes a significant respondent burden. General Social Surveys are not usually appropriate vehicles for collecting detailed information on incomes, as the time required to do this would severely limit the space available to collect information on other dimensions of well-being. However, information on income and wealth is essential to measuring the joint distribution of outcomes and are important for the analysis of drivers of other well-being dimensions. For this reason it is important that General Social Surveys include a simpler measure of income that can serve to as a link to the more detailed information available in household income surveys.

## 2.2 Coverage and coherence

### 2.2.1 *General inclusion of the dimension*

47. Overall, the income and wealth dimension is almost universally covered across countries in General Social Surveys: Apart from Mexico, which is the only country not asking any relevant questions in the ENH, 37 countries (34 OECD) have included relevant items in the core module of their social surveys:

- Australia's GSS includes short modules that cover income (Module 14 and 15) as well as investment and debts (Module 17).
- In Canada's GSS, a section is dedicated to personal and household income (IRN).
- Chile dedicates a module on income (Ingresos) to the topic of economic household resources.
- The European countries, covered under EU-SILC, include detailed questions on the financial situation of households in the core survey. As EU-SILC was originally developed as a survey of income and living conditions, the quality of the income data in EU-SILC is considerably higher than is the case for many other General Social Surveys.
- In the core of its Social Survey, Israel covers material well-being with a few questions on household income. A rotating module run in 2002 and 2012, provides more detailed information on the topic of retirement planning.
- Japan's Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions includes questions on income, savings and subjective evaluation of the household's current living standard in its core module.
- Korea's Social Survey regularly collects information on income levels and satisfaction with income and daily life as a consumer.

- Apart from its participation in EU-SILC, the Netherlands' Social Cohesion and Well-being survey, includes items on self-reported satisfaction with the financial situation and worries about the financial future. Although no question address income and wealth directly in the survey, objective data on these is matched via tax registrations.
- New Zealand's General Social Survey features questions on income and difficulties due to material deprivation in its core.
- Poland has a second General Social Survey beyond EU-SILC, which includes two questions on total income and most important source of income of the household.
- The US American Community Survey includes a few items on sources of income and total household income.

48. Looking at the OECD partners that provided answers to this questionnaire, Colombia includes questions on household income in both its ECV surveys. Costa Rica's ENAHO features several question on sources of income and net income in sections D-F and H. Lastly, the Russian Federation gathers information on the household's opinion about its financial situation in the country's General Social Survey.

**Table 5. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions related to income and wealth**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core module	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	15 social surveys	1 social survey	0 social surveys
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Chile (Casen)</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV* and ENUT)</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)*</li> <li>• European countries (<i>EU-SILC</i>)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)*</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)</li> <li>• United-States (ACS)*</li> <li>• Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)</li> </ul>	
<b>OECD countries</b>	34	1	0
<b>OECD partners</b>	5**	0	0
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		Mexico	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC

### *2.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators*

49. The first headline indicator of the dimension, household net adjusted disposable income, is not included in the vast majority of social surveys considered: while almost all OECD countries (34 out of 35) ask the respondent a question about their income, none of these questions captures the value of government transfers in kind, and many surveys ask about income before taxes rather than net income. Table 6 below lists the income questions for all relevant countries. Those countries collecting net income data are identified next to the country heading. Question wording, many times due to national differences in what falls under as income taxes and transfers, slightly varies – and, although not shown in detail in Table 6 below, most countries collect their answers in terms of income bands. The second headline indicator, household net financial wealth, is not well measured among surveys, with 31 countries (28 OECD members) asking a question about assets and liabilities. All but 2 of the countries reporting information on household wealth here are covered by EU-SILC. The question wording and exact focus of this indicator differs quite significantly across countries.

50. Information on household consumption is only collected by one country (Chile). Data on the second supplementary indicator, self-reported satisfaction with material conditions, is gathered by 34 countries (30 OECD members) – but once again, the degree of harmonization between countries is low, with some countries focusing on satisfaction with income level, others on satisfaction with the economic situation and others on worries about the financial future.

Table 6. Selected indicators on income and wealth and comparability across the OECD

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
Core module		Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Household net adjusted disposable income</b>	<p><b>Australia</b> Before income tax is taken out, how much income in total do you and (specify names of members in other income unit) usually receive from the following sources? <i>Wages or salary (including from own incorporated business) / profit or loss from own unincorporated business or share in a partnership / profit or loss from rental property / dividends or interest / any Government pension or allowance / child Support or maintenance / superannuation, annuity or allocated pension / workers' compensation / other</i></p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 34 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 4 partners in their core survey</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Canada</b> What is your best estimate of your total personal income, before taxes and deductions, from all sources during the year ending December 31</p>			
	<p><b>Chile</b> In the last month, what were your wages or net wage in your main job? Other than the income you just declared, did you receive any other income from your main occupation last month? Can you declare how much for overtime/fees/tips/allowance for housing, transportation, children education, etc.? During the last 12 months, in addition to the income you just declared, did you receive any of the following types of income from your main job? <i>Bonuses or other special allowances/awards/13<sup>th</sup> month salary/other /no</i> In the past month, did you receive any of the following in-kind benefits from your main job? Can you estimate how much they are worth in pesos? <i>Food stamps/food and drink/accommodation/ vehicle for private use/shuttle service/telephone/clothing/day care or nursery services/firewood/products produced by the employer/other</i> Last month, did you receive income from leasing of urban properties/rental of machinery or animals/alimonies/money contributed by non-household relatives living in the country/cash provided by relatives living abroad?</p>			
	<p><b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> Before withholdings, how much did you earn last month in this job? During the last 12 months did you receive any income for aid in money coming from other households or institutions/for the sale of properties? In the last twelve months, did any member of the household receive</p>			

	allowance from the government or other institution in cash or in kind for the purchase, construction, improvement, entitlement or execution by deed of dwelling or plot?			
	<b>Costa Rica*</b> How much regular income do you receive from the following: contract work/agricultural work/selling something (stitching, crafts, food, jewellery)/child care/services/other?			
	<b>EU-SILC*</b> If you sum all kinds of income you receive, what was the gross household income for the last year? <i>(The EU-SILC net income series correspond to the gross income components but the tax at source or the social insurance contributions or both are deducted)</i>			
	<b>Israel*</b> What was your net income, after deductions such as: income tax, managers' insurance, provident funds? What was the net income of the entire household, after deductions, from all income sources: work, pension, allowances, rent, etc.?			
	<b>Japan*</b> Did you receive any kind of income during the past one year? Please fill in the amount of income (unit: 10 thousand JPY) by type (earned income; business income; agricultural/farming income; domestic income; property income).			
	<b>Korea</b> What was your household's monthly average income before tax in the last year? Includes the sum of earned income, business income, property income and other income of all members of the household.			
	<b>New Zealand</b> In the last 12 months what was your total income, before tax or anything else was taken out?			
	<b>Poland (net income)</b> If you sum up income from all sources of all members of your household, what is the net income (take-home pay) of your household gained over the last 12 months?			
	<b>United States</b> Give your best estimate for the total amount during the past 12 months of: wages, salaries, commissions, bonuses or tips from all jobs/ self-employment income from own non-farm businesses, including proprietorship and partnerships/interest, dividends, net rental income, royalty income, or income from estates and trusts/public assistance or welfare payments from the state or local welfare office/retirement,			

	survivor or disability pensions/any other sources of income received regularly (veteran's payments, unemployment compensation, child support or alimony).			
<b>Household net financial wealth</b>	<b>Australia</b> Do you have any of these assets and what do you estimate their value to be: over AUD1 000 cash deposited in banks, credit unions or other financial institutions/own incorporated business/shares, stocks and bonds/other buildings or land/DK/none? Do you have any debts or liabilities such as these and what do you estimate you owe on each: credit cards or store cards not paid off by due date/ car loans or personal loans/ interest free purchases/ hire purchase agreements/ other/none/DK			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 28 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 3 partners in their core survey</li> </ul>
	<b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> During the last 12 months, did you receive money for interest for loans or term deposit certificates?			
	<b>EU-SILC*</b> In the 12 months since (date), have you received any rent from property, for example, renting out a building, house, a flat, a room or land? Do you or anyone in your household have to repay any credit card, hire purchase or other loans (that is, excluding mortgage repayments or other loans connected with the accommodation)?			
	<b>Japan*</b> Do you have any savings listed below as of the end of June 2013: bank deposit; insurance fee; stock; others? Please fill in the total amount of savings on hand			
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<b>Household final consumption</b>	<b>Chile</b> How much money of your income last month did you use for your household expenses? How many products of your activity or business last month did your household consume? Estimate the amount you would have had to pay for these products.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1 OECD country in its core survey</li> </ul>
<b>Subjective evaluation of material well-being</b>	<b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> Do you think that the standard of living of your household, compared to 5 years ago, is: <i>better/ same/ worse?</i> Do you consider yourself poor?		<b>EU-SILC***</b> From 0 (not satisfied at all) to 10 (completely satisfied), how satisfied are you with your income level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 30 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 4 partners in their core survey</li> </ul>
	<b>EU-SILC*</b> To what extent is the repayment of loans and the interest a financial burden or struggle for your household?			

	<p><i>A heavy burden/slight burden/not a burden at all</i> Thinking of your household's total income, is your household able to make ends meet, namely, to pay for its usual necessary expenses? <i>With great difficulty/with difficulty/ with some difficulty /fairly easily/easily/very easily</i></p>			
	<p><b>Israel*</b> How satisfied are you with your economic situation? Are you satisfied with the income from work? <i>Very satisfied / satisfied /not so satisfied / not satisfied at all</i></p>			
	<p><b>Japan*</b> How do you feel about your current living-condition in general? <i>Very difficult/ somewhat difficult/ normal/ somewhat comfortable/ very comfortable</i></p>			
	<p><b>Korea</b> Compared to the minimum monthly living expense required for your household, do you think the actual household income is sufficient? <i>Very sufficient/ moderately sufficient/ suitable/ moderately insufficient/ very insufficient</i> Do you earn a regular income(including earned, business, property, and all other forms of income)? If yes, how satisfied are you with your income? <i>Very satisfied/ moderately satisfied/ neither satisfied nor dissatisfied/ moderately dissatisfied/ very dissatisfied</i></p>			
	<p><b>Netherlands*</b> On a scale from 1(not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with your financial situation? On a scale of 1 (never) to 10 (constantly), how often you are worried about your financial future?</p>			
	<p><b>New Zealand</b> How well does (you / you and your partners combined) total income meet your everyday needs for such things as accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities. <i>Not enough money /only just enough money / enough money/ more than enough money / DK/R</i></p>			
	<p><b>Russian Federation**</b> Household opinion about its financial condition</p>			

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Exact question wording was not provided to the authors in English

\*\*\* Ad-hoc module on well-being

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 2.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

51. A few countries collect indicators related to income and wealth that could further inform the OECD well-being framework, should more countries include them in their General Social Surveys in the future. These touch upon topics such as old age savings, savings plans and pension, and future financial outlook. In particular, several surveys contain items on material deprivation, which are used to develop scales of consumption hardship. Australia, EU-SILC, New Zealand and Israel all collect such data.

**Table 7. Selected alternative indicators on income and wealth (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country
Material deprivation	In the last 12 months, how many times have you experienced difficulty in paying bills? In the last 12 months, have any of these happened to you because you were short of money: <i>Could not pay electricity, gas or telephone bills on time /could not pay mortgage or rent payments on time /could not pay for car registration or insurance on time /could not make minimum payment on credit card /pawned or sold something because you needed cash/went without meals/were unable to heat or cool your home/sought financial assistance from friends or family/sought assistance from welfare or community organisations/ no / none of these/DK?</i>	Australia (General Social Survey)
	*Can you afford to eat meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent every two days/ buy new clothes (not second-hand)/ own two good pair of shoes per adult in the household/ replace damaged furniture/not being in arrears with payment of rent, mortgage, utilities, instalments/ to keep your dwelling adequately warm / to receive some friends or family at your place for a drink or a meal/ to spend a small amount of money for yourself/to practice a leisure activity/ to have a one-week holidays, outside of the dwelling, once a year/ to meet an unexpected expenditure (of a given amount depending on countries)/a car/Internet connection, ?	European countries (EU-SILC)
	*During the past 12 months, did you do the following due to financial difficulties: do without a hot meal at least every other day/do without buying clothing or shoes/ do without food? * Do you manage to cover all your monthly household expenses for food, electricity, telephone, etc.? <i>Yes, without any difficulty / yes, but with some difficulty / no, not so well / no, not at all</i>	Israel (Social Survey)
	When you need to buy clothes or shoes for yourself, how limited do you feel by the money available? Imagine that you have come across an item in a shop or on the internet that you would really like to have. It has a price tag of \$300. It is not an essential item for accommodation, food, clothing or other necessities – it's an extra. If this happened in the next month, how limited would you feel about buying it? <i>Not at all limited/ a little limited/ quite limited/very limited /DK/R</i> In the last 12 months have (you / you or your partner) not paid electricity, gas, rates or water bills on time because of a	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)

	shortage of money? <i>Not at all/once/more than once/DK/R</i>	
<b>Social protection payments/savings</b>	Since this time in last year, have you done any of the following: followed a budget/ saved regularly/paid more than the minimum payment required by credit card company or loan provider/made more than the minimum home loan repayments/made voluntary contributions towards superannuation/received financial information, counselling or advice from a professional (including Centrelink, welfare/community organisations and financial planners)/DK/no?	Australia (General Social Survey)
	What sources of income do you plan to live on after you stop working? <i>Spouse's pension fund or survivor's pension/ your savings/ allowances/sale or rental of personal assets/financial support from family members/inheritance/pension or allowance from abroad/some other way</i> Do you have a pension plan, meaning: a pension fund, managers' insurance, or a provident fund, in your name?	Israel (Social Survey)
	Do you make any regular social insurance payments?	Korea (Social Survey)
<b>Future financial outlook/optimism</b>	*In the near future, do you think that compared to today, your financial state will be <i>better / unchanged / worse</i>	Israel (Social Survey)
	What are your expectations for your household finances in the next year? <i>Will greatly improve/ will slightly improve/ remain the same/ will slightly get worse/ will greatly get worse</i>	Korea (Social Survey)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

Note: Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 2.3 The statistical agenda ahead

52. Overall, all countries participating in this Review, except for Mexico, regularly collect some information on income in their General Social Surveys. Therefore, the potential to draw upon these measures for well-being analyses is large. The headline indicator with the highest relevance for the OECD well-being framework is net household income which the large majority of countries cover in some fashion. A key constraint, however, is the fact that, with the expectation of EU-SILC, this information is mostly collected in the form of income bands. While this is useful for cross tabulation with other well-being measures, detailed household income information will continue to be drawn from more focused surveys in the future.

53. Wealth data is generally not collected in social surveys as it is difficult and time consuming to collect, and is therefore not a priority for additional focus. The situation is similar with respect to consumption expenditure, which is currently only collected in a General Social Survey by one OECD country (Chile).

54. Harmonization of measures of satisfaction with the economic situation should be considered a high priority. Data are already collected across most OECD countries, and guidance on collecting such measures in a comparable manner is readily available (OECD 2013b, Annex B, Module E). Beyond this, it would be useful if all surveys collected information on net incomes, as this is most relevant for the analysis of well-being outcomes, and many surveys currently collect only gross income data.

55. Harmonization of questions on subjective evaluations of material well-being – particularly satisfaction with the financial situation and satisfaction with standard of living – would be relatively

straight forward, and would have significant benefits. Currently, most cross-country information of this sort comes from small sample non-official sources such as the Gallup World Poll, which limits the analysis that it is possible to undertake. Another area where harmonization would have large benefits is with respect to measures of material deprivation. Measures of this sort are already collected in a large number of OECD countries through EU-SILC and several national General Social Surveys. Such measures would add significant value to existing income measures, as they provide information on consumption at the micro-data level without imposing the high respondent burden associated with full expenditure surveys.

### 3. MATERIAL CONDITIONS: JOBS AND EARNINGS

#### 3.1 Concept

##### 3.1.1 Why are jobs and earnings important for well-being?

56. Jobs and earnings are essential to individual well-being. Not only do good jobs increase people's command over resources, but they also enable people to fulfil their own ambitions, to develop skills, to feel useful in society and to build self-esteem. Further, jobs shape personal identity and create opportunities for social relationships. Conversely, unemployment affects people's financial security, mental and physical health as well as subjective well-being.

##### 3.1.2 Measuring jobs and earnings

57. Working conditions are as important as job availability for people's well-being. Thus, ideal indicators would capture both job quality and quantity, as well as the extent to which working conditions meet people's expectations and allow them to earn a good living. In terms of job quantity, the indicators should measure the availability of jobs for those who want to work as well as the intensity of labour market participation. Concerning job quality, the UNECE Expert Group (2015) on this subject recommends collecting measures of job safety and ethics, security of employment and social protection, working time, social dialogue, skills development and training as well as employment-related relationships alongside with income from employment. The OECD is currently developing guidelines on the measurement of the quality of the working environment, scheduled to be launched in 2017.

##### 3.1.2.1 OECD well-being indicators

**Table 8. OECD well-being indicators: Jobs and earnings**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment rate</li> <li>• Long-term unemployment rate</li> <li>• Probability of becoming unemployed</li> <li>• Average gross annual earnings per full-time employee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involuntary part-time unemployment</li> <li>• Short job tenure</li> <li>• Work accidents</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

58. *How's Life? 2015*, includes four headline indicators of jobs and earnings, while previous editions of *How's Life?* included three additional secondary indicators. The first headline indicator, the **employment rate**, refers to the percentage of the working-age population (15 to 64 years in most OECD countries) that declare having worked in gainful employment for at least one hour in the previous week. Data on employment rates come from national Labour Force Surveys (LFSs) as compiled in the OECD Annual Labour Force Statistics (ALFS) Database. The second headline indicator, the **long-term unemployment rate**, is also drawn from LFSs and refers to the number of persons who have been unemployed (meaning they are currently not working but willing to do so and actively searching for employment) for one year or more, as a percentage of the labour force. **Average gross annual earnings of full-time employees**, the third headline indicator, refer to the average annual wages of all employees working across all sectors and is computed as the total wage bill from National Accounts, divided by the number of full-time equivalent employees in the economy. The fourth headline indicator for the jobs and earning dimension is the **probability of becoming unemployed**, which is based on LFSs and is calculated as the number of people who have been unemployed for less than one year, as a proportion of the number of employed persons the year before. Generally, data on these indicators of job quantity are regularly

collected and comparable. However, there are certain limitations. For example, employment rates do not distinguish between people who are voluntary unemployed and those who were forced to withdraw from the labour market, nor do they capture under-employment.

59. In terms of secondary indicators, the OECD considers the **prevalence of involuntary part-time workers** in total employment – although definitions of involuntary part-time work are not fully harmonised across countries, *How's Life? 2011* defines part time workers as those who usually work less than 30 hours per week either because they were unable to find a full-time job or declaring they would prefer to work more hours. The second supplementary indicator, which is meant to capture job quality, refers to **temporary workers as a share of total employees**. One shortcoming of this indicator is that it does not provide information on individuals' reasons for accepting this type of work arrangement. Data for both indicators come from the OECD Employment Database. The third secondary indicator for the jobs and earnings dimension is a standard measure of safety at work: the **frequency of fatal and non-fatal work accidents** (expressed as the number of accidents during 12 consecutive months per 100 000 workers). This measure is drawn upon from the ILO LABORSTA database, the Eurostat New Cronos database and the Injuries, Illnesses and Fatalities database of the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is considered a secondary indicator since record keeping and data sources vary significantly across countries.

### *3.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring jobs and earnings*

60. Labour Force Surveys provide the primary source of detailed information on the labour market activity of individuals, and this is reflected in the fact that 5 of the 7 OECD indicators are derived either directly or indirectly from such surveys. Data in General Social Surveys should ideally align with the measures and definitions used in Labour Force Surveys in order to allow links to be made between the two survey types. Measures of employment status are the most important core measure to enable links to be made between the different survey types. However, information on earnings is also possible to capture in General Social Surveys and, can provide a useful supplementary piece of information.

## **3.2 Coverage and coherence**

### *3.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

61. Apart from Mexico and the Russian Federation, all other 38 countries participating in this Review are collecting some type of information on jobs and earnings through a General Social Survey:

- In Australia the GSS core Module 4 covers questions around employment history and conditions.
- In Canada several questions in the core of the GSS ask about main occupation, employment type and history of the respondents.
- In Chile a module on work (Trabajo) is included in the core module of Casen.
- In Europe, Eurostat covers the topic of jobs and earnings in the yearly core of its EU-SILC.
- In Israel, apart from a range of questions on current employment status in the core of its social survey, a rotating module is dedicated to participation in the labour force and attitudes to employment in 2005.
- In Japan the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions includes one question on hours worked in the last week in its core, although this question is related to the indicators of the separate dimension of work-life balance (see Chapter 7).

- In Korea the Social Survey contains a module focusing on employment status, career choice, satisfaction with employment status and the role of women in the labour force.
- In the Netherlands, the Social Cohesion and Well-being Survey features questions on satisfaction with work and fear of job loss.
- In New Zealand the General Social Survey includes a range of question on the employment status of respondents in its core module.
- In Poland, beyond EU-SILC, the Social Cohesion and Well-being Survey collects information on the profession at the main workplace of the head of household and his/her partner, including satisfaction with work.
- In the US, the American Community Survey includes a few questions on employment status and employment history.

62. Outside the OECD, Colombia asks items on jobs in the core module of ECV and ENUT. The ECV also featured a 2014 rotating module on child labour. In Costa Rica ENAHO covers the topics of job satisfaction, location, stability and unemployment.

63. It is important to note that this section does not focus on aspects of work-life balance, as these are covered in section 7 on this dimension. However, the two dimensions of jobs and work-life balance are obviously closely related and readers are encouraged to consider the two chapters jointly.

**Table 9. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions related to jobs and earnings**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	14 social surveys	2 social surveys	0 social survey
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Chile (Casen)</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV* and ENUT)</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)*</li> <li>• European countries (<i>EU-SILC</i>)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)*</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)</li> <li>• United-States (ACS)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colombia (ECV)</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)</li> </ul>	
<b>OECD countries</b>	34	1	0
<b>OECD partners</b>	6**	1	0
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		Mexico, Russian Federation	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC

### ***3.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators***

64. The first headline indicator, employment rate, is well covered (38 countries, 34 of the OECD members collect information) and also asked in a broadly comparable manner across social surveys. To a slightly lesser extent, the same is true for the second headline indicator of long-term unemployment, which is currently considered by 35 countries (31 OECD). Here, question wording needs to be further standardised, as the reference period since when a person has not worked differs somewhat across surveys. The third headline indicator, earnings per employee, is asked in a relatively comparable fashion – although some countries include in-kind payments provided by employers – across 32 countries (29 OECD members). The fourth headline indicator, probability of unemployment, is addressed directly by only 2 OECD countries (Israel and the Netherlands) in the form of perceived fear of job loss, although the probability of unemployment can be calculated for all countries that capture information on long term unemployment.

65. Two of the three secondary indicators for the jobs and earnings dimension, involuntary part-time employment and short job tenure, are included by 30 (28 OECD) and 32 (29 OECD) countries respectively. However, the questions on involuntary part-time employment are restricted to Chile, the European countries and Israel. Further, the questions on short job tenure focus on the type of employment contract and do not manage to capture the true spirit of their intended indicator: While it can be a sign of short job tenure to not be a permanent employee, it would be more informative to know about the actual length of the contract in weeks/months/years. No country currently asks questions about work accidents or other aspects of job safety in their social survey.

Table 10. Selected indicators on jobs and earnings and comparability across the OECD

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Employment rate</b>	<b>Australia</b> Last week, did you do any work at all in a job, business or farm? At any time during the last 4 weeks have you been looking for full-time or part-time work? <i>Yes, full-time work / yes, part-time work / no</i> If you had found a job could you have started work last week?			➤ 34 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 4 partners in their core survey
	<b>Canada*</b> Did you have a job or were you self-employed in the last week? In the last four weeks, did you look for a job?			
	<b>Chile</b> Did you work last week, at least an hour, regardless housework? If you were offered a job, would you be able to restart work? <i>Yes, right now/ yes, at another time in the year/no</i> Did you look for paid work or tried to start your own business initiative in the last four weeks?			
	<b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> Last week, did you perform a paid activity for one hour or more? In the last four weeks, did you take any steps to get a job or establish a business? If any job had been possible, were you available last week to work?			
	<b>Costa Rica*</b> How many jobs did you have last week?			
	<b>EU-SILC*</b> Did you work at least 1 hour during the previous week? Have you been actively looking for a job in the previous four weeks? If a job or a place on a government scheme week available in the week ending Sunday the (date), would you be able to start within 2 weeks?			
	<b>Israel</b> Did you work last week? <i>Yes, you worked last week. / you were doing permanent army service / you were doing compulsory army service / No, you didn't work last week</i> Did you actively seek work in the last 4 weeks? If you had been offered an appropriate job, could you have started			

	<p>working last week?</p> <p><b>Japan*</b> Number of days worked last week (for household members with job): Please fill in the number of days and hours worked during the one week of (date) to (date).</p> <p><b>Korea</b> Did you do any work for pay for over 1 hour in the last week? Or did you do any work without pay in a family business for over 18 hours?</p> <p><b>New Zealand</b> During those seven days, did you do any work for pay or profit in a job, business or farm? At any time in the last four weeks did you look for paid work? If a job had been available, could you have started last week?</p> <p><b>Unites States*</b> Last week, did this person work for pay at a job or business? Last week, did this person do any work for pay, even for as little as one hour? Last week, was this person on layoff from a job? Last week, was this person temporarily absent from a job or business? <i>Yes, on vacation, temporary illness, maternity leave, other family/personal reasons/ bad weather, etc.</i> Has this person been informed that he or she will be recalled to work within the next 6 months or been given a date to return to work? During the last four weeks, has this person been actively looking for work? Last week, could this person have started a job if offered one, or returned to work if recalled? <i>Yes, could have gone to work/no, because of own temporary illness/no, because of all other reasons (in school, etc.)</i></p>			
<p><b>Long-term unemployment rate</b></p>	<p><b>Australia</b> How long ago is it since you last worked for two weeks or more? <i>1 year or less / more than 1 year / never worked for 2 weeks or more but has worked / has never worked</i> When did you begin looking for work? When did you last work for two weeks or more?</p> <p><b>Canada*</b> Did you have a job or were you self-employed in the last 12 months? In what year did you last do any paid work?</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 31 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 4 partners in their core survey</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Chile</b> Did you ever work? How many weeks have you been looking for work?</p> <hr/> <p><b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> For how many weeks have you been looking or did you look for work?</p> <hr/> <p><b>Costa Rica*</b> When was the last time you looked for work?</p> <hr/> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b> What were you doing 12(11-1) months ago, that is in (month) last year? <i>Working full-time as an employee/working part-time as an employee/working full-time self-employed/working part-time self-employed/unemployed/student/looking after family home/long-term sick or disabled/retired from paid work/not in paid work for some other reason</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Israel*</b> Have you been looking for work more than three months? How many years have you not worked?</p> <hr/> <p><b>United States*</b> When did this person last work, even for a few days? <i>Within the past 12 months/1 to 5 years/over 5 years ago or never worked</i> During the past 12 months (52 weeks), did this person work 50 or more weeks? Count paid time off as work. How many weeks did this person work, even for a few hours, including paid vacation, paid sick leave, and military service?</p>			
<p><b>Average gross annual earnings of full-time employees</b></p>	<p><b>Australia</b> Are you paid a wage or salary, or some other form of payment? Before income tax, salary sacrifice or anything else is taken out, how much do you receive from wages or salaries?</p> <hr/> <p><b>Chile</b> In the last month, what were your wages or net wage in your main job? Other than the income you just declared, did you receive any other income from your main occupation last month? Can you declare how much for overtime/fees/tips/allowance for housing, transportation, children education, etc.? During the last 12 months, in addition to the income you just declared, did you receive any of the following types of income from your main job? <i>Bonuses or other special allowances/awards/13<sup>th</sup> month salary/other /no</i> In the past month, did you receive any of the following in-kind benefits from your main job? Can you estimate how much they are worth in</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 29 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 3 partners in their core survey</li> </ul>

	<p>pesos?  <i>Food stamps/food and drink/accommodation/ vehicle for private use/shuttle service/telephone/clothing/day care or nursery services/firewood/products produced by the employer/other</i></p> <p><b>Colombia (ECV)*</b>                  Before withholdings, how much did you earn last month in this job?                  In addition, did you receive food/housing/other income in kind as part of the payment for your work?</p> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b>                  On average, what was your monthly income from this job/ business over the last 12 months - before deducting income tax and national insurance contributions?</p> <p><b>Israel*</b>                  Last month, the month of (name of the month), what was your gross income from all your places of work (including wages and income from a business)?</p>			
<p><b>Probability of becoming unemployed</b></p>	<p><b>Netherlands*</b>                  On a scale of 1 (never) to 10 (constantly), how often you are worried about losing your job or not finding work?</p>	<p><b>Israel</b>                  In your opinion, is there a suspicion that you will lose your job/not have work in the coming year?  <i>Not concerned                  all/slightly                  concerned/greatly                  concerned/very                  greatly concerned</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module</li> </ul>
<p><i>Secondary indicators</i></p>				
<p><b>Involuntary part-time employment</b></p>	<p><b>Chile</b>                  Are you willing to work more hours per week?  <i>Yes, right now/ yes, at another time in the year/no</i></p> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b>                  What are the reasons you are working less than 30 hours in your main and other jobs?  <i>Undergoing education or training/personal illness or disabilities/ want to work more hours but cannot find a job(s) or work(s) of more hours/ do not want to work more hours/ number of hours in all job(s) are considered as a full-time job/ housework, looking after children or other persons/ other reasons</i></p> <p><b>Israel</b>                  What are the reasons that you work less than 35 hours a week?</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 28 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 2 partners in their core survey</li> </ul>

	<i>You looked for full-time job but couldn't find any/looked for additional job but could not find one/in this type of work, one usually works less than 35 hours a week/reasons of illness, deformity, disability/retired/advanced age/caring for children/housekeeping/studying/it does not pay you to work more hours, because you will lose an allowance or grant or have to pay higher taxes/not interested in working more than 35 hours a week/ other</i>			
<b>Short job tenure</b>	<p><b>Australia</b> Do you expect to be working (in this business / for this employer) in 12 months time? <i>Yes/DK/depends/no</i></p> <p><b>Chile</b> Is your job or main business <i>permanent/seasonal season/occasional or casual/on probation/for a limited amount of time?</i> In your main work, what type of contract or working agreement do you have? <i>Indefinite period/ fixed term</i></p> <p><b>Costa Rica*</b> Is your job or main business <i>permanent/seasonal season/occasional or casual/on probation/just one time/for a limited amount of time?</i></p> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b> Which kind of contract do you have? <i>Short-term contract / long-term contract / DK/R</i></p> <p><b>New Zealand</b> A permanent employee is guaranteed continuing work. They can stay in their job until they decide to leave or their employer makes them redundant. In your job, are you a permanent employee?</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 29 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 3 partners in their core survey</li> </ul>
<b>Work accidents</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*Yearly implemented core modules

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 3.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

66. A few participating countries collect a range of additional indicators that are of interest to assess employment conditions from a well-being perspective. These include items on employee rights, the legality of employment and self-reported satisfaction with the employment situation. Especially the latter could greatly complement more objective employment indicators and is currently already included by Costa Rica, Israel, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Poland.

**Table 11. Selected alternative indicators on jobs and earnings (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country
<b>Employee rights</b>	Does this job provide you with paid sick leave/holiday leave?	Australia (General Social Survey)
	Is your job affiliated to any pension system or social security institution?	Chile (Casen)
	*Do you enjoy bonus payments/paid sick leave/paid vacation/risk insurance at work/recognition of overtime? *Do you receive social security through your work?	Costa Rica (ENAHO)
<b>Legality of employment</b>	In your main job, do you have written contract of employment? <i>Yes, signed/ yes, but not signed/no/ DK</i>	Chile (Casen)
<b>Domestic work</b>	*Last week, did you do at least one house work chore, like washing, ironing, cooking, cleaning, or other tasks? How many hours did you dedicate to it last week?	Costa Rica (ENAHO)
<b>Satisfaction with work</b>	Would you like to change your job? Why? (list provided)	Costa Rica (ENAHO)
	What is your degree of overall satisfaction with your current job? (using a scale of 0 to 10, in which 0 means not at all satisfied and 10 means completely satisfied)	EU (EU-SILC)
	In general, how satisfied are you with your job? Are you satisfied with the income from work? <i>Very satisfied/satisfied/not very satisfied/not satisfied at all</i>	Israel (Social Survey)
	How satisfied are you with your work conditions? Please check the appropriate cells for job/personal management/wages (compared with amount of work)/welfare/potential development in the future/working environment/relationship with colleagues/working hours/efforts for the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace/workplace education and training opportunities. <i>Very satisfied/moderately satisfied/ neither satisfied nor dissatisfied/moderately dissatisfied/very dissatisfied/DK/irrelevant to me</i> Considering all work conditions, how satisfied are you with your employment? <i>Very satisfied/moderately satisfied/neither satisfied nor dissatisfied/moderately dissatisfied/very dissatisfied</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
	* On a scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with your work?	Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)
	Think about the last four weeks in your job. Looking at showcard 12, how do you feel about your job? <i>Very satisfied/ satisfied / no feeling either way/ dissatisfied/very dissatisfied /DK/R</i>	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)
	**Are you satisfied with your current professional situation?	Poland (Social Cohesion and Well-being)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Answering scale was not provided to the authors in English.

Note: Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 3.3 The statistical agenda ahead

67. Overall, the jobs and earnings dimension is well covered across considered countries and there is relatively little to do: 3 of the headline indicators – employment rate, long-term unemployment and earnings are included by the majority of countries, and, with a few more standardisation efforts particularly with regard to the earnings dimensions, there is great potential to draw on General Social Surveys in the context of the OECD well-being framework. Probability of unemployment, although not directly collected in most surveys can be calculated for all countries that collect both labour force status and long term unemployment (the majority). Further, most questions are integrated in the core of the respective General Social Surveys, and thus already collected on a regular basis.

68. Self-reported satisfaction with the employment situation is an indicator that so far has not been foreseen in *How's Life?*, but that is already collected by several countries (albeit more in rotating than core modules as of now) and that could relatively easily be harmonised drawing on the existing guidelines on the measurement of subjective well-being (OECD 2013b, Annex B, Module E).

69. While the secondary indicator of involuntary part-time employment is included by the European countries, Israel and Chile, especially its answering scale needs to be standardised and a broader range of countries need to adopt it before it becomes a useable *How's Life?* source. The secondary indicators of short job tenure and work accidents are not captured in a promising fashion across participating countries. Further insights into best practice in measuring job quality are to be expected with the release of the OECD guidelines on job quality in 2017.

## 4. MATERIAL CONDITIONS: HOUSING CONDITIONS

### 4.1 Concept

#### 4.1.1 Why are housing conditions important for well-being?

70. The place and conditions under which people live can have a major impact on their lives. While good quality housing is essential for meeting the basic need for shelter, it also offers a sense of privacy, personal space and security. Housing is also important for providing a space to form social relationships, inviting friends and raising a family. All these elements make a “house” a “home” and are intrinsically valuable to people. Besides this intrinsic value, housing conditions may affect a wide range of other outcomes, such as financial resources left for other essential expenditures as well as physical and mental health status.

#### 4.1.2 Measuring housing conditions

71. It is difficult to measure housing conditions and their effect on people’s well-being because no international statistical standards are available, very few comparable indicators are currently available, and no harmonised housing survey is conducted across countries. Further, the factors shaping people’s housing conditions are heterogeneous and views about what basic needs should be satisfied vary across and within countries.

##### 4.1.2.1 OECD well-being indicators

**Table 12. OECD well-being indicators: Housing conditions**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing expenditure</li> <li>• Dwellings without basic sanitary facilities</li> <li>• Number of rooms per person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfaction with housing</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

72. Drawing on what data is available as of now, *How’s Life?* has defined three headline and one secondary indicator to measure housing outcomes. In order to capture the affordability of housing, the OECD uses an indicator of **housing expenditure**, defined as the share of household gross adjusted disposable income spent on housing and its maintenance based on data from the SNA. The percentage of people living in **dwellings without access to basic sanitary facilities** refers to the percentage of the population living in a building without an indoor flushing toilet for the sole use of the household. Overcrowding is measured by the **number of rooms** in a dwelling divided by the number of persons living in the building. Data for the last two indicators are currently drawn from various national surveys and EU-SILC for the European countries. A secondary indicator on people’s subjective **satisfaction with their housing conditions** complements these objective measures. This indicator is considered secondary since cultural norms may influence perceptions of satisfactory housing.

##### 4.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring housing

73. Detailed housing surveys are not a core part of the statistical system in most OECD countries, and as noted above, there are no international standards for measuring housing quality. For this reason it is not possible to identify a core measure that can be used to link to more detailed housing data, and the role

of General Social Surveys should be as a source of more detailed information. In particular information on the status of basic needs such as electricity, heating and quality of the structure is important. A model set of housing measures would also inform about the tenure status of households and the environmental characteristics of the areas where dwellings are located. Experience of homelessness, the most extreme form of housing deprivation, should also be reflected in an ideal composition of measures.

## 4.2 Coverage and coherence

### 4.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension

74. With 34 OECD countries and 5 partner countries having included questions related to housing in their core social survey, the issue is very well-covered across countries. The European countries, through EU-SILC, also collect housing data in both the core and a number of ad-hoc modules.

- In Australia the GSS includes several housing modules, on housing mobility and ownership or rental of the dwelling (Module 4 – Housing and Mobility), tenure (Module 38), landlord type and rent payments (Module 39), mortgage repayments (Module 40), the number of bedrooms in the dwelling (Module 41) and value of the home (Module 42).
- In Japan the social survey comprises two questions on housing that match with the OECD indicators on the housing dimension.
- In New-Zealand, a range of questions in the GSS core module deal with housing conditions, focusing on the characteristics of the dwelling and its equipment.
- In Israel the Social Survey comprises two chapters on housing, namely on the “Details of the dwelling, automobile and help” and on “Positions regarding the dwelling”.
- In Canada the GSS has a short section dedicated to housing conditions in the core module of its GSS. These questions capture different outcomes on housing conditions than the ones for *How’s Life?*
- In Chile the General Social Survey includes one recurring module focusing on housing (Module 7 – Vivienda).
- In Mexico the social survey includes a section on housing conditions in the core module of the questionnaire, in addition to an ad-hoc supplementary module on housing during the third quarter of 2015.
- In the US, the American Community Survey (ACS) poses questions on housing in its core to assess both the financial and the physical housing characteristics.
- In Europe, EU-SILC, questions included in the Housing and in the Material Deprivation core modules are of interest to measure housing conditions. Moreover, Eurostat implemented an ad-hoc module on housing conditions in 2007 and in 2012, as well as the 2013 ad-hoc module on well-being.
- In addition to EU-SILC, several European countries have launched separate national social surveys, all of which contain a housing section. For example, the Netherlands’ Social Cohesion and Well-being survey includes questions on subjective satisfaction with the dwelling and the neighbourhood and Poland’s Social Cohesion Survey assesses physical characteristics of

housing. France has not launched a separate social survey, but its national counter-part of EU-SILC includes a question on subjective satisfaction with housing.

- Korea is the only OECD country not asking any questions related to housing in its GSS.

75. Outside the OECD realm, the Russian Federation's Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions contains a few questions to assess housing conditions. Costa Rica and Colombia also have included a relative large number of questions to assess financial and physical characteristics of the housing (some questions are similar to the ones included in the Chilean social survey).

**Table 13. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions related to housing conditions**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	12 social surveys	0 social surveys	1 social survey
<b>Surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Chile (Casen)</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV)*</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)*</li> <li>• European countries (<i>EU-SILC</i>)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)</li> <li>• Mexico (ENH)*</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New-Zealand (New-Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)</li> <li>• United-States (ACS)*</li> <li>• Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)</li> </ul>		European countries ( <i>EU-SILC</i> )
<b>OECD countries</b>	34	0	26
<b>OECD partners</b>	5**	0	2**
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		Korea	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under *EU-SILC*.

#### 4.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

76. When it comes to the OECD headline indicators of housing conditions, these are well covered across the participating countries – housing costs are included in the core modules of 32 countries (29 OECD), lack of access to sanitary facilities in the core module of 32 countries (28 OECD), and number of rooms per person in the core module of 35 countries (32 OECD). However, the framing of the questions for all three headline indicators differs substantially across countries, especially for housing costs and number of rooms, impeding cross-country comparability. Beyond this, the content of the question on

housing costs varies from country to country. In some countries the focus is primarily on rent, while in other cases mortgage repayments (principal and/or interest repayments), insurance, and maintenance costs may be considered. In order to compute an indicator for housing overburden costs, the social survey would need both comparable measures of costs and also comparable questions on disposable household income (see Chapter 1 on this dimension).

77. The OECD's secondary housing conditions indicator – self-reported level of satisfaction with housing – is not as widespread across the participating countries. Only five countries feature a related question in their core survey, although the coverage increases starkly if the additional twenty two OECD countries that collect data on this indicator through the ad-hoc modules of EU-SILC are taken into account. Again, question framing and response options differ across countries.

**Table 14. Selected indicators on housing conditions and comparability across the OECD**

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Housing expenditure</b>	<b>Australia</b> What was (your / this household's) last rent payment for this dwelling? What is (your / this household's) usual repayment on (this loan / these loans)?			➤ 29 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 3 partners in their core survey
	<b>Costa Rica*</b> If you are paying a monthly rent for this apartment, how much are you paying?			
	<b>EU-SILC*</b> Total housing cost (including electricity, water, gas and heating) / mortgage principal repayment <i>(exact question wording differs depending on country context)</i>			
	<b>United States*</b> What is the monthly rent for the dwelling? What are the monthly owner costs (details for costs for electricity, annual real estate costs, costs for water and sewer, costs for mortgage, for the Condominium taxes and personal property taxes)?			
<b>Dwellings without basic sanitary facilities</b>	<b>Chile</b> Is there an indoor flushing toilet in your dwelling?			➤ 28 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 4 partners in their core survey
	<b>Costa Rica*</b> Which type of sanitary facilities do you have in the dwelling? Do you have a bathroom in the dwelling? Do you share it?			
	<b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> What kind of sanitary service does the household have? <i>Toilet connected to sewerage /toilet connected to a septic tank / toilet with no connection /latrine / overhung latrine/ it does not have sanitary service</i>			

	<p><b>EU-SILC*</b> Is there an indoor flushing toilet in your dwelling? <i>Yes, for sole use of the household / yes, shared / no</i></p> <p><b>United States</b> Does this house have hot and cold running water/a flush toilet/ a bathtub or shower/ a sink with a faucet/a stove or range/ a refrigerator/ telephone service from which you can both make and receive calls?</p>				
<b>Number of rooms per person</b>	<p><b>Australia</b> How many bedrooms are there in this dwelling?</p> <p><b>Costa Rica*</b> How many bedrooms does this apartment have?</p> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b> Number of rooms available to the household <i>(exact question wording differs depending on country context)</i></p> <p><b>Israel*</b> In how many rooms do you live, including half-rooms?</p> <p><b>Japan</b> Please fill in the number of habitable rooms in your house. Do not include entrance or bathrooms.</p> <p><b>Poland</b> How many rooms does your household have at its own disposal?</p> <p><b>USA*</b> How many separate rooms are in this house, apartment, or mobile home? How many of these rooms are bedrooms?</p> <p><b>New-Zealand</b> How many bedrooms are there in your house or flat?</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 32 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 3 partners country in their core survey</li> </ul>	
	<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
	<b>Satisfaction with housing</b>	<p><b>France*</b> From 0 to 10, how you rate your overall satisfaction regarding your housing?</p> <p><b>Israel*</b> Are you satisfied, in general, with the dwelling you live in? Are you satisfied with the size of your dwelling? <i>Very satisfied /satisfied/ not so satisfied/not satisfied at all</i></p> <p><b>Netherlands*</b> On a scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with: your home/ the neighbourhood in which you live?</p> <p><b>Poland**</b> How do you assess the way you household is</p>		<p><b>EU-SILC</b> Overall satisfaction with the dwelling: <b>2012:</b> <i>Very dissatisfied /Dissatisfied / Satisfied / Very satisfied</i> <b>2013:</b> <i>(using a scale of 0 to 10, in which 0 means not at all satisfied and 10 means</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 4 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 26 OECD countries on ad-hoc basis</li> <li>➤ 1 partner in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 2 partners on ad-hoc basis</li> </ul>

	equipped with durable goods?		<i>completely satisfied</i>	
	<b>Russian Federation**</b> Assessment of dwelling conditions			

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Exact question wording/answering scale was not provided to the authors in English.

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

#### 4.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

78. Several countries collect a range of additional items that are of interest to housing condition assessment efforts and that reflect the requirements of an ideal set of indicators more clearly. These include questions on housing ownership, type and state of the dwelling, the neighbourhood of the dwelling, financial aspects of the dwelling for the household, access to services inside the dwelling, and the experience of homelessness. Questions related to the neighbourhood of the building and access to services inside the building, in particular, are clearly already of interest to many OECD and partner countries and could be integrated into the OECD well-being framework.

**Table 15. Selected alternative indicators on housing conditions (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country
<b>Housing ownership/tenure type</b>	Is this dwelling owned or partly owned by (you / anyone in this household)? Is this dwelling rented by (you / anyone in this household)?	Australia (General Social Survey)
	*Is this dwelling: <i>owned by you or a member of this household, even if it is still being paid for / rented, even if no cash rent is paid?</i>	Canada (General Social Survey)
	In which of these ways do you occupy this accommodation? <i>Own outright/Buying it with the help of a mortgage or loan/ Pay part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership/Rent it/Live here rent-free (including rent-free in relative's/friend's property; excluding squatting/Squatting</i>	EU (EU-SILC)
	*Is the dwelling in which you live: <i>a dwelling you own / a rented dwelling / sheltered housing / dwelling owned by others and you do not pay rent. /dwelling with key-money arrangement /other?</i> *Do you own another dwelling? *Do you own a dwelling?	Israel (Social Survey)
	*Is the house, apartment or mobile home: <i>Owned by you or someone in the household with a mortgage or loan/owned by you or someone in this household free and clear/rented/occupied without payment of rent?</i>	United States (American Community Survey)
<b>Type and state of dwelling</b>	*In what type of dwelling are you now living? Is it a...? <i>single detached house / semi-detached or double (side by side) / garden home, town-house or row house / duplex (one above the other) / low-rise apartment (less than 5 stories) / high-rise apartment (5 or more stories) / mobile home or trailer / other</i>	Canada (General Social Survey)
	In what type of dwelling are you living? (list provided) What are the main material of the exterior walls / the flooring / the ceiling of the dwelling? How many square meters does the housing count? How would you rate the status of the exterior walls / the flooring / the ceiling of the dwelling?	Chile (Casen)
	*In what type of dwelling are you living? (list provided)	Colombia (ECV)

	<p>*What is the main material of the exterior walls / the flooring? (list provided)</p> <p>*In the last twelve months, has the dwelling been affected by: <i>floodings, overflowing, flows, urban flow / avalanches, landfalls or landslides / land subsidence / strong winds, storms, gales</i></p>	
	<p>*In what type of dwelling are you living? (list provided)</p> <p>*What is the main material of the exterior walls / the flooring / the ceiling of the dwelling? (list provided)</p> <p>*How would you rate the status of the exterior walls / the flooring / the ceiling of the dwelling? <i>Good/normal/bad</i></p> <p>*Approximately, how many square meters does this living space have?</p>	Costa Rica (ENAHO)
	<p>Is your dwelling too dark, meaning is there not enough day-light coming through the windows?</p> <p>Do you have any of the following problems with your dwelling / accommodation: A leaking roof / damp walls, floors or foundation / rot in window frames or floor?</p> <p>Shortage of space in the dwelling</p> <p>Size of the dwelling in square meters</p>	European countries (EU-SILC)
	<p>Please fill in the approximate floor space of the entire house including entrance and corridors etc.</p>	Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)
	<p>How would you describe the condition of your house or flat? <i>No repairs or maintenance needed right now / minor maintenance needed / some repairs and maintenance needed / immediate repairs and maintenance needed / immediate and extensive repairs and maintenance needed / DK/R</i></p> <p>Does your house or flat have no problem, a minor problem or a major problem with dampness or mould? <i>No problem / minor problem / major problem / DK/R</i></p> <p>In winter, is your house or flat colder than you would like? <i>Yes - always / yes - often / yes - sometimes / no / DK/R</i></p>	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)
	<p>How many square metres does the dwelling occupied by your household (part of a dwelling) have?</p>	Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)
	<p>*Which best describes this building? (list of types of homes provided)</p> <p>*About when was this building first built?</p>	United States (ACS)
<b>Neighbourhood of dwelling/Access to services outside dwelling</b>	<p>Which kind of issues (eg. infrastructures and facilities) do you have to face in the neighbourhood / local area of your dwelling? (list provided)</p>	Chile (Casen)
	<p>How easily can you access the following services in your neighbourhood: grocery services, banking services, postal services, public transport, primary health care services, compulsory schools? <i>With great difficulty / with some difficulty / easily / very easily</i></p> <p>Do you have any of the following problems related to the place where you live: too much noise in your dwelling from neighbours or from outside (traffic, business, factory, etc.)?</p>	European countries (EU-SILC)
	<p>*Are you satisfied, in general, with the area in which you live?</p> <p>*Are you satisfied with the public transportation in your area of residence?</p> <p>*Are you satisfied with the state of the roads and sidewalks in your area of residence? e.g., the width of the roads and</p>	Israel (Social Survey)

	sidewalks, lighting, signage, etc. Does noise outside of your dwelling bother you? <i>Very satisfied / satisfied / not so satisfied / not satisfied at all</i>	
<b>Financial aspects</b>	Please think about your total housing costs including mortgage repayment (instalment and interest) or rent, insurance and service charges (sewage removal, refuse removal, regular maintenance, repairs and other charges). To what extent are these costs a financial burden to you? <i>A heavy burden / a slight burden / not burden at all</i> Can your household afford to keep itself adequately warm?	European countries (EU-SILC)
	*What is the annual payment for fire, hazard and flood insurance on this property? *How much is the regular monthly mortgage payment on this property?	United States (ACS)
	Where does the water come from in the housing? (list provided) What is the water distribution system? (list provided) Do you have access to electricity in the dwelling?	Chile (Casen)
<b>Access to services in dwelling</b>	*Which of the following public, private or community utilities does the dwelling have? <i>Electricity / water supply / sewerage / garbage collection</i>	Colombia (ECV)
	*Where does the water come from in the housing? (list provided) *What is the water distribution system? (list provided) *Which institution is providing electricity in the dwelling? (list provided) *What is the main source of energy for cooking? *Does the house have a cell phone/home phone/ refrigerator/hot water system/water tank/laptop/desktop/radio/TV? How many?	Costa Rica (ENAHO)
	Does the dwelling have: adequate electrical installations, adequate plumbing/water installations? Is the dwelling equipped with heating facilities? Is the dwelling comfortably warm during winter time/ comfortably cool during summer time?	European countries (EU-SILC)
	**House accomplishment and sanitation **Gas supply **Hot water, heating and electricity distribution **Communication and television equipment **Intentions to improve housing condition	Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)
	*Does this house have hot and cold running water/a flush toilet/ a bathtub or shower/ a sink with a faucet/a stove or range/ a refrigerator/ telephone service from which you can both make and receive calls?	United States (ACS)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

#### 4.3 The statistical agenda ahead

79. The OECD's headline indicators on housing costs, access to sanitary facilities and number of rooms per person are available in a large number of core modules – but their framing still differs substantially across countries and could be standardised. Countries could focus on bedrooms instead of number of rooms, as these better measure available personal living space, and reflect wording already used in several OECD countries.

80. The OECD's secondary indicator – subjective satisfaction with housing conditions – is currently mostly available through ad-hoc modules in the European countries. In order to compare progress across

all OECD members, integration of this indicator in social surveys outside of the European continent is desirable.

81. Beyond what is currently covered in *How's Life*, a lot of countries collect alternative promising indicators on both financial and physical characteristics of dwellings, many of which have been identified as statistical gaps by the OECD. For example, questions on access to services (such as electricity, water supply, heating) could supplement or even replace lack of improved sanitation as indicator of housing quality. Questions on the quality of indoor housing (room temperature, exposure to noise) and the neighbourhood of the dwelling (infrastructure, subjective satisfaction with area) can provide additional important information. However, the breadth of available measures also reflects differing national housing circumstances and priorities, and suggests that moves towards wider harmonization of housing measures may be unhelpful. Rather, the focus should be on agreeing on the small set of headline measures identified above, and making use of the more heterogeneous national data where this is appropriate.

## 5. QUALITY OF LIFE: HEALTH STATUS

### 5.1 Concept

#### 5.1.1 Why is health status important for well-being?

82. Health status is fundamental to any conception of well-being. Health status includes both physical and mental health, and can be assessed via objective health conditions and self-reported measures: The length of life and whether it is lived free of illness and disabilities both have intrinsic value for people. Health status also carries instrumental value as it enhances people's opportunities to work, study and make the most of their leisure time and their social activities. Poor health is consistently associated with lower satisfaction with life as a whole and with worse daily emotions and experiences.

#### 5.1.2 Measuring health status

83. An ideal set of health indicators should provide information about both the length and quality of life, and would assess both physical and mental health outcomes. Information on the most important diseases and conditions, disability or death as well as the various risk factors, behaviours and drivers that lead to poor health are potentially important for supplementary indicators. Ideal indicators would also inform on the linkages between the various health components and on how, for instance, physical and psychological aspects of health are related.

84. In practice, comparative information on health status provided by existing indicators is limited. In OECD countries, mortality indicators refer only to the length of people's lives, rather than to the health status of the living.

85. Measures of illness are more difficult to construct, as sickness is multidimensional (one may suffer from various diseases), not always measurable through objective measures (e.g. pain), and may require a longitudinal follow-up to assess whether conditions are temporary or chronic. Beyond measures of physical morbidity, little comparative information is available on mental health.

86. One approach to measuring non-fatal health outcomes is to focus on a person's functioning – whether they experience any limitations in domains such as vision, hearing, walking, cognition or affect – as well as pain and fatigue. The UNECE-WHO-Eurostat taskforce on measuring health status and the Washington Group on disability statistics (2015) have proposed a set of six questions (SF-6) to measure these functionings which may become the basis for international comparisons of morbidity in the future.

##### 5.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

**Table 16. OECD well-being indicators: Health status**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life expectancy at birth</li> <li>• Perceived health status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overweight and obesity</li> <li>• Infant mortality</li> <li>• Perceived longstanding illness</li> <li>• Perceived limitations in daily activities</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

87. The OECD's current two headline indicators for the health status dimension are life expectancy at birth and self-reported health. Measures of **life expectancy at birth** refer to people born today and are based on official national statistics compiled by the OECD, available in the OECD Health Statistics Database. The measure of **perceived health status** refers to the percentage of the population aged 15 and over who report being in "good" or "very good" health. This data is also compiled as part of the OECD Health Statistics Database, and drawn from EU-SILC and more detailed health interviews of national statistical systems.

88. Four secondary indicators complement the headline indicators: **overweight and obesity**, the **infant mortality rate**, **self-reported longstanding illness** and **self-reported limitations** in daily activities. Data on weights and heights, which are used to determine overweight and obesity, are collected either through specialised health interview surveys (e.g. the European Health Interview Survey) or through health examinations that record objective information. The last two secondary indicators are self-reported measures and are only available for European countries. Self-reported longstanding illness refers to the prevalence of chronic health problems as reported by the respondent, while limitations in daily activities refer to the experience of disabilities resulting from severe health problems.

#### *5.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring health status*

89. All OECD countries have sophisticated systems of health statistics, underpinned both by demographic data (such as life expectancy) and health surveys. The role of General Social Surveys should therefore be to include a minimal set of core measures of health status that both allow a link to be made to more detailed health statistics, and which are also sufficiently valid to support analysis of the joint distribution of health outcomes alongside other dimensions of well-being.

## **5.2 Coverage and coherence**

### *5.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

90. There is a universal coverage of the health dimension in national social surveys: all OECD countries, as well as 4 OECD partners, have included health status in the core module of their survey. The Netherlands and Poland also address health in the core of their national General Social Survey outside of the EU-SILC system. In addition, Canada, France and Israel have specific items on health in their rotating modules. Costa Rica is the only country in this study that addresses health only via a rotating module.

The way in which health status is integrated in social surveys varies across OECD countries:

- In Australia a specific module on health (Module 9 – Self-perceptions of Health and Healthcare Delays) and another module focused on disabilities (Module 10 – Disability – Parts 1 and 2) are included in the General Social Survey.
- In Canada but the GSS has a question on the core module on self-rated health status. The cycle on Time Use also includes a module on self-rated health and health and activity limitations.
- In Chile Casen includes a fixed and detailed section on health (module S).
- In Europe, EU-SILC features a core module on health.
- In Israel a core module on health and fertility (Chapter 4) is included in the Social Survey. In addition, an ad-hoc module titled "Health and Way of Life & Computer usage" was included in 2010.

- In Japan there are two questions on health status in the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions.
- In Korea the Social Survey features a comprehensive health module.
- In Mexico health is covered in their core module of the ENH.
- In New Zealand the GSS, covers a range of questions on health, including mental health, which are repeated on a regular basis.
- In Poland the Social Cohesion Survey includes three questions on physical and mental health in the core module.
- In the United States questions on health are included in their American Community Survey, but items are framed in a different fashion than most other OECD countries – the United States is therefore included in Table 17 but not in any of the more focused listings of this chapter.

91. OECD key partners, Colombia, Costa Rica and the Russian Federation, have included some questions on health in their General Social Surveys. For Costa Rica, questions on health in their rotating module are related to breastfeeding, vaccination and cancer detection rather than overall health status. For Colombia, several questions on health are asked in the core modules of its two social surveys, the ECV and ENUT. For Russia, the dimension is covered through its Comprehensive monitoring of living conditions core module on health.

**Table 17. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions on health**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	14 social surveys	3 social surveys	1 social survey
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Chile (Casen)</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV* and ENUT)</li> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Mexico (ENH)*</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)</li> <li>• France (SRCV)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)</li> <li>United-States (ACS)*</li> <li>Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)</li> </ul>		
<b>OECD countries</b>	35	3	1
<b>OECD partners</b>	4**	0	0
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		None	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 5.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

92. While General Social Surveys are not suitable to collect data on the length of life, measures of self-reported health status are included in the core social surveys of 38 countries (33 OECD). Although response scales are slightly different across countries, the question wording for this indicator is broadly comparable.

93. With the exception of infant mortality, the other secondary measures can potentially be addressed in surveys. Self-reported longstanding illness and limitations in daily activities are covered by 31 (29 OECD) and 35 (32 OECD) countries respectively. Several countries, in particular Israel and New Zealand, ask questions on self-reported limitations in daily activities which are very close to the SF-6 module recommended by the Washington Group. Although data on self-reported obesity could potentially be collected in General Social Surveys (as is currently the case in a number of health surveys), only the Israeli social survey currently collects data of this type.

Table 18. Selected indicators on health and comparability across the OECD

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Life expectancy at birth</b>	n/a	n/a		n/a
<b>Perceived health status</b>	<b>Australia</b> In general, would you say that your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?			➤ 33 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 3 partners in their core survey
	<b>Canada*</b> In general, would you say that your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?			
	<b>Chile</b> From 0 to 7, how do you rate your current personal health?			
	<b>EU-SILC*</b> How is your health in general? <i>Very good/good/fair/bad/very bad/DK/R</i>			
	<b>Israel *</b> How is your health, overall? <i>Very good/ good, not so good/ not good at all</i>			
	<b>Japan</b> How is your current health status (for household members at age 6 and over)? <i>Good/ sort of good/ fair/ not so good/ bad</i>			
	<b>Korea</b> What is the overall condition of your health? <i>Very good/ good/ average/ bad/ very bad</i>			
	<b>Netherlands*</b> On a scale from 1(not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with your physical health? How is your health in general? <i>Very good/good/does it/poor/very bad</i>			
	<b>New Zealand</b> In general, would you say that your health is <i>excellent/ very good/ good/ fair / poor?</i>			

	<b>Russian Federation**</b> Self-assessment of their health by persons aged 15 and over			
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<b>Overweight and obesity</b>	n/a	n/a	<b>Israel</b> What is your height, without shoes on? What is your weight today, in light closing and with no shoes on?	➤ 1 OECD country in an ad-hoc module
<b>Infant mortality rate</b>	n/a	n/a		n/a
<b>Perceived longstanding illness</b>	<p><b>Australia</b> Do you have a disability or long-term health condition? (list provided)</p> <p><b>Chile</b> Do you have a disability or long-term health condition? (list provided)</p> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b> Do you have any longstanding illness or health problem?</p> <p><b>Israel*</b> Do you have any health or physical problem of any kind that has lasted six months or more?</p> <p><b>Netherlands*</b> Do you have one or more chronic diseases or conditions (that are lasting/expected to last six months or more)?</p> <p><b>Poland</b> Do you have any long-lasting health problems or chronic illnesses lasting (or expected to last) for 6 months or longer?</p>			<p>➤ 29 OECD countries in their core survey</p> <p>➤ 2 partners in their core survey</p>
<b>Perceived limitations in daily activities</b>	<p><b>Australia</b> Still thinking of conditions lasting 6 months or more, are you restricted in everyday activities by any of these? Because of the (conditions / condition) you have told me about, do you have any difficulties with education / any difficulties with</p>			<p>➤ 32 OECD countries in their core survey</p> <p>➤ 3 partners in their core</p>

	<p>employment?</p> <p><b>Canada*</b> Are your daily activities at home, work, school or any other area limited by: ...a physical condition? <i>No / sometimes / often / always / DK</i></p> <p><b>Chile</b> Considering your health conditions, do you have difficulties to do the following activities (list of activities) provided? <i>Yes, I have difficulties and I am receiving some external help/ yes, I have difficulties and I have some technical assistance/ no, I do not have any difficulties</i></p> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b> For at least the past 6 months, to what extent have you been limited because of a health problem in activities people usually do? Would you say you have been ... <i>severely limited/ limited but not severely / not limited at all?</i></p> <p><b>Israel*</b> Do you have difficulty walking or climbing stairs/ difficulty in getting dressed or washing/ difficulty in carrying out activities related to the household/ difficulty in eating without help/ problems remembering or concentrating/ vision problems – even when you wear glasses/ difficulty hearing? <i>No difficulty / slight difficulty / significant difficulty / completely incapable</i> Does this problem interfere with your day-to-day functioning? <i>Greatly interferes / interferes / doesn't interfere so much / does not interfere at all</i></p> <p><b>Netherlands*</b> To what extent are you confined by your health due to</p>			<p>survey</p>
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	<p>limitations in activities people usually do?  <i>Severely limited/limited, but not seriously/not limited</i></p> <p><b>New-Zealand</b>                  During the past four weeks, how much of the time were you limited in the kind of work or other regular daily activities you do as a result of your physical health?                  During the past four weeks, how much of the time did you do work or other regular daily activities less carefully than usual as a result of any emotional problems, such as feeling depressed or anxious?                  How much of the time have you accomplished less than you would like as a result of your physical health?                  How much of the time have you accomplished less than you would like as a result of any emotional problems, such as feeling depressed or anxious?                  How much did pain interfere with your normal work including both work outside the home and housework?                  During the past four weeks, how much of the time has your physical health or emotional problems interfered with your social activities, such as visiting friends, relatives etc.?  <i>All of the time/ most of the time/some of the time/ a little of the time/ none of the time/DK_R</i>                  Now I'm going to read a list of activities that you might do during a typical day. Please tell me if your health now limits you in the following activities: moderate activities such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum cleaner, bowling, or playing golf/ climbing several flights of stairs.  <i>Yes, limited a lot/ yes, limited a little/ no, not limited at</i></p>			
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	<i>all/DK_R</i>			
	<b>Poland</b> Have you had a limited ability of performing activities that people usually perform, lasting six months or longer due to health problems?			
	<b>Russian Federation**</b> Chronic diseases Being under medical observation for chronic diseases			

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Exact question wording was not provided to the authors in English.

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 5.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

94. A few additional indicators on health status could be drawn from questions asked in General Social Surveys. These cover topics such as financial aspects of health, drivers of health status, mental health, as well as the frequency and state of illness.

95. Mental health is an area of particular interest, as it is currently poorly covered in available health statistics, but is thought to represent a significant proportion of the total burden of poor health. Six OECD countries have mental health questions in their General Social Survey (Canada, Israel, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Poland). However, with the exception of some similarities between the approaches taken by New Zealand and Israel, different surveys adopt very different measurement strategies. The Netherlands also has an interesting question on physical limitations, which mirrors the subjective evaluation of physical health used in the Dutch social cohesion and well-being survey.

**Table 19. Selected alternative indicators on health status (including core, rotating and ad hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country (GSS)
<b>Financial aspects of health/Insurance</b>	Have you ever delayed seeing a doctor or other health professional for your own health because you could not afford it? Have you ever delayed buying prescribed medicines because you could not afford it?	Australia (General Social Survey)
	Was there any time during the past 12 months when you really needed medical examination or treatment (excluding dental) for yourself? <i>Yes (I really needed at least at one occasion medical examination or treatment)/No (I did not need any medical examination or treatment)</i> Did you have a medical examination or treatment each time you really needed? <i>Yes (I had a medical examination or treatment each time I needed)/No (there was at least one occasion when I did not have a medical examination or treatment)</i> What was the main reason for not having a medical examination or treatment? <i>Could not afford to (too expensive)/ Waiting list/ Could not take time because of work, care for children or for</i>	Europe (EU-SILC)*

	<p><i>others/ Too far to travel or no means of transportation/ Fear of medical doctors, hospitals, examination or treatment/ Wanted to wait and see if problem got better on its own/ Didn't know any good medical doctor/Other reasons</i></p>	
	<p>*During the past 12 months, did you do without prescription medications due to financial difficulties? *In addition to state health insurance, do you have supplementary health insurance from your sick fund or private medical insurance from an insurance company? *Do you not have supplementary health insurance or private medical insurance due to financial difficulties?</p>	Israel (Social Survey)
	<p>**Availability of medical insurance policy</p>	Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)
<b>Drivers of health status</b>	<p>In general, how many hours a night do you sleep, other than on weekends? Are you on a diet, in order to lose weight or maintain your weight? In the last three months, did you engage in physical exercise? In the last three months, did you engage in strenuous/moderate physical exercise that continued for at least 10 consecutive minutes? In general, how many times a week did you engage in strenuous/moderate physical exercise? In general, how many hours a week did you engage in strenuous/moderate physical exercise? Do you define yourself as a vegetarian/vegan/neither? How many times a week do you eat breakfast? <i>Six to seven/four to five/twice to three/one time a week or less</i> Do you eat regular meals? <i>Often/occasionally/seldom/never</i> Do you make sure to eat fruits and vegetables/natural foods/drink a lot? <i>To a very great extent/to a great extent/to a small extent/not at all</i> Do you smoke at least once a week today? Did you smoke at least once a week in the past? How many cigarettes a day do/did you smoke? At what age did you start/stop smoking? In general, do you use any of the following protective measures when you are exposed to the sun: sunglasses, sunscreen, hat, long sleeves? <i>Often/occasionally/seldom/never</i></p>	Israel (Social Survey)
	<p>*Do you smoke? *Do you ever drink alcoholic beverages? *How often do you do sports? <i>Daily/at least once per week but not daily/at least once per month but not weekly/less than once per month/rarely or never</i></p>	Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)
<b>Mental health</b>	<p>*In general, would you say your mental health is: <i>excellent/ very good/ good/ fair/ poor/ DK/R?</i></p>	Canada (General Social Survey)
	<p>In the last 12 months, have: You felt under pressure? You felt depressed?</p>	Israel (Social Survey)

	<p>You felt you could cope with your problems?          You felt full of energy?          Worries disturbed your sleep?  <i>Always, often/sometimes, occasionally/ seldom/ never</i></p>	
	<p>How much stress did you have in the last 2 weeks?  <i>Severe/moderate/weak/none</i>          In the last year, did you think about committing suicide?</p>	Korea (Social Survey)
	<p>On a scale from 1(not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with your mental health?</p>	Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)
	<p>During the past four weeks, how much of the time did you do work or other regular daily activities less carefully than usual as a result of any emotional problems, such as feeling depressed or anxious?          How much of the time have you accomplished less than you would like as a result of any emotional problems, such as feeling depressed or anxious?          During the past four weeks, how much of the time has your physical health or emotional problems interfered with your social activities, such as visiting friends, relatives etc.?  <i>All of the time/ most of the time/some of the time/ a little of the time/ none of the time/DK_R</i>          Now I'm going to read a list of activities that you might do during a typical day. Please tell me if your health now limits you in the following activities: moderate activities such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum cleaner, bowling, or playing golf/ climbing several flights of stairs.  <i>Yes, limited a lot/ yes, limited a little/ no, not limited at all/DK_R</i></p>	New Zealand
	<p>Please specify how often during the last month have you felt sad, distressed or down?</p>	Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)
<b>Frequency and state of illness</b>	<p>Over the last 3 months, did you face a health problem such as sickness or accident?</p>	Chile (Casen)
	<p>On day (date), were you sick or had any dental problem?          Has (name) had any of the following diseases or health issues diagnosed? (list provided)          Has (name) had any permanent limitation for (list provided)</p>	Colombia (ENUT)
	<p>Do you feel anything wrong with your health due to illness or injury etc. these few days (subjective symptom)? If you have any, please select all from the list below and fill in the one you feel most uneasy (42 symptoms for example have fever, feel dizzy etc.), and please tell whether you receive any treatment for those symptoms.</p>	Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)
<b>Other</b>	<p>**Parents' estimation of children health aged 0-14 years          **Determined disability</p>	Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*Exact question wording was not provided to the authors in English.

Note: Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 5.3 The statistical agenda ahead

96. Health status is relatively well covered and collected on a regular basis across participating countries. In particular, the headline indicator self-reported health status is included in the core social

surveys of 35 countries (33 OECD). Question wording for this indicator is broadly comparable across countries and move towards a common answering scale should be a priority.

97. Two of the secondary indicators, self-reported longstanding illness and limitations in daily activities, are also covered by most participating countries. However, question wording and response scales vary widely across surveys. A key priority should be the standardisation of these self-reported measures of health status based on the recommendations of the Washington Group, as has already happened with a few General Social Surveys in this sample.

98. Beyond the *How's Life?* indicators, a range of other indicators collected through General Social Surveys could be used to broaden the understanding of health status outcomes. Mental health represents a particular priority as it is a significant part of health more generally, and is currently very poorly covered in available data sources. Questions on the experience of mental health should be included in General Social Surveys to complement questions on the overall experience of physical health. As is the case with physical limitations, the guidelines of the Washington Group should form the basis for international standardisation.

## 6. QUALITY OF LIFE: EDUCATION AND SKILLS

### 6.1 Concept

#### 6.1.1 Why are education and skills important for well-being?

99. Education has both an intrinsic and an instrumental value for well-being. While the opportunity to learn new skills and expand one's mind can be inherently rewarding, a good education also makes it easier to gain higher earnings and achieve greater employability. More educated people generally have better health status, and are more likely to carry out a job in a working environment with fewer hazards. Education also raises civic awareness, fosters political participation and provides individuals with the skills necessary to integrate more fully into their societies.

#### 6.1.2 Measuring education and skills

100. Education statistics are in general of good quality, especially for OECD countries. However, information on educational outcomes (which informs about the quality of education and the effective skills that have been developed as a result) has traditionally been less developed and output measures such as educational attainment are commonly used instead. In the past twenty years, several more outcome-focused instruments have been developed and are being coordinated by the OECD, notably the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Surveys (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). All these tools measure students' cognitive skills in a broad range of tasks and make it possible to study how educational systems influence people's abilities. Acknowledging the fact that these instruments do not capture non-cognitive (i.e. social and emotional) skills, the OECD project on Education and Social Progress (OECD, 2015b) is developing a set of measures to capture these and is scheduled to be launched in 2019.

##### 6.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

**Table 20. OECD well-being indicators: Education and skills**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment of the adult population</li> <li>• Cognitive skills of 15 year old students</li> <li>• Competencies of the adult population aged 16-65</li> </ul>	n/a

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

101. The OECD well-being framework for the time being considers three headline indicators: First, **educational attainment of the adult population** measures the percentage of the population aged 25-64 which has completed at least an upper-secondary degree. The data underlying this indicator are collected through the annual OECD questionnaire on National Educational Attainment Categories (NEAC) and are based on national LFS surveys. Second, **cognitive skills of 15 year old students** are measured through their average score in reading, mathematics and science, based on data gathered through PISA. Third, recognizing the importance of lifelong learning, the well-being framework also considers the **competencies of the adult population aged 16-65**. The indicator refers to the mean proficiency in numeracy and literacy of this population and is based on data collected through the OECD Survey of Adult Skills, which is part of the PIAAC. At present, PIAAC has limited country coverage, and is carried out on a 10 year cycle.

### 6.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring education and skills

102. Educational attainment is a core demographic variable collected in almost all household surveys, and is also a core measure that can be used to link information on cognitive skills from specialist surveys such as PISA and PIAAC. With an existing body of specialist surveys on skills and competencies that can be linked to via a well-established demographic variable, the main role of General Social Surveys in measuring education and skills should be to incorporate one or more core measures.

## 6.2 Coverage and coherence

### 6.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension

103. Education and skills is universally covered across all participating countries: 40 countries (all 35 OECD) include questions in their core module, and 2 countries (1 OECD), Israel and Colombia, collect more detailed additional information in an ad-hoc module.

**Table 21. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions on education and skills**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
<b>Numbers</b>	<b>16 social surveys</b>	<b>0 social surveys</b>	<b>2 social surveys</b>
<b>Surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Chile (Casen)</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV* and ENUT)</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)*</li> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)*</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Mexico (ENH)*</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)</li> <li>• United-States (ACS)*</li> <li>• Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colombia (ECV)</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)</li> </ul>
<b>OECD countries</b>	35	0	1
<b>OECD partners</b>	5**	0	1
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		none	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 6.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

104. Educational attainment is the main headline indicator being currently measured through General Social Surveys. It is very well covered: 37 countries (34 OECD) have provided information about including this indicator in their core survey for the purpose of this Review.

**Table 22. Selected indicators on education and skills and comparability across the OECD**

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Educational attainment of the adult population</b>	<b>Australia</b> What was the highest year of primary or secondary school you completed? <i>Year 12 or equivalent/ year 11 or equivalent/ year 10 or equivalent/ year 9 or equivalent/ year 8 or below/ never attended school</i>			➤ 33 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 4 partners in their core survey
	<b>Canada*</b> What is the highest level of education that you have completed? <i>Less than high school diploma or its equivalent/ high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate/ trade certificate or diploma College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma (other than trades certificates or diplomas)/university certificate or diploma below the bachelor's level Bachelor's degree (e.g. B.A., B.Sc., LL.B.)/university certificate, diploma, degree above the bachelor's level/ DK/ RF</i>			
	<b>Chile</b> What is your highest educational level, or your current educational level? <i>Never attended/kindergarten/Nursery/Pre-kindergarten/Special education/Primary school or basic education/ Secondary education/Technical school/Professional/ Postgraduate</i>			
	<b>Colombia (ECV* and ENUT)</b> What is the highest educational level attained by (name) and the last year or grade passed at this level? (list provided)			

	<p><b>Costa Rica*</b>            What is your latest degree or year that you passed?  <i>None / school / teaching / special / primary / secondary. academic / secondary technical / para-university / college / specialty / master / doctorate</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>EU-SILC*</b>            What is your highest educational level attained?  <i>Pre-primary education / primary education / lower secondary education / (upper) secondary education / post-secondary non tertiary education / first stage of tertiary education (not leading directly to an advanced research qualification) / second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification)</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Israel*</b>            What is the highest certificate or degree that you have received?  <i>Certificate of high school completion (which is not a matriculation certificate) / matriculation certificate / non-academic certificate of completion of post-secondary school / first academic degree, B.A., or corresponding degree, including academic certificate / second academic degree, M.A., or corresponding degree (including M.D., medical doctor) / third academic degree, PhD, or corresponding degree / did not receive any of the above-mentioned certificates</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Japan*</b>            Please select your current educational status (in education/graduate), and select your educational level (<i>elementary school/lower secondary school; upper secondary school; vocational training school; junior college/college of technology; university; graduate school</i>). If you are a graduate, please select your final educational level.</p>			
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	<p><b>Korea</b> Did you graduate from a vocational high school, college or university?</p> <p><b>Netherlands*</b> What is your highest level of education? (list provided)</p> <p><b>New Zealand</b> What is your highest completed secondary school qualification? What is your highest completed qualification? <i>National certificate level 1 / national certificate level 2 / national certificate level 3 / national certificate level 4 / trade certificate / diploma or certificate level 5 / advanced trade certificate / diploma or certificate level 6 / teachers certificate / diploma / nursing diploma / bachelor degree / bachelor hons / . postgraduate certificate/ master's degree / PhD / other</i></p> <p><b>United States*</b> What is the highest degree or level of school this person has completed?</p> <p><b>Russian Federation**</b> Level of educational attainment</p>			
<b>Cognitive skills of 15 year old students</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Competencies of the adult population aged 16-65</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*Yearly implemented core modules

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 6.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

105. A range of alternative indicators on education and skills are featured in General Social Surveys: these include topics relating to relevant skills acquired through education, access to educational opportunities, time spent on education, and life-long learning. Most of these do not measure educational outcomes per se, but potentially offer a deeper understanding of some of the key drivers of educational outcomes. An exception here are the measures of satisfaction with education collected by Korea and the Netherlands, which have the potential to usefully complement existing measures of educational attainment by capturing people's subjective evaluation of their level of knowledge and skills.

Table 23. Selected alternative indicators on education and skills (Including core, rotating and ad hoc modules)

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country (GSS)
<b>Relevant skills</b>	*Is your work at your present (main) workplace related to the field of your academic or post-secondary studies?	Israel (Social Survey)
	Is your current job related to your field of study? (previous job if currently not employed) <i>Completely related/moderately related/neither related nor unrelated/moderately unrelated/completely unrelated</i> How effective do you think is the current educational system for school students, in relation to the following four aspects of learning: enhancing general knowledge, gaining virtues, shaping social attitudes and nationalism, preparing for adulthood and working life? <i>Strongly effective/moderately effective/ neither effective nor ineffective/ moderately ineffective/ strongly ineffective/ DK</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
	Please tell, which of the below-mentioned languages can you speak? (list provided)	Poland (Social Cohesion)
	**Accordance of work performed with profession received	Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)
	*Please print below the specific majors of any Bachelor's degrees this person has received.	United States (ACS)
<b>Access to education/ educational opportunities</b>	What are the reasons you did not study although wanted to? (list provided)	Australia (General Social Survey)
	*What is the main reason why ... is not studying? (list provided)	Colombia (ECV)
	*During this year, did a member of the household receive food help for students/free transport/free educational texts/no incentive?	Costa Rica (ENAH0)
	Have you been able to reach the level of education you wanted to? If no, what is the main reason? <i>Economic hardships/lived too far away from school/failed the entrance examination/opposing views of parents (e.g. gender distinction)/had to take care of house chores/sickness or health issues/others</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
<b>Lifelong learning/ higher education</b>	Do you currently attend preschool, public school, private school, college, university or another higher education institution?	Colombia (ENUT)
	*Are you currently attending school? (Do you attend preschool, school, college or university)?	Colombia (ECV)
	*What were you doing 12(11-1) months ago, that is in (month) last year? <i>Working full-time as an employee/working part-time as an employee/working full-time self-employed/working part-time self-employed/unemployed/student/looking after family home/long-term sick or disabled/retired from paid work/not in paid work for some other reason</i>	European countries (EU-SILC)
	*During the past 12 months, have you taken part in any professional training course or supplementary professional training? *Have you, during the past twelve months, participated in any courses or group activities? For example, courses or classes in Torah subjects, sports, computers, languages, crafts, etc.	Israel (Social Survey)

	Do you read books in your free time? *Have you read any newspapers, magazines or periodicals during the past 12 months?	
	Are you a student (includes students on leave or studying to retake a college-entrance exam)?	Korea (Social Survey)
	**Getting education at the present time	Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)
	*At any time in the last 3 months, has this person attended school or college? *What grade or level was this person attending?	United States (ACS)
<b>Satisfaction with education</b>	How satisfied are you with your school life: course of study (level), method of teaching (teaching, evaluation), relationship with schoolmates, relationship with teachers/professors, school facilities, school neighbourhoods and surroundings, development of talents and aptitudes, major (vocational high school student, college, university and graduate), general school life? <i>Very satisfied/moderately satisfied/ neither satisfied nor dissatisfied/moderately dissatisfied/very dissatisfied/NA</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
	*On a scale from 1(not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with you're the training opportunities you have had thus far?	Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Exact question wording was not provided to the authors in English.

### 6.3 The statistical agenda ahead

106. One of the headline indicators for skills and education, educational attainment, is almost universally covered across General Social Surveys and asked in a broadly comparable way across participating countries. Although educational attainment provides less information on actual skills acquired than PISA/PIAAC, it is more than adequate for the analysis of the joint distributions of education with other outcomes.

107. The potential alternative indicators identified here mostly do not capture information on educational outcomes, but may be of interest in broadening understanding of some of the key drivers of education and in identifying links between education and other well-being outcomes. In particular, access to education and information on the relevance of other skills fall under this category.

108. Information on satisfaction with education has the potential to complement existing attainment indicators and is well aligned with the role and existing content of General Social Surveys. A key issue for further development in this area, however, is whether such satisfaction questions should focus on satisfaction with education services (as in the Netherlands or Korea) or satisfaction with knowledge and skills more broadly (as proposed in the *OECD guidelines on measuring subjective well-being*).

## 7. QUALITY OF LIFE: SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

### 7.1 Concept

#### 7.1.1 Why are social connections important for well-being?

109. Positive social relationships, both in their frequency and their quality, are a powerful driver of well-being. Time-use surveys suggest that socialising is the highlight of most people's daily activities, while loneliness and a lack of social support tend to lower subjective well-being. Strong social networks also provide material and emotional support in times of need, as well as access to jobs and other opportunities. Social capital, which is an important driver of well-being outcomes (including the strength of communities and economies, health, crime as well as democratic participation,), is created by social interactions and the shared values and norms that these ties generate.

#### 7.1.2 Measuring social connections

110. Measuring the complexity of human relationships and their contribution to well-being is difficult: people's lives are made of countless social connections that vary in context and intensity and also include interactions that are not happening face-to-face. Ideally, a set of indicators of social connections should capture time spent in social interactions, as well as their quality and the resulting outcomes for people (i.e. emotional and financial support, social isolation) and for society (i.e. trust in others, tolerance). However, official statistics on social connections are still scarce and comparable information is produced only by small-scale unofficial surveys (such as the Gallup World Poll, the World Values Survey and the International Social Survey Program) or has limited country coverage (European countries only). To encourage the inclusion of this dimension in national statistical systems, the OECD is currently developing guidelines on the measurement of trust, which are expected to be launched at the end of 2016.

##### 7.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

**Table 24. OECD well-being indicators: Social connections**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceived social network support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time spent volunteering</li> <li>Frequency of social contact</li> <li>Generalised social trust</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

111. The OECD selected one headline indicator and three secondary indicators to integrate social connections into *How's Life?*. Informal connections are measured through a headline indicator on **perceived social network support**, which reflects the percentage of people who have responded positively to the question: "If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?" in the Gallop World Poll. This measure does not provide any information about the source, quality or nature of the support provided, and focuses on support received rather than the enjoyment of social contact per se. Formal types of social connections are represented by a secondary indicator on **time spent volunteering**, information about which is collected from various national time use surveys and harmonised by the OECD. **Frequency of social contact**, another supplementary indicator, measures the proportion of people who report socialising with friends and relatives living outside the household at least once a week. The third secondary indicator estimates

**generalized social trust** through the proportion of people who agree with the statement “most people can be trusted”.

### *7.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring social connections*

112. There is a shortage of internationally comparable data on social connections in OECD countries from official sources. While Time Use Surveys have the potential to provide good measures of the extent and nature of social contact, such surveys are conducted infrequently and do not exist for many OECD countries. Given the shortage of official information, General Social Surveys are a potentially important source of information on social contact. Ideally this would include a core measure that could be validated against data from Time Use Surveys, but there is also a strong case for using General Social Surveys as the vehicle for collecting a wider range of information on social contact.

## **7.2 Coverage and coherence**

### *7.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

113. Social connections are not broadly covered in General Social Surveys as of now. Only 8 countries (6 OECD) include questions in their core modules, while 3 OECD countries focus on social connections through rotating modules., Mainly thanks to EU-SILC and Israel, 29 (27 OECD) countries have addressed the topic on an ad-hoc basis. Chile, Costa Rica, Japan, Mexico and the United States do not collect any data on social connections.

- Australia has several modules related to social connections as both core and rotating elements of its GSS. Modules 12 (Support from Others), 15 (Involvement in Social Activities), 16 (Contacts with Family/Friends), 17 (Network Advice and Opinions), 18 (Trust), 19 (Community Activities) and 20 (Voluntary Work) cover different many forms of social connections that have a direct or indirect impact on individuals’ well-being.
- Canada has relevant questions under Cycles 27 (Social Identity), 26 (Caregiving and Care Receiving) and 24 (Time Stress and Well-being).
- Colombia includes one question on volunteering activities in its ENUT survey.
- The European countries have asked several questions on social connections in the 2013 Well-being and the 2006 and 2015 Social Participation ad-modules of EU-SILC. As mentioned above, from 2019 an item on either generalized social trust or perceived social support may be included in the EU-SILC core survey – this is not yet reflected in the tables below.
- Israel has a module dedicated to social connections (Relations with Family and Friends) as part of the Social Survey. Further, the 2014 rotating module focused on Environment & Social Capital – this questionnaire was not yet online at the time of this Review, therefore specific questions from this module are not listed below.
- Korea includes a detailed module focusing on social participation in the General Social Survey, and asks a few other relevant questions in its Family module.
- The Netherlands covers questions on the topics of satisfaction with social life and frequency of social contact in its yearly Social Cohesion and Well-being survey.

- New Zealand collects information on social connections in the rotating module on Social Networks and Support as part of the 2014 iteration of the New Zealand GSS. A decision on what questions will continue in the core content will be made once the National Statistics Office has analysed performance of the questions. The relevant question on trust in other people is contained in the core of the NZGSS.
- Poland includes two questions on frequency of social contact in the Social Cohesion survey.

114. The Russian Federation is the only non-OECD country that has included questions on social connections in its national social survey, although these are constraint to assistance to and from children living separately from their parents, and thus not listed in the detailed questions below.

**Table 25. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions on social connections**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	<b>8 social surveys</b>	<b>3 social surveys</b>	<b>2 social surveys</b>
<b>Surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Colombia (ENUT)</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion survey)</li> <li>• Russian Federation (Comprehensive monitoring of living conditions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)</li> </ul>
<b>OECD countries</b>	6	3	27
<b>OECD partners</b>	2	0	2**
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b> Chile, Costa Rica, Japan, Mexico, United States			

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 7.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

115. The headline indicator for social connections, perceived quality of network support, can be found in only 3 OECD countries' social survey core modules. 2 OECD countries include it in a rotating module and 26 countries (all OECD) on an ad-hoc basis (through EU-SILC). Questions on this indicator are framed quite differently – for example, who counts as belonging to the support network varies and some countries ask for general crises, whereas others specify specific situations of need. The secondary indicators of the social connections dimension, time spent volunteering, frequency of social contact and

generalized social trust, are covered in a similar pattern as the headline indicator, with only few social surveys featuring items in their core. Questions on these indicators clearly address similar concepts, but question wording and scale are in need of standardization across countries.

**Table 26. Selected indicators on social connections and comparability across the OECD**

Social surveys having similar indicators to the OECD				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Perceived social network support</b>	<b>Australia</b> If you needed to, could you ask someone for any of these types of support in a time of crisis? (list provided) Do you have any family members (not living with you) that you feel you can confide in? Do you have any friends that you feel you can confide in? How many friends/family members can you confide in? Could you ask friends/ family members for small favours?	<b>Canada</b> How many relatives and friends do you have who you feel close to, that is, who you feel at ease with, can talk to about what is on your mind, or call on for help? There are plenty of people I could rely on when I have problems. <i>Yes/more or less/no/DK_R</i>	<b>EU-SILC</b> Do you have someone to discuss personal matters with? Whether you need it or not, do you have the possibility to ask for help (any kind of help: moral, material or financial) from any relatives, friends or neighbours? I am going to describe two situations where people might need help (ill in bed and need help at home/ financial difficulty and need to borrow some money to see you through the next few days). For each one, could you tell me if you would ask any of your neighbours/friends/family for help?	➤ 3 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 2 OECD countries in a rotating module ➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc module ➤ 2 partners in an ad-hoc module
	<b>Israel*</b> If you were in trouble, are there people whose help you could count on?	<b>New Zealand</b> Altogether, how many family members/ friends help and support you?		
	<b>Korea</b> How many persons can you seek for help from in the following situations : if you have the flu and need help around the house / if you need to borrow a large sum of money / if you feel just a bit down or depressed, and you want to talk about it? <i>Have (X) person(s)/none</i>			
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<b>Time spent volunteering</b>	<b>Australia</b> Over the last month, did you do any unpaid work for any of these types of organisations: <i>arts/heritage / business/professional union /</i>	<b>New Zealand</b> In the last four weeks, did you do any voluntary work for a	<b>EU-SILC</b> Over the last 12, months, did you participate in the in activities of political parties	➤ 3 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 1 partner

	<p><i>welfare/community / education and training / parenting, children and youth / emergency services / environment / animal welfare / international aid/development / health / law/justice/political /religious / sport and physical recreation / other recreation or interest / ethnic and ethnic-Australian groups / other / no?</i></p> <p>Over the last 12 months, how often did you work for (any voluntary organisation)?  <i>At least once a week / at least once a fortnight / at least once a month / several times a year / less regularly</i></p> <p>Over the last 12 months, how many voluntary organisations did you work for?</p> <p><b>Colombia (ENUT)</b>          On day (date), without being paid for that, did you carry out community or volunteer work?</p> <p><b>Israel*</b>          During the last twelve months, did you engage in volunteer activities?          *How many hours per month in total, did you engage in volunteer activities?</p> <p><b>Korea</b>          In the last year, did you participate in any voluntary service (list provided)?          If yes, how many times and how many hours, on average, did you spend each time?</p>	<p>group or organisation?          In the last four weeks, how often did you do voluntary work for a group or organisation?  <i>Every day/ around 3-6 times a week/around 1-2 times a week/around once a fortnight/at least once in the last four weeks/DK_R</i></p>	<p>or trade unions/professional associations/churches or other religious organisations/recreational groups or organisations/of charitable organisations/other groups or organisations?          The next question is about involvement in groups, clubs and organisations. These could be formally organised groups or just groups of people who get together to do an activity or talk about things. Please exclude just paying a subscription, giving money, and anything that was a requirement of your job.          In the last 12 months, have you been involved with any groups?</p>	<p>country in their core survey          ➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module          ➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc module          ➤ 2 partners in an ad-hoc module</p>
<p><b>Frequency of social contact</b></p>	<p><b>Australia</b>          In the last 3 months, have you seen family or friends (who do not live with you)?          How often have you have contact with family and friends?  <i>Everyday/ at least once a week/at least once a month/ at least once in three months/ no recent contact</i>          How often have you had telephone and mobile phone /</p>	<p><b>New Zealand</b>          How would you describe the amount of contact you have with that family member /friend (that helps and supports you/ live in the same</p>	<p><b>EU-SILC</b>          How often do you get together with relatives/ friends?  <i>No friends - no relatives / daily / every week / several times a month / once a month / at least once a year / never</i></p>	<p>➤ 5 OECD countries in their core survey          ➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module          ➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc</p>

	<p>telephone / mobile phone contact with them (in the last 3 months)? <i>A few times a day / once a day / a few times a week / once a week / at least once a month / at least once a quarter</i></p>	<p>household/ neighbourhood /town city rural area/different region/overseas)?</p>		<p>module ➤ 2 partners in an ad-hoc module</p>
	<p><b>Israel*</b> Do you have friends you meet or talk to on the phone? (including Internet, email, sms, etc.) How often do you meet these friends, or talk to them on the phone? <i>Daily, or almost daily/ once or twice a week/ once or twice a month/ less than once a month</i></p>	<p><i>Too much contact/about the right amount of contact/not enough contact/DK/RF</i> Please think about that family member/friend that does not live with you.</p>		
	<p><b>Korea</b> How often do you contact your parents, either by phone or visitations? <i>Almost every day/1-2 times per week/1-2 times per month/ a few times per year/ rarely</i></p>	<p>How often in the last four weeks have you talked in person with them/ had video conversations such as skype with them/talked over the telephone or mobile phone with them/had written conversations, such as text messages, emails or postal mail with them?</p>		
	<p><b>Netherlands*</b> How often do you have contact with your friends/family/neighbours? <i>At least once a week / at least once a fortnight / at least once a month / several times a year / less regularly</i></p>	<p><i>Every day/at least once a week/at least once a fortnight/at least once in the last four weeks/not at all/DK/RF</i></p>		
	<p><b>New Zealand</b> Which family members/friends help and support you? <i>My partner, spouse/ my parents/ my brothers and, or sisters/my children/my uncles, aunts and, or cousins/my in-laws/any other family member – please state/no family who could provide me with help or support/I don't like to ask family members for help or support/DK/RF/friends</i> Where does that person live? <i>The same household/ neighbourhood as me/the same town, city, rural area as me/a different region in New Zealand to me/ overseas/DK/RF</i> Imagine you are away and needed help with things like collecting mail, looking after</p>			

	<p>pets, or checking your home. Who would you first ask to help you? / Suppose you needed NZD2 000 in an emergency. Who would you first ask to lend you the full NZD2 000 /(list of different scenarios)?  <i>A family member I do not live with / a friend I do not live with / a neighbour / a professional (e.g. dog walker) / an organisation (e.g. security company) / other / there is no one I could ask for help / I would not ask anyone for help</i>                  How easy or hard would it be to ask that person for help?  <i>Very easy / easy / sometimes easy, sometimes hard / hard / very hard / DK / R</i></p>			
<p><b>Trust in others</b></p>	<p><b>Australia</b>                  How strongly do you agree or disagree that most people can be trusted?  <i>Strongly agree / somewhat agree / neither agree nor disagree / somewhat disagree / strongly disagree</i></p>	<p><b>Canada</b>                  Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people?  <i>Most people can be trusted/ you cannot be too careful in dealing with people/ DK_R</i>                  From 0 to 5, how much do you trust each of the following groups of people: people in your family</p>	<p><b>EU-SILC</b>                  From 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely), how much do you trust in others?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 28 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module</li> <li>➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc module</li> <li>➤ 2 partners in an ad-hoc module</li> </ul>
<p><b>New Zealand</b>                  In general how much do you trust most people in New Zealand from 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely)?</p>				

		<p>/ people in your neighbourhood  / people you work with or go to school with / strangers/people that speak a different language than you?  If you lost a wallet or purse that contained two hundred dollars, how likely is it to be returned with the money in it, if it was found: by someone who lives close by/by a police officer/by a stranger?  <i>Very likely/ somewhat likely/ not at all likely/ DK_R</i>  There are many people I trust completely.  <i>Yes/more or less/no/DK_R</i></p>		
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\*Yearly implemented core modules

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 7.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

116. A few participating countries, namely Australia, Canada, Israel and New Zealand, collect interesting alternative indicators on social connections, including questions on loneliness, satisfaction with social contact, family life, sources of social support and participation in community activities other than voluntary organisations.

**Table 27. Selected alternative indicators on civic engagement and governance (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Questions (selected)</b>	<b>Country (GSS)</b>
<b>Loneliness</b>	I miss having people around. I often feel rejected. <i>Yes/more or less/no/DK_R</i>	Canada (General Social Survey)
	Some people say they feel isolated from the people around them while others say they don't. They might feel isolated even though they see family or friends every day. In the last four weeks, how often have you felt isolated from others? <i>None of the time / a little of the time / some of the time / most of the time / all of the time / DK / R</i> In the last four weeks, how much of the time have you felt lonely? <i>None of the time / a little of the time / some of the time / most of the time / all of the time / DK / R</i>	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)
<b>Satisfaction with social contact</b>	*Are you satisfied with your relations with your neighbours/ family members? <i>Very satisfied/ satisfied/ not so satisfied/not satisfied at all</i> *Do you ever feel lonely? <i>Frequently/ sometimes/seldom/never</i>	Israel (Social Survey)
	*On a scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with your social life?	Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)
	How satisfied are you with living on your own? <i>0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied)/ DK/RF</i> How would you describe the amount of quality time you spend with your partner/your children? <i>Too much quality time/about the right amount of quality time/not enough quality time/DK/RF</i> How well do you get along with everyone/the other person in your household? <i>0 (extremely badly) to 10 (extremely well)/ DK/RF</i> In the last seven days how many times did everyone in your household/the two of you eat a meal together? Do you have a spouse or partner who lives in another household? Where does your spouse or partner live? <i>The same neighbourhood as me/the same town, city, rural area as me/a different region in New Zealand to me/ overseas/DK/RF</i>	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)
	**Are you satisfied with your relationships with other people, your acquaintances and friends included?	Poland (Social Cohesion)
<b>Family/ household life</b>	How satisfied are you with living on your own? <i>0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied)/ DK/RF</i> How would you describe the amount of quality time you spend with your partner/your children? <i>Too much quality time/about the right amount of quality time/not enough quality time/DK/RF</i> How well do you get along with everyone/the other person in your household? <i>0 (extremely badly) to 10 (extremely well)/ DK/RF</i> In the last seven days how many times did everyone in your household/the two of you eat a meal together?	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)

	<p>Do you have a spouse or partner who lives in another household? Where does your spouse or partner live? <i>The same neighbourhood as me/the same town, city, rural area as me/a different region in New Zealand to me/overseas/DK/RF</i></p>	
<b>Source of social support</b>	<p>Who would you ask for support in a crisis? <i>Friend/neighbour/family member/work colleague/community, charity or religious organizations/local council or other government services/health, legal or financial professional/other</i></p>	Australia (General Social Survey)
	<p>*Who would you turn to first for support if you need advice on important personal or family matters/ if you are ill (not for medical treatment)/ if you feel a bit depressed and need to talk to someone/ for financial support (other than a bank loan) if you urgently need ILS5 000 for something important? <i>My spouse / my parents / my children / another family member / a friend / a professional / another person / no one</i></p>	Israel (Social Survey)
<b>Informal social and community activities (non-voluntary basis)</b>	<p>In the past 3 months, have you participated in any of these activities? <i>Visited or was visited by friends / went out with or met group of friends - outdoor activities / went out with or met group of friends - indoor activities / spent time in Internet social activity / other informal social activities / no informal social activities</i></p> <p>Over the last 6 months, have you attended any events that bring people together such as fetes, shows, festivals or other community events?</p> <p>In the last 12 months, have you been actively involved in any of these social groups or taken part in an activity they organised? <i>Sport or physical recreation group / arts or heritage group / religious or spiritual group or organisation / craft or practical hobby group / adult education, other recreation or special interest group / ethnic / multicultural club / social clubs providing restaurants or bars / other social groups (please specify) / no active involvement in social groups</i></p> <p>What are the reasons you were not actively involved in any social group in the last 12 months? <i>Financial reasons/ no groups in local area/ no childcare available/ not interested/ not convenient/ no time/ discrimination because of ethnic or cultural background/ health reasons/ other/ n.a.</i></p>	Australia (General Social Survey)
	<p>In the last year, did you participate in any community activities? If yes, what kind of community did you participate in: <i>social meetings/religious organization/ hobby, sports &amp; leisure/ civil society organization/academic association/common interest group/political group/local community meeting/other?</i></p>	Korea (Social Survey)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Answering scale was not provided to the authors in English.

Note: Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 7.3 The statistical agenda ahead

117. Social connections, both in terms of headline and secondary indicators, are currently not well covered in General Social Surveys, with only few countries focusing on these in their core modules. The number of countries increases when rotating and ad-hoc modules are considered, but even with these modules included, there is still a lack of consistency both in topics measured and how questions are worded. While time use surveys are potentially the best vehicle for detailed measures of social contact time, such surveys are expensive and are typically only run every 5 to 10 years. Thus, even in countries with good time use data, General Social Surveys are crucial as a potential data source for timely statistics on social contact. For General Social Surveys to fill this role effectively, however, the exact focus and wording of the survey items will need to be harmonised.

118. The existing *How is Life?* indicator (social network support) provides a good starting point for the measurement of social contact in household surveys. A key area for development here will be to identify a preferred question wording. Currently two types of question are used to collect this information in General Social Surveys. Australia and Israel frame the question in terms of whether the respondent could access help if they needed it, while Canada, Korea, and New Zealand ask about the number of people that the respondent could call on for help. It is beyond the scope of this review to take a view as to which approach is preferable, but work to shed light on this issue would be valuable.

119. A second area for further work is to develop an indicator of social contact time for use in General Social Surveys. Currently Australia, New Zealand, and the EU-SILC well-being module all ask questions on how often the respondent sees friends and/or family. Significant further work is needed, however, to refine the scope of the question. In particular, should the question cover both family and friends, or just friends and what time period should be covered (the past week, month, or year)? While in EU-SILC friends and family are addressed separately, this is not the case in other surveys. Work is also needed to cross-validate responses from surveys of this sort with the analysis of results from time use surveys. Time use surveys also offer the potential to investigate the most appropriate question scope through the joint analysis of data on whom the respondent was with and the respondent's experienced well-being during various activities (Krueger et al, 2009).

120. Another area for development is the inclusion in General Social Surveys of questions on satisfaction with levels of social contact. Israel, Poland, and the Netherlands already have such questions, and there is international guidance available on question design (OECD, 2013c).

121. Generalised trust is also an important measure for inclusion in General Social Surveys, both as an outcome in its own right and as the best available measure of social cohesion and social capital. The OECD is currently preparing guidelines on the measurement of trust that will provide detailed information on best practice in measuring trust in household surveys and which will include proposed questions.

## 8. QUALITY OF LIFE: WORK-LIFE BALANCE

### 8.1 Concept

#### 8.1.1 Why is work-life balance important for well-being?

122. How people spend their time is an important driver of their overall well-being, and most workers spent a larger proportion of their waking hours at work than at any other place. Achieving the right balance between work and personal life impacts people's health and happiness, but also their relationships with family, friends and the wider community. Work-life balance is not only important for the well-being of an individual but also for that of the whole family. In particular children's and other dependents' well-being is strongly affected by the capacity of the providers to both work and nurture them.

#### 8.1.2 Measuring work-life balance

123. In general, measuring work-life balance is a challenging task and cross-country comparisons on work-life balance should be interpreted in light of both individual preferences and cultural, social and family contexts. For instance, two persons working the same number of hours may experience very different levels of well-being depending on how much they enjoy their job, whether or not they have children to raise and whether their work schedule can be tailored with that of their partner. Further, many available measures do not consider the quality of the time spent outside work, and thus on people's personal enjoyment or perceived time stress.

124. Hence, an ideal set of indicators for work-life balance would include indicators that measure the occurrence of objective conflicts between daily activities, people's personal enjoyment of these activities, and their perceived time stress.

##### 8.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

**Table 28. OECD well-being indicators: Work-life balance**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees working very long hours</li> <li>• Time devoted to leisure and personal care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commuting time</li> <li>• Satisfaction with allocation of time</li> <li>• Employment rate of mothers with children of compulsory school age</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

125. For the time being, *How's Life?* considers two headline and three secondary indicators for measuring work-life balance. The two headline indicators provide both an indirect and a direct measure of the time available for non-work activities. First, the prevalence of **long working hours** is captured by the proportion of employees who usually work for pay for 50 hours per week or more. The data exclude self-employed workers who may deliberately choose to work long hours. The hours threshold has been set at 50 hours because, when also considering the amount of time devoted to commuting, unpaid work and satisfying basic needs, workers working more than 50 hours per week are likely to be left with very few hours for other activities. Data for this indicator come from national LFSs and are broadly comparable across countries. Second, *How's Life?* draws on various national Time Use Surveys for information on the **time** (full-time employed) **people devote to leisure and personal care** in a typical day. Activities considered under the definition of leisure and personal care include sleep, eating, hygiene, exercise, time spent with friends and family, and non-work-related travel.

126. In terms of secondary indicators, *How's Life?* lists **commuting time** (referring to the number of minutes spent commuting on a typical day by all workers), **satisfaction with the allocation of time** (drawn from the question “Could you tell me if you think you spend too much, too little or just about the right amount of time” in the four areas of work, family, other social contacts, and hobbies as measured in the European Quality of Life Survey for the European countries), as well as the **employment rate of mothers with children of compulsory school age** which serves as proxy for the existence of flexible work arrangements.

#### *8.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring work-life balance*

127. In general, there is relatively little information on work-life balance in most Labour Force Surveys. While hours worked is a potential core measure that could link General Social Surveys to the available information in Labour Force Surveys, issues relating to time use and pressure will require links to Time Use Surveys as well. While there is some scope for General Social Surveys to collect additional information on aspects of work-life balance, the core focus should be identifying a core measure that can link to detailed time use data.

## **8.2 Coverage and coherence**

### *8.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

128. Work-life balance is covered in General Social Surveys: 32 OECD countries and 5 partner countries include questions related to this dimension in their core survey, and one OECD country (Canada) covers work-life balance in a rotating module.

- In Australia, there are questions regarding commuting time (Module 7 – Transport to Work), time allocation between work and family/community commitments and number of hours worked (Modules 6.2 and 6.6 – Work and family/community commitments).
- In Canada Cycle 24 of the General Social Survey included questions on commuting to work, labour, society and community, and unpaid work.
- In Europe, there is no ad-hoc module on work-life balance per se but in the 2013 Well-being module of EU-SILC asked respondents to report their levels of satisfaction regarding commuting time and time use. The 2009 Material Deprivation module recorded information on attendance of cultural events. In the EU-SILC core module, Eurostat collects data on hours worked per week.
- In Israel data on commuting time and working long hours is collected as part of the core questionnaire.
- In Japan measuring measure of work-life balance is included in the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions, focusing on number of days worked per week.
- In Korea, the Social Survey includes a few items on satisfaction with working hours, leisure time and awareness of work policies to promote work-life balance.
- In the Netherlands the core of its Social Cohesion and Well-being survey asks about satisfaction with free time and weekly working hours.
- In New Zealand the General Social Survey does not have a dedicated work-life balance section in its survey, but does collect data on hours worked per week.

- In the United States the core ACS gathers information on working hours and commuting time.

129. The General Social Surveys for the Russian Federation, Costa Rica and Colombia all include questions on work-life balance in their core social surveys. While Costa Rica and Colombia stick to the standard collection of working hours and commuting time (only commuting time for Colombia), the Russian Federation collects indicators on leisure time activities.

**Table 29. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions on work-life balance**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	12 social surveys	1 social survey	1 social survey
<b>Surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV* and ENUT)</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)*</li> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Japan (Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions)*</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)</li> <li>• United States (American Community Survey)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)</li> </ul>
<b>OECD countries</b>	32	1	26
<b>OECD partners</b>	5**	0	2
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		Chile, Mexico	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 8.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

130. One OECD headline indicator – long working hours – is covered by the majority of countries. 34 countries cover working hours in their core social survey, and 1 country in a rotating module. Further, the questions for this indicator are asked in a relatively coherent fashion across countries. Time allocated to leisure and care, typically the focus of Time Use Surveys, is not currently collected in any country's social survey and evidence suggests that this type of information is better gathered through more detailed and focused instruments.

131. The secondary indicators on commuting time and satisfaction with time allocation are only collected by a few countries (5 and 3 respectively) in their core surveys. However, once the 2013 EU-SILC ad-hoc survey module on Well-being is taken into consideration, data on satisfaction with commuting time and time allocation is available for the 26 European OECD countries and Romania and Lithuania. For commuting time, EU-SILC and Israel collect data on satisfaction with the commute, whereas Australia, the Russian Federation, Colombia and the US focus on the actual length of the commute in minutes. Questions on satisfaction with time use are phrased quite differently across countries, focusing on time spend at work, time available for leisure, and balance between work and home.

**Table 30. Selected indicators on work-life balance and comparability across the OECD**

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Employees working very long hours</b>	<b>Australia</b> How many hours do you usually work each week in (all your jobs / that job / that business)?	<b>Canada</b> How many hours a week (do/did) you usually work at your job?		➤ 31 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module ➤ 3 partners in their core survey
	<b>Costa Rica (ENAH0)*</b> How many hours does (name) normally work per week? How many hours more than usual has (name) worked in the last week? How many hours less than usual has (name) worked in the last week? How many hours has (name) worked in the last week?			
	<b>European countries (EU-SILC)*</b> How many hours do you usually worked per week in your main job/second/third job?			
	<b>Israel*</b> Do you usually work 35 hours a week or more?			
	<b>Japan*</b> Please fill in the number of days and hours worked during the one week of Monday May 20th to Sunday May 26th.			
	<b>Netherlands*</b> How many hours do you usually work per week?			
	<b>New Zealand</b> Including overtime, how many hours a week do you usually work in (your job / job number 1... 10)?			

	<p><b>Russian Federation**</b> Duration of working week (hours) on the main work, including overtime Night and holidays work</p>			
	<p><b>United States*</b> During the past 12 months, in the weeks worked, how many hours did this person usually work each week?</p>			
<b>Time devoted to leisure and personal care</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<b>Commuting time</b>	<p><b>Australia</b> Travel time to work (each day) <i>Not applicable/10 minutes or less/ 11 - 29 minutes/ 30 minutes to less than 1 hour/ 1 hour or more/5. Variable workplace/ Work at home</i> Days usually travel to work each week <i>Monday-Sunday</i></p>	<p><b>Canada</b> Last week, how often did you experience traffic congestion during your commute to (school/work)? <i>Everyday /three or four days/one or two days/never/RF/DK</i> Overall, how satisfied are you with the amount of time it took you to get to work/ school last week? <i>Very dissatisfied / dissatisfied / satisfied / very satisfied with the time it took</i></p>	<p><b>EU-SILC</b> From 0 to 10, how are you satisfied with your commuting time?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 3 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module</li> <li>➤ 26 OECD country in an ad-hoc module</li> <li>➤ 2 partners in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 2 partners in an ad-hoc module</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> How much time do you spend in your commute to your workplace (include waiting time for the means of transportation)?</p>			
	<p><b>Colombia (ENUT)</b> In total, how much time did you spend on (date) on your commute to your workplace/your second workplace?</p>			
	<p><b>Israel*</b> How long does it usually take you to get to work? <i>Less than 15 minutes/ 15-29 minutes/ 30-44 minutes/ 45-59 minutes/ 60-89 minutes/ 90 minutes or more/ Works at home</i> Are you bothered by the length of time it takes you to get to work? <i>Greatly bothered / bothered / not very bothered / not bothered at all</i></p>			
	<p><b>Russian Federation**</b> Time taken to get to and from workplace</p>			
	<p><b>United States*</b> How many minutes did it</p>			

	usually take this person to get from home to work last week?			
<b>Satisfaction with allocation of time</b>	<b>Korea</b> Are you satisfied with your working hours? <i>Very satisfied / moderately satisfied / neither satisfied nor dissatisfied / moderately dissatisfied / very dissatisfied / DK</i>	<b>Canada</b> How satisfied (are/were) you with the current balance between your job and home life? ( <i>Very satisfied/ satisfied/ neither satisfied nor dissatisfied/ very dissatisfied/ RF/DK</i> )	<b>EU-SILC</b> From 0 to 10, how are you satisfied with time use?	➤ 2 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module ➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc module ➤ 2 partners in an ad-hoc module
	<b>Netherlands*</b> On a scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with the quantity of leisure you have?			
<b>Employment rate of mothers with children of compulsory school age</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Detailed question wording has not been provided to the authors in English.

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 8.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

132. Some of the surveys covered in this review provide information on the availability of flexible work policies, teleworking agreements, time stress, as well as participation in specific leisure time activities. These questions could provide the basis for other indicators that would significantly improve enhance information on work-life balance.

Table 31. Selected alternative indicators on work-life balance (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country (GSS)
<b>Flexible work place policies</b>	Does your (business/employer) have conditions such as these that allow you to meet your family or community commitments? More than one response is allowed. <i>Unpaid leave / carer's leave / parental/maternity/paternity leave / flex leave / annual holiday or recreational leave / Long Service Leave / sick leave / flexible working hours / permanent part-time / shift work / rostered day off / working from home / informal arrangement with employer / other / no / DK</i> Are you always, sometimes or never able to use these conditions (to meet family or community commitments)? <i>Always / sometimes / never</i>	Australia (General Social Survey)
	Excluding overtime, (do/did) you usually work any of your scheduled hours at home? How many paid hours per week (do/did) you usually work at home? Do you have a flexible schedule that allows you to choose the time you begin or end your work day?	Canada (General Social Survey)
	Are you aware of the following systems which help you maintain a balance between work and family life: maternity leave/paternity leave/childcare leave/working hours reduction in childcare period/workplace childcare support/support for worker's family care/flexible working arrangements? <i>Know/DK</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
	<b>Time stress</b>	
In the past 12 months, how often has it been difficult to concentrate or fulfil your work responsibilities because of your family responsibilities? In the past 12 months, how often has it been difficult to fulfil family responsibilities because of the amount of time you spent on your job? How often do you feel that you have enough quality time with family and friends? <i>All of the time/most of the time/sometimes/never/DK, RF</i> How often do you feel rushed or pressed for time? Is it always, often, sometimes, rarely or never? <i>Always/ often/ sometimes/ rarely/ never</i>	Australia (General Social Survey)	
Do you worry that you don't spend enough time with your family or friends? In the past 12 months how often has it been difficult to fulfil your family responsibilities because of the amount of time you spent on your job (please include responsibilities concerning your spouse and child(ren) if it applies, as well as your own parents, siblings and other related persons). Was it...? <i>All of the time/most of the time/sometimes/never/not applicable/RF/DK</i> Do you consider yourself a workaholic? When you need more time, do you tend to cut back on your sleep? At the end of the day, do you often feel that you have not accomplished what you had set out to do? Do you feel that you're constantly under stress trying to accomplish more than you can handle? Do you feel trapped in a daily routine? Do you feel that you just don't have time for fun anymore? Do you often feel under stress when you don't have enough time?	Canada (General Social Survey)	
*During the past 12 months, was it ever hard for you to function in your family due to work commitments? <i>Often/ Sometimes/ Seldom/ Never</i>	Israel (Social Survey)	
Which do you take priority on, work or family life? <i>Strongly take priority on work/ slightly take priority on work/same on</i>	Korea (Social Survey)	

	<i>both/slightly take priority on family life/strongly take priority on family life</i>	
<b>Leisure time activities</b>	In the last 12 months, that is, since this time in last year, have you visited or attended any of the following: public library, museum or art gallery, botanic garden, zoo or aquarium. movie theatre, concert, theatre, did not visit any of these? In the last 12 months, have you attended a sporting event as a spectator (including motor sports and horse racing)?	Australia (General Social Survey)
	Thinking about the last twelve months, how many times did you go to the cinema/to live performances/visit historical monuments, museums. art galleries or historical sites/attend a live sporting event? <i>No visits/one to three times/four to six times/seven to twelve times/more than twelve times</i>	European countries (EU-SILC)
	Did you attend any of the following events or venues in the last 12 months: music concert/play musical/dance performance/movie/museum/art gallery/spectating sports? If yes, how many times did you attend? Are you satisfied with your usual leisure activities? <i>Very satisfied/ moderately satisfied/neither satisfied nor dissatisfied/ moderately dissatisfied/ very dissatisfied</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
	**Tourist and excursion trips in last 12 months **Visiting cultural events **Outdoor activities	Russian Federation (Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Exact question wording was not provided to the authors in English.

Notes: Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 8.3 The statistical agenda ahead

133. Given the large amount of countries collecting coherent information on the headline indicator of hours worked in a coherent fashion, the potential for drawing information for *How's Life?* on this from General Social Surveys is large and should be a key priority.

134. The secondary indicators of commuting time and satisfaction with time allocation are not yet collected by many countries in their core modules, and still need to be standardised. A key priority should be investigating whether it is possible to develop a set of questions on time stress that can serve to link General Social Surveys with more detailed information in diary-based Time Use Surveys. The aim here would be to identify one or more survey questions on time stress that could be validated against detailed time use information from Time Use Surveys. These questions would then be included both in the survey component of Time Use Surveys and also in General Social Surveys.

135. Some interesting alternative measures are being collected, for example on the existence of flexible work policies to give information on drivers of work life balance, time stress or actual participation in leisure time activities as an outcome indicator. The *OECD guidelines on measuring job quality* due to be released in 2016 will provide more detailed information on best practice in collecting information on several important aspects of work/life balance, and will be an important resource for further development in this area.

## 9. QUALITY OF LIFE: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

### 9.1 Concept

#### 9.1.1 Why does civic engagement and governance matter for well-being?

136. Civic engagement refers to the activities people use to express their political voice and contribute actively to the functioning of society. Apart from the intrinsic value of these activities, civic engagement may increase people's sense of personal effectiveness and control over their lives, and allows individuals to develop a sense of belonging to their community, trust in others and a feeling of social inclusion.

137. Governance on the other hand relates to the institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. The quality of these institutions strongly conditions people's quality of life, by setting regulations, defining and implementing public policies and establishing the rule of law. Good, effective public governance also deepens confidence in government and public administration, and thus increases people's well-being. Good governance may hence be seen as a mutually supportive relationship between governments, on one side, and citizens, on the other.

#### 9.1.2 Measuring civic engagement and governance

138. Ideal indicators of civic engagement would measure whether citizens are involved in a range of important civic and political activities that enable them to effectively shape the society where they live. Similarly, indicators of the quality of governance should measure whether public policy is effective and transparent in achieving its stated goals, and whether individuals trust the government and the institutions of the country where they live.

139. In practice, measuring civic engagement and governance is a considerable challenge. First, the quality of governance encompasses a large number of factors, including the efficiency and the transparency of the various institutions, their range of action, and their openness and accessibility to all citizens. Second, people can engage in society in various ways, e.g. by volunteering or participating in other types of associations that benefit society at large. Common expressions of civic engagement include voting, signing petitions and using social networks to share political ideas and values. Finally, another challenge for measuring civic engagement involves distinguishing between the processes that allow freedom of action and whether people actually avail themselves of these opportunities.

140. The indicators of governance and civic engagement used by the OECD meet this ideal set of principles only to a limited extent. Despite the multitude of existing indicators of governance, these lack a recognised statistical standard and are affected by low coverage and over-reliance on information from institutional sources and experts. Moreover, while civic engagement indicators are potentially available for many dimensions of participation, they very often rely either on non-harmonised or non-official surveys.

##### 9.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

**Table 32. OECD well-being indicators: civic engagement and governance**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voter turnout</li> <li>• Consultation on rule making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-reported participation in political activities</li> <li>• Confidence in national government, judicial system and media</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

141. Taking the above limitations into account, the OECD has chosen to focus on one headline indicator and two secondary indicators in *How's Life?*. The first headline indicator, covering civic engagement, is **voter turn-out** as proxy for political participation. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) compiles this information. A related secondary indicator for civic engagement looks at **self-reported participation in other political activities**, since citizens can express their political voices in ways other than voting, such as signing a petition, joining a political organisation or participating in a political rally or demonstration. Data for this indicator is limited to European countries and based on Round Four (2008) of the European Social Survey.

142. A measure of consultation in rule making is the second headline indicator used in *How's Life?*, and focuses on issues related to the quality of governance. This measure is a composite index compiled by the OECD in conjunction with member states, and does not draw on survey data. Instead, it is based on country responses to the OECD's survey of regulatory management systems, and measures the extent to which there is open consultation on rule-making in a country.

143. Quality of governance is also captured by the secondary indicator, people's self-reported **confidence in various institutions** (national government, the judicial system and the media). For this indicator, the OECD relies on Gallup World Poll data. However, as already mentioned in section 6 on Social Connections, the OECD is currently developing guidelines on the measurement of trust, including trust in institutions. These guidelines are projected to be released in early 2017 and aims to support national statistical offices that are interested in measuring trust.

#### *9.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring civic engagement and governance*

144. There is currently little information from official sources on civic engagement and governance that a General Social Survey could link to. For this reason General Social Surveys should be considered not only as a vehicle for a single core measure of civic engagement or governance, but also as a potential source of more detailed information. In particular, information on individual attitudes to institutions, beliefs, and civic behaviour can potentially be captured.

## **9.2 Coverage and coherence**

### *9.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

145. Only 6 countries (5 OECD) include measures of civic engagement and governance in the core module of their General Social Surveys, and 1 country in a rotating module. 27 OECD countries, thanks to EU-SILC and Israel, as well as Romania and Lithuania, cover the topic in an ad-hoc fashion. Six countries do not collect any information on civic activities and governance through their social surveys.

- In Australia the core module of the GSS includes questions on trust in institutions and participation in other types of political activities, referred to as "civic activities" in the survey language.
- In Canada, the 2013 GSS module on Giving, Volunteering and Participating (Cycle 27) contains a few questions on membership in political organizations. This topic, together with items on trust in institutions, is also covered in the 2008 Social Networks (Cycle 22) and the 2003 Social Engagement (Cycle 17) GSS.
- In Chile the Casen section "Residentes" includes one question on group membership.

- In Europe, a few questions on this dimension are included in two EU-SILC ad-hoc modules, the 2006 Social Participation module and the 2013 Well-being module. The items focus on political, informal and church-related organization membership and trust in institutions.
- In Israel the Social Survey does not address issues on civic engagement and governance in its core module but a relevant ad-hoc module (Welfare and Satisfaction with the Government Services) was conducted in 2007. A new ad-hoc module titled “Civic Involvement” was implemented in 2015, but the questions were not yet available online at the time of this Review.
- In the Netherlands information on voting behaviour, including the party the respondents voted for, as well as on participation in demonstrations is collected in their Social Cohesion and Well-being survey.
- In New Zealand the GSS includes several submitted on for this dimension, including t questions related to trust in a range of institutions. Other questions address social trust issues, “Cultural Identity”, “Discrimination” and “Acceptance of diversity”. An additional ad-hoc module on “Civic and cultural participation” is planned for 2016.
- In Poland the Social Cohesion survey includes questions on voting behaviour in local and European elections.

146. Costa Rica has included a set of questions that address civic engagement and governance, namely on participation in political organizations.

**Table 33. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions on civic engagement and governance**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	6 social surveys	1 social surveys	2 social surveys
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Chile (Casen)</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)*</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)</li> </ul>
OECD countries	5	1	27
OECD partners	1	0	2**
Countries not measuring dimension:		Colombia, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Russian Federation, United States	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 9.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

147. Overall, only a minority of surveys included in their review include questions on governance and civic engagement: The OECD headline indicator of voter turnout is only considered by 2 OECD countries in their core surveys. Information on the secondary indicators, participation in political activities and trust in institutions, is also not collected regularly: While 28 (26 OECD) countries include relevant questions on an ad-hoc basis, only 4 OECD countries cover political activities and only 2 OECD countries cover trust in institutions in their core surveys. However, 1 country collects data on trust in institutions in a rotating module, and 28 (26 OECD) do so through ad-hoc modules.

**Table 34. Selected indicators on civic engagement and governance and comparability across the OECD**

Social surveys having similar indicators to the OECD				
Core modules		Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Voter turnout</b>	<b>Netherlands*</b> Did you participate in the last election?			➤ 2 OECD countries in their core survey
	<b>Poland</b> Did you participate in the last elections to the European Parliament? Do you usually participate in the elections to local authorities?			
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<b>Self-reported participation in political activities</b>	<b>Australia</b> In the last 12 months have you: <i>Participated in a community consultation or attended a public or council meeting? / written to the (territory government / council), or contacted a (territory government member / local councillor)? / contacted a member of parliament? / signed a petition? / attended a protest march, meeting or rally? / written a letter to the editor of a newspaper? / participated in a political campaign? / deliberately bought or boycotted products for environmental, ethical or political reasons? / engaged in none of these in last 12 months</i> In the last 12 months, have you been actively involved in any of these community support groups or taken part in an activity they organised?	<b>Canada</b> In the past 12 months, were you a member or participant in: <i>A political party or group / a professional association/ a union?</i>	<b>EU-SILC</b> In the last 12 months, have you been involved with any groups? Which of the categories on this card best describe the groups you have taken part in? <i>Hobbies/social clubs/ sports/exercise groups, including taking part, coaching or going to watch/ local community or neighbourhood groups/ environmental groups/ political groups/ trade union groups/</i>	➤ 4 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc module ➤ 2 partners in an ad-hoc module

	<p><i>Trade union, professional / technical association/ political party/ civic group or organization/ environmental or animal welfare group/ human and civil rights groups/ body corporate or tenants' association/ consumer organization/ other civic or political organization/ no active involvement in civil or government groups in last 12 months</i></p> <p><b>Chile</b> Do you at the moment participate in any organization or organized group? <i>Neighbourhood organization/ sport clubs/ religious organization/ artistic organization/ cultural identity associations/ youth or student groups/women groups/elderly groups/volunteer groups/self-help health groups/ideological groups (political parties)/cooperative groups (union, trade association, professional association)/ do not participate in any organization or group</i></p> <p><b>Costa Rica</b> Are you affiliated with any of the following organizations: <i>Cooperative/labour union/solidary association/trade association/community association/other</i></p> <p><b>Netherlands*</b> Have you in the past five years: <i>participated in a protest group/ in a protest, march or demonstration/ in a signature campaign/ have done something else politically to address or influence on politicians or the government?</i></p>		<p><i>religious groups, including going to a place of worship or belonging to a religious based group/ charitable organisation or group/ professional associations/ other group</i></p>	
<p><b>Confidence in national government, judicial system, courts and media</b></p>	<p><b>Australia</b> How strongly do you agree or disagree) that the following can be trusted? Hospitals / police in your local area / police outside your local area <i>Strongly agree/somewhat</i></p>	<p><b>Canada</b> Now, a few questions about the level of confidence you have in various institutions.</p>	<p><b>EU-SILC</b> From 0 to 10, how much do you trust: <i>The political system / the legal system / the police?</i></p>	<p>➤ 2 OECD countries in their core survey</p> <p>➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating</p>

	<i>agree/ neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/strongly disagree</i>	Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'No confidence at all' and 5 means 'A great deal of confidence', how much confidence do you have in:		module
	<b>New Zealand</b> From 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all, and 10 is completely, how much do you trust: the police/ the education system/ the media / the courts / Parliament / the health system?	the police/ the justice system and courts/ the school system/ Federal Parliament/ the Canadian media?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc module</li> <li>➤ 2 partners country in an ad-hoc module</li> </ul>

\*Yearly implemented core modules

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 9.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

148. Only 3 countries collect alternative indicators related to civic engagement and governance – Australia has questions on perceptions of political efficacy, and together with Israel also features items on experience and satisfaction with specific institutions.

**Table 35. Selected alternative indicators on civic engagement and governance (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country (GSS)
<b>Political efficacy</b>	How often do you feel you are able to have a say within the general community, on issues that are important to you? <i>All of the time / most of the time / some of the time / a little of the time / none of the time</i>	Australia (General Social Survey)
<b>Experience/ satisfaction with specific institutions</b>	Do you personally know a member of State or Federal parliament, or local government that you would feel comfortable contacting for information or advice? Do you personally know someone in any of the following types of organisations that you would feel comfortable contacting for information or advice? <i>State or Territory government department / federal government department / local council / legal system / healthcare / trade union / political party / media / university/ religious / spiritual group / school related group / big business / small business</i>	Australia (General Social Survey)
	Questions below are asked for the courts, the Taxes Authority, the Ministry of Interior, the Welfare Offices, the Public Transportation Systems, Israel Railways, the Community Centre, the services given by local authorities to their citizens: In the last 12 months, did you use the services of the courts? Has the treatment of your issue been concluded? In general, are you satisfied with the manner in which your issue is being dealt with/was dealt with?	Israel (Social Survey)

	<p>Are you satisfied with the work hours of the court dealing with/dealt with your issue?          In general, are you satisfied with the attitude of the legal staff during treatment of your issue?  <i>Very satisfied / satisfied / not so satisfied / not satisfied at all</i></p> <p>Are/Were you bothered by the length of time necessary to deal with your issue?  <i>Bothered very much / bothered not so much / not bothered at all</i></p> <p>In your opinion, to what extent do the courts in Israel provide services in an egalitarian manner, i.e., without discrimination, to all groups of the population?  <i>To a very great extent / to a great extent / to a small extent / not at all</i></p> <p>In general, what is your opinion of the functioning of the courts in Israel?  <i>Very good / good / not so good / not good at all</i></p>	
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\*Yearly implemented core modules

### 9.3 The statistical agenda ahead

149. The civic engagement and governance dimension is not well covered across participating countries, with very few of them regularly collecting information on this in their social surveys. Similarly, very few countries collect potential alternative indicators to draw from in their social surveys. This partly reflects the nature of the civic engagement and governance domain. Some issues – such as voting behaviour – may be regarded as sensitive by respondents and national statistical offices may therefore be reluctant to include questions on these issues in household surveys. Other measures – such as consultation on rule-making – are simply not survey based.

150. However, despite these limitations, there is considerable scope for General Social Surveys to collect better information on aspects of civic engagement and governance. In particular, measures of political efficacy, such as that used by Australia, and measures of subjective satisfaction with governance would appear to be of significant potential value and their inclusion in General Social Surveys would allow the analysis of civic outcomes in the context of other well-being outcomes.

151. Beyond this, trust in institutions is an obvious and widely used measure. The Guidelines on the measurement of trust the OECD is currently developing will address trust and confidence in institutions and will recommend survey modules to National Statistical Offices interested in collecting information on this important topic. The Guidelines are projected to be published in early 2017.

## 10. QUALITY OF LIFE: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

### 10.1 Concept

#### 10.1.1 Why is environmental quality important for well-being?

152. The environment plays an important role in people's quality of life. Living in an environment that is free from dangerous pollutants, hazards and noise contributes to individual physical and mental health.

153. Besides affecting people's health, the environment also matters intrinsically as many people attach importance to the beauty and the healthiness of the place where they live. People also directly benefit from environmental assets and services, such as water, sanitation services, clear air, lands, forests, and access to green spaces, as they allow them to satisfy basic needs and to enjoy free time and the company of others.

#### 10.1.2 Measuring environmental quality

154. Measuring environmental quality is difficult because there are few comparable indicators that meet agreed standards. An ideal set of indicators would inform on a number of environmental media (soil, water, air), on people's access to environmental services, as well as on the impact of environmental hazards on human health.

##### 10.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

Table 36. OECD well-being indicators: environmental quality

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfaction with water quality</li> <li>• Annual exposure to fine particulate matter air pollution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfaction with access to green spaces</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

155. *How's Life?* focuses on two headline indicators: one based on people's subjective perceptions of the quality of their living environment and one objective metric. The first headline indicator measures **satisfaction with water quality** to capture, more broadly, people's subjective appreciation of their living environment. As this subjective indicator is not well covered by national statistics, data comes from the Gallup World Poll. The absence of comparable objective data on water quality is a significant gap, and the perception-based measure used instead may suffer from comparability problems (e.g. it is not clear whether the question refers to drinking water or all forms of water in the local area).

156. The objective indicator aims to measure air quality through the **average concentration of fine particulate matter (PM)** in residential areas of cities larger than 100 000 inhabitants. This particulate matter consists of small liquid and solid particles floating in the air, and include sulphate, nitrate, elemental carbon, organic carbon matter, sodium and ammonium ions in varying concentrations. The data shown are drawn from the OECD Regional Well-Being Database, and are calculated from satellite-based observations.

157. A secondary subjective indicator, **satisfaction with access to recreational or green spaces**, complements the analysis and provides information on environmental conditions. So far, this indicator is

based on data from the European Quality of Life Survey, which is limited to European countries and the EU-SILC 2013 well-being module.

#### *10.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring environmental quality*

158. General Social Surveys have the potential to play a useful role in bridging the gap between objective measures of environmental quality that are often collected at an aggregate level or for a specific geographic region, and the lived experience of individual respondents. This means focusing on a limited set of core measures that can serve to link individual experiences to aggregate environmental quality. Beyond this, in the absence of other survey-based data on individual perceptions and experiences of environmental quality, there may also be a case to be made for collecting more detailed information in General Social Surveys.

### **10.2 Coverage and coherence**

#### *10.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

159. In total, 30 OECD countries and 4 partner countries have adopted items related to the environmental dimension in their social survey questionnaires: all the European countries under EU-SILC guidelines, Korea, Colombia and Costa Rica have these questions in their core modules (with EU-SILC also featuring two relevant ad-hoc modules). Israel, Mexico and New Zealand have ad-hoc or rotating modules on environmental topics.

- In Europe the EU-SILC questionnaire has included questions on environmental quality in both the core module (Material Deprivation chapter) and in the 2009 Material Deprivation and 2013 Well-being ad-hoc modules.
- Israel included a rotating module called “Environment and Social capital” in 2014. In addition, some questions related to Chapter 3 “Positions regarding dwellings” in the Social Survey give useful insight into the surrounding environment.
- In Korea a number of questions related to environmental dimensions are included in the core questionnaire for the General Social Survey in its dedicated Environment module.
- In the Netherlands there is one question on experience of noises and smells in the immediate environment of respondents in their Social Cohesion and Well-being survey.
- In New Zealand environmental conditions are not covered in the core module of its New Zealand General Social Survey apart from a question regarding neighbourhood noise in the Safety and Security module. A new module on “Housing and Environmental Quality” is scheduled for 2018 – its precise questions are not available yet.
- In Mexico the first ad-hoc supplementary module will be related to the topic “Households and environment”, but as with New Zealand, the questions are not available as of this point. In the more specific indicator tables after Table 37, Mexico and New Zealand are thus not included.

160. The OECD partner country Colombia includes items on environmental conditions in the core modules of its ECV questionnaire, such as questions on the surrounding quality of the dwelling in terms of noise, odours or air pollution. Costa Rica includes a few questions about environmental behaviour of households in terms of garbage elimination and separation that are distantly related to the environmental quality dimension.

**Table 37. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions on environmental quality**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
<b>Numbers</b>	<b>5 social surveys</b>	<b>1 social survey</b>	<b>3 social surveys</b>
<b>Surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colombia (ECV)*</li> <li>Costa Rica (ENAHO)*</li> <li>European countries (EU-SILC)*</li> <li>Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Israel (Social Survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European countries (EU-SILC)</li> <li>Mexico (ENH)</li> <li>New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> </ul>
<b>OECD countries</b>	27	1	28
<b>OECD partners</b>	4**	0	2**
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Poland, Russian Federation, United States	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 10.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

161. The selected OECD headline indicators for environmental quality are not widely shared across participating countries: Objective air quality, measured as average concentration of particulate matters, cannot be collected through General Social Surveys by its very definition. Questions relating to satisfaction with water quality are posed in European countries, Korea and Israel, but the EU-SILC and Korean question refers to water in the local area, whereas the Israeli one clearly refers to drinking water.

162. Information on the secondary indicator, access to green spaces, is only collected by two OECD countries, Israel and Korea, in their core modules. However, EU-SILC countries have data available on this indicator through an ad-hoc module. The question itself is slightly differently framed across these three surveys.

**Table 38. Selected indicators on environmental quality and comparability across the OECD**

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Satisfaction with water quality</b>	<b>EU-SILC*</b> Do you have any of the following problems related to the place where you live? <i>Pollution/ grime/ or other environmental problems in the local area such as: smoke, dust, unpleasant smells or polluted water</i>			➤ 28 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 2 partners in their core survey

	<p><b>Israel*</b> Are you satisfied with the quality of drinking water in the faucet at home? <i>Very satisfied/ Satisfied/ Not so satisfied/ Not satisfied at all</i> What type of water do you usually drink at home? <i>Tap water/ Purified or filtered tap water/ Bottled water or water in containers</i></p> <p><b>Korea</b> How do you feel about your current surrounding environment: water? <i>Very good/ somewhat good/ average/ somewhat bad/ very bad</i></p>			
<b>Annual exposure to fine particulate matter air pollution</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<b>Access to green spaces</b>	<p><b>Israel*</b> Are you satisfied with the amount of parks, public gardens or greenery in the area in which you live? <i>Very satisfied / satisfied / not so satisfied / not satisfied at all</i></p> <p><b>Korea</b> How do you feel about your current surrounding environment: forest environment (ie parks, street trees)? <i>Very good/ somewhat good/ average/ somewhat bad/ very bad</i></p>		<p><b>EU-SILC</b> Generally speaking, on a scale from 0 (<i>not at all satisfied</i>) to 10 (<i>completely satisfied</i>), how satisfied are you with the recreational areas and green spaces in your local area?</p>	<p>➤ 2 OECD countries in their core survey</p> <p>➤ 26 OECD countries in an ad-hoc module</p> <p>➤ 2 partners as an ad-hoc module</p>

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 10.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

163. A few countries collect data on alternative indicators related to the environment that are potentially interesting for *How's Life?*. First, the European countries, Israel, Korea and Colombia collect subjective information on satisfaction with air quality. Secondly, these countries, in addition to the Netherlands, also assess satisfaction with the quality of the living environment for factors other than air and water, such as general satisfaction with the environment and with the cleanliness and noise level of the

area. Korea is the only country that also collects data on perceptions of changes in environmental quality over time.

**Table 39. Selected alternative indicators on environmental quality (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country (GSS)
<b>Subjective satisfaction with air quality</b>	*Which of the following issues affect your dwelling: Air pollution/ odours from outside?	Colombia (ECV)
	*Do you have any of the following problems related to the place where you live? <i>Pollution/ grime/ or other environmental problems in the local area such as: smoke, dust, unpleasant smells or polluted water</i>	European countries (EU-SILC)
	Does air pollution in your area of residence bother you: e.g., emissions from cars or from an industrial zone, sewage smells, and waste? <i>Bothers me very much/ bothers me/ doesn't bother me so much/ doesn't bother me at all</i>	Israel (Social Survey)
	How do you feel about your current surrounding environment: air? <i>Very good/ somewhat good/ average/ somewhat bad/ very bad</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
<b>Satisfaction with quality of living environment other than water or air quality</b>	*Which of the following issues affect your dwelling? <i>Noises from outside/ Presence of garbage in the streets/ Invasion of public space (streets and sidewalks)/ Presence of animals that causes discomfort</i>	Colombia (ECV)
	*Do you have any of the following problems related to the place where you live: pollution/ grime/ or other environmental problems in the local area such as: smoke, dust, unpleasant smells or polluted water, litter lying around in the neighbourhood, damaged public amenities (bus stops, lamp posts, pavements, etc.) in the neighbourhood? <i>Very frequently/ frequently/ sometimes/ rarely/ never</i> Generally speaking, on a scale from 0 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), how satisfied are you with your local living environment?	European countries (EU-SILC)
	Are you satisfied, in general, with the area in which you live? Are you satisfied with the cleanliness of the area in which you live? Are you satisfied with the recycling collection services in your area of residence? Including the variety of facilities and frequency of collection? <i>Very satisfied / satisfied / not so satisfied / not satisfied at all</i>	Israel (Social Survey)
	How do you feel about your current surrounding environment: soil (by garbage and waste)/noise? <i>Very good/ somewhat good/ average/ somewhat bad/ very bad</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
	*Do you experience the following in your area: aircraft noise, noise from trains, trams, metros, noise from cars, trucks, motorcycles or mopeds, noise from industry or business, sounds of neighbours, stench of traffic, smell of traffic, smell of industry or business, smell of agriculture, smell of open fire places? <i>Yes/sometimes/no</i>	Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)
<b>Perceptions of environmental quality over time</b>	How do you feel about the changes in your surrounding environment compared with 1 year ago: air/water/soil (by garbage and waste)/noise/forest environment (i.e. parks, street trees)? <i>Very good/ somewhat good/ average/ somewhat bad/ very bad</i>	Korea (Social Survey)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

Note: Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 10.3 The statistical agenda ahead

164. While the environmental dimension in general is covered in 29 OECD countries and 3 partner countries, the selected indicators – both headline and secondary – are not close to the ones used in the OECD well-being framework. Even when they are, such as is the case with access to green spaces, these questions are seldom included in regularly implemented core modules. A first priority would thus be to include questions on access to green spaces in the core (rather than ad-hoc) modules of the General Social Surveys featured in this Review.

165. Another priority is to move towards greater standardisation with respect to questions on water quality. As discussed earlier, these questions currently vary not only in the details of question wording, but also on whether the scope of the question is intended to cover drinking water specifically, or local water sources more generally.

166. A major improvement that could be made to the environmental content of General Social Surveys is to use the geo-coding of respondents to merge objective environmental data with General Social Survey datasets. This approach would involve using existing datasets of environmental indicators to generate measures of environmental quality for specific neighbourhoods or localities. The values for these environmental indicators would then be attached to respondents in the General Social Survey dataset depending on where they lived. Using geo-coding in this way would allow high-quality objective measures of environmental quality to be analysed alongside other General Social Survey variables, but would have no impact on respondent burden and relatively little additional cost. Privacy issues would not arise, as while geo-coding would be used to link the variables with individual unit records, once the data is merged the specific geo-coding is not needed for analysis. Air quality is one obvious candidate, but measures of access to green space and other environmental outcomes are also relatively straight-forward to construct and would add a lot of value to existing datasets.

## 11. QUALITY OF LIFE: PERSONAL SECURITY

### 11.1 Concept

#### 11.1.1 Why is personal security important for well-being?

167. Personal security encompasses both physical security and the ability to be free of threats to person or property. Significant personal harm resulting from assault or other types of victimisation has a direct and negative impact on well-being. This includes both an immediate psychological impact and longer term implications for the victims' physical and mental health. Other threats to personal security, including crimes against property (e.g. car theft, burglary in one's own home) and non-conventional crimes (e.g. consumer fraud, corruption) are also important to well-being. Both the risk of victimisation, and people's perceptions about their own safety (even when they are non-victims), decrease overall well-being by creating anxiety and worry or by restricting people's behaviour.

#### 11.1.2 Measuring personal security

168. A set of ideal indicators of personal security would inform about the various forms of threat and victimisation experienced by individuals, weighting these by the severity of the harm done. Equally important is detailed information on the victims, their background and the circumstances in which they have been attacked. Finally, indicators should provide information on how fear of victimisation and subjective insecurity affect people.

169. Generally speaking, official crime statistics are a poor proxy for the actual experience of individuals as they are sensitive to changes in legislation and the resourcing of law enforcement services. Moreover, official records of crime may not be comparable across countries due to differences in what is counted and recorded as crime. From a well-being perspective, it is therefore important to focus on the experience of individuals who have been victims or who feel unsafe. The gold standard for information of this type comes from victimisation surveys, and agreed international standards published by the UNODC and UNECE provide detailed guidance on collecting data of this sort. However, not all OECD countries have regular victimisation surveys, and in many countries that do have victimisation surveys these are not run on a regular basis. In the absence of a formal victimisation survey useful information can be obtained from more limited sets of questions incorporated in other types of household survey.

##### 11.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

**Table 40. OECD well-being indicators: personal security**

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death due to assault</li> <li>• Self-reported victimisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-reported feeling of safety/fear of crime</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

170. *How's Life?* considers two headline and one secondary indicator of personal security. First, homicide, as the most violent form of assault, is captured through a measure on **deaths due to assault**. This refers to all cases in which assault is registered as the cause of death in official death registers and data is available through the OECD Causes of Mortality Database. The second headline indicator, **self-reported victimisation**, refers to the percentage of people who declare having been the victim of assault or mugging in the preceding calendar year and is drawn from the Gallup World Poll. A secondary indicator

captures the **fear of crime and feeling of safety** for the general population. This indicator is also drawn from Gallup World Poll data and measures the percentage of people who declare feeling safe when walking alone at night in their neighbourhood.

#### *11.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring personal security*

171. Most OECD countries have a sophisticated system of justice statistics, heavily dependent on administrative data from law enforcement authorities and the judicial system, but also drawing on cause of death data from the health system. In a smaller proportion of countries there is also a victimisation survey collecting information on the experience of victimisation in the population. Given this existing body of data, the primary role for General Social Surveys is to collect one or more core measures of victimisation that can be used to connect with more detailed victimisation surveys.

## **11.2 Coverage and coherence**

### *11.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

172. Personal security is not covered in most General Social Surveys covered in this review: while 29 OECD countries and 4 partner countries collect information on personal security in their core survey (and an additional 26 countries run either rotating or ad-hoc modules), 6 countries, 5 of which are OECD members, do not collect any data at all.

- In Australia the GSS includes two relevant modules in its core survey – the “Victimisation” module focusing on personal experience of crime, as well as the “Social disorder” module which concentrates on safety in the local area of respondents.
- In Canada, the 2014 Cycle 28 of the GSS was dedicated to victimisation. This cycle explores criminal victimisation and spousal violence. In particular, victimisation cycles ask Canadians about reported and unreported victimisation, including: experiences of different types of crime, violence and abuse by current or past partners, use of services available to help victims of abuse or crime, fear of crime, crime prevention, social disorder and experiences of discrimination. Selected questions are presented below.
- In Europe personal security is not widely covered by Eurostat so far: The EU-SILC questionnaire features one question on crime in the neighbourhood in its core module (Material Deprivation Questionnaire – Household data) and an additional one on feelings of safety in the 2013 Well-being ad-hoc module.
- In Israel’s Social Survey there is a dedicated chapter on Victimisation (Chapter 11) complemented with a question on perceptions of feeling safe when asked about housing conditions in Chapter 3.
- In Korea the Social Survey includes a module on safety featuring several relevant questions about self-reported fear of crime and perceptions of public order.
- In the Netherlands the yearly Social Cohesion and Well-being survey asks one question regarding feelings of unsafety.
- In New-Zealand the GSS features a range of questions to assess personal security in its core module. An expanded ad-hoc module on crime and safety is under consideration for future implementation after 2018.

- In Poland the Social Cohesion Survey asks two questions about perceptions of safety in its core.

173. Colombia and Costa Rica also include questions on personal security in their social surveys: The Colombian ECV includes two relevant questions in its core, and Costa Rica implements a rotating victimisation module, which was last run in 2010 and 2014.

**Table 41. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions on personal security**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	7 social surveys	2 social surveys	1 social survey
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV)*</li> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Costa Rica (ENAHO)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)</li> </ul>
OECD countries	30	1	26
OECD partners	3**	1	2**
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		Chile, Japan, Mexico, Russian Federation, United States	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 11.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

174. The first OECD headline indicator of personal security, deaths due to assault, by definition cannot be gathered through General Social Surveys. Questions related to the second headline indicator, self-reported victimisation, are covered by 4 countries (3 OECD) in their core survey and 2 countries (1 OECD) in a rotating module. The absence of a question on this indicator in EU-SILC drastically reduces the coverage across members. Question wording varies significantly across countries, with some of them asking about experience of violence in general and others referring to specific crimes. Victimisation questions in General Social Surveys are thus in clear need of standardization.

175. The secondary indicator of personal security included in *How's Life?*, self-reported feelings of safety/ fear of crime, is available across a larger number of social surveys than the headline indicators: 33 countries (31 OECD) collect relevant although for the majority this is through the EU-SILC ad-hoc module on well-being and therefore currently not available regularly. Further, questions are broadly comparable, mostly concentrating on feeling safe enough to walk alone or stay at home alone at night and featuring very similar response scales.

Table 42. Selected indicators on personal security and comparability across the OECD

Social surveys with similar indicators as How's Life?				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Deaths due to assault</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	➤ n/a
<b>Self-reported victimisation</b>	<p><b>Australia</b> In the last 12 months, did anyone, including people you know, use physical force or violence against you? In the last 12 months, did anyone, including people you know, try to use or threaten to use physical force or violence against you? Were any of these threats made in person?</p>	<p><b>Canada</b> Were you attacked by anyone in the past 12 months? How many times did this happen during the past 12 months? Has anyone forced you or attempted to force you into any unwanted sexual activity, by threatening you, holding you down or hurting you in some way? Did anyone take or try to take something from you by force or threat of force?</p>		<p>➤ 3 OECD countries in their core survey</p> <p>➤ 1 partner in their core survey</p> <p>➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module</p> <p>➤ 1 partner in a rotating module</p>
	<p><b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> During the last 12 months, which of the following events have you or any member of your household been a victim of (list of incidences provided)?</p>	<p><b>Costa Rica</b> In the past 12 months, were you or any member of the household attacked by anyone for a theft or any other assault? <i>(if yes – with aggression/without aggression)</i></p>		
	<p><b>Israel</b> In the last 12 months, were you attacked physically; e.g., beaten or injured? During the past 12 months, were you sexually harassed? Sexual harassment can be verbal or behavioural, at all ages. In the last 12 months, was anything stolen from you without the use of force, or the threat of force (pickpocketing, etc.)?</p>			

	<p><b>New Zealand</b> I am now going to ask you a general question about crime. I will not be asking you for details of what might have happened to you. Crime includes damage to personal property, theft, assault, and threats. In the last 12 months, were any crimes committed against you?</p>			
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<p><b>Self-reported feeling of safety/fear of crime</b></p>	<p><b>Australia</b> How safe or unsafe do you feel walking alone in your local area after dark/at home by yourself during the day/at home by yourself after dark? <i>Very safe / safe / neither safe nor unsafe / unsafe / very unsafe / never home alone/walk alone during the day/after dark</i></p> <p><b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> How do you feel in the neighbourhood, village or parish where you live? <i>Very safe/fairly safe/a bit unsafe/very unsafe/DK</i></p> <p><b>Israel*</b> Do you feel safe walking alone at night in your neighbourhood? <i>Very safe/safe/ not so safe/not safe at all/I don't go out at all</i></p> <p><b>Korea</b> Is there any place in your neighbourhood where it is dangerous to walk alone at night? How safe do you feel our society is: crime? <i>Very safe/fairly safe/ neither safe nor unsafe/fairly unsafe/ very unsafe</i></p> <p><b>Netherlands*</b> On a scale of 1 (not safe) to 10 (completely safe), how safe do you feel?</p> <p><b>New Zealand</b> Thinking about crime, how safe or unsafe do you feel: Walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark/ at home by yourself at night/ waiting for or using public transport such as buses and trains at night/ using the</p>	<p><b>Canada</b> How safe do you feel from crime walking alone in your area after dark? <i>Very safe / reasonably safe / somewhat unsafe / very unsafe / do not walk alone</i></p> <p>When alone in your home in the evening or at night, do you feel...? <i>Very worried / somewhat worried / not at all worried about your safety from crime / never alone</i></p> <p>In general, how satisfied are you with your personal safety from crime? <i>Very satisfied / satisfied / neither satisfied nor dissatisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied / no opinion</i></p> <p><b>EU-SILC****</b> In general, how do you feel about walking alone at night in your neighbourhood? <i>Very safe/fairly safe/a bit unsafe/very unsafe/DK</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 29 OECD countries in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 3 partners in their core survey</li> <li>➤ 1 OECD country in a rotating module</li> </ul>

	internet for online transactions? <i>Very safe / safe / neither safe nor unsafe / unsafe / very unsafe / not applicable / DK / R</i>			
	<b>Poland**</b> How safe do you or would you feel while walking alone after dark in the surroundings of your home? How often do you fear someone might break into your dwelling or building?			

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Answering scale was not provided to the authors in English.

\*\*\* EU-SILC well-being module

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 11.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

176. Some countries (Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Israel, Korea, New Zealand) collect more detailed information on crime and personal security in their General Social Surveys – mostly through dedicated victimisation modules that cover topics such as social disorder in the neighbourhood, perception of crime trends, experience of violence against property, as well as intimate partner violence. Very few of these questions are, however, collected on a yearly basis as of now except for the problem with crime question in EU-SILC.

**Table 43. Selected alternative indicators on housing conditions (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country
<b>Social disorder</b>	Thinking about the last 12 months, have you considered any of the following to be a problem in your local area? <i>Noisy driving/dangerous driving/ people being insulted, pestered or intimidated in the street/ public drunkenness/ rowdy behaviour/ offensive language/ people hanging around in groups/ noisy neighbours/ people using or dealing drugs /graffiti/ intentional damage to property other than graffiti</i>	Australia (General Social Survey)
	Do you have any of the following problems related to the place where you live? <i>Crime/violence/ vandalism in the local area</i>	European countries (EU-SILC)*
	How well do you think Korean people adhere to social rules: maintaining order in public places/keep the street clean/walk order/observe safe driving/refrain from smoking in public places/keep quiet in public places? <i>Very well/well/average/not well/poorly</i>	Korea (Social Survey)
	Thinking about the last 12 months, have any of these things been a problem in your neighbourhood? You can choose as many as you want. <i>Vandalism / graffiti /burglary / break-ins /assaults/ harassment /people using or dealing drugs /people being drunk in a public place /dangerous driving /any other problems - please state /none of these / DK / R</i>	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)
<b>Crime trends</b>	Compared to other areas in Canada, do you think your neighbourhood has a higher amount of crime, about the same or a lower amount of crime? <i>Higher / about the same / lower</i>	Canada (General Social Survey)

	<p>During the last 5 years, do you think that crime in your neighbourhood has increased, decreased or remained about the same?  <i>Increased / decreased / about the same / just moved into the area</i></p>	
<b>Violence against property</b>	<p>Thinking of all the places you have lived in the last 12 months, during this time / In the last 12 months) did anyone break into your home, garage or shed?                  In the last 12 months, have you found any signs of an attempted break-in to your home, garage or shed?</p>	Australia (General Social Survey)
	<p>During the past 12 months, did anyone deliberately damage or destroy any property belonging to you or anyone in your household, such as a window or a fence?                  Did anyone illegally break into or attempt to break into your residence or any other building on your property?                  Was anything of yours stolen from your place of work, from school or from a public place, such as a restaurant?</p>	Canada (General Social Survey)
	<p>Over the past 12 months, were your car, or those of any member of your household, stolen / any belongings of your household stolen (list given) / have you, or any member of your household, been victims from a crime against property (vandalism)? <i>(if yes – with aggression/without aggression)</i></p>	Costa Rica (ENAHO)
	<p>*In the last 12 months, did you or a member of your household have a car stolen?                  *In the last 12 months, did anyone break into or steal something from a car belonging to you or a member of your household?                  *In the last 12 months, did anyone break into or steal anything from your dwelling? Including an attempted break-in into your dwelling or theft of your property which is outside the dwelling: in the yard, in you storage space, in the entrance to your building.</p>	Israel (Social Survey)
<b>Intimate partner violence</b>	<p>Is your spouse/partner try to limit your contact with family or friends/ put you down or calls you names to make you feel bad? /jealous and doesn't want you to talk to other men or women? / harms, or threatens to harm, someone close to you / demands to know who you are with and where you are at all times? / damages or destroys your possessions or property / prevents you from knowing about or having access to the family income, even if you ask / forces you to give (him/her/him or her) your money, possessions or property?                  During the past 5 years has your current (spouse/partner) threatened to hit you with (his/her/his or her) fist or anything else that could have hurt you / thrown anything at you that could have hurt you / pushed, grabbed or shoved you in a way that could have hurt you / slapped you/ hit you with something that could have hurt you / beaten you?                  In the past 5 years, has your current (spouse/partner) ever been physically or sexually violent towards anyone in the family / towards anyone outside of the family?</p>	Canada (General Social Survey)
	<p>Over the last 12 months, did any crime against persons happen in your household (domestic violence, death threats)?</p>	Costa Rica (ENAHO)

\*Yearly implemented core modules

Note: Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 11.3 The statistical agenda ahead

177. Personal security is not as broadly covered in social surveys across countries as some of the other dimensions of *How's Life?*. Notably, the headline indicator of self-reported victimisation is not yet available for a majority of OECD members (mainly because it is not included in EU-SILC) and is not standardised by those countries that have included it.

178. However, the secondary indicator – self-reported safety – is collected in 29 countries on a regular basis using similar question wording and response scales. There is thus huge potential for *How's Life?* to draw this information from General Social Surveys in addition to or as replacement of Gallop data.

179. Most OECD countries carry out stand-alone victimisation surveys in line with the UN manual on the topic (UNODC and UNECE 2010). While victimisation surveys provide detailed information on the prevalence, incidences, nature and scope of victimisation, this data cannot, in most cases, be connected to other well-being outcomes and are not substantially timely to monitor well-being. It would thus be desirable for a short standardised question set of victimisation questions to be developed for use in General Social Surveys that can be compared to data from the more detailed victimisation surveys. This approach is taken by Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Israel, Korea, New Zealand, that have detailed victimisation modules that collect information on specific topics related to crime in their General Social Surveys. However, further work is needed to calibrate measures of this sort against the data produced from victimisation surveys.

## 12. QUALITY OF LIFE: SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

### 12.1 Concept

#### 12.1.1 Why is subjective well-being important for well-being?

180. Although a person's mental states may not provide as a full description of their well-being, how a person experiences life is at least part of their overall well-being. Recently, the measurement of subjective well-being has taken a central role (from having been a niche academic interest) in work to better measure the progress of societies. Subjective well-being measures capture the notion that what matters to a good life is the impact of a specific set of circumstances on how people feel about their life, and rely on the view that people are the best judges of how their life is going.

#### 12.1.2 Measuring subjective well-being

181. Subjective well-being consists of people's evaluations, feelings and experiences of their lives. There are three distinct components of subjective well-being, each offering a different perspective. First, life evaluations focus on a person's overall assessment of their life as a whole, such as their life satisfaction. Second, affect measures capture information on moods, feelings and emotions, including experiences of both positive (enjoyment, well-rested) and negative (sadness, worry) states. Third, eudaimonic measures concern a person's sense of meaning, purpose and worthwhileness in life. Data from official sources on life satisfaction, is already or will become available in the near future for a large majority of OECD countries, based on comparable questions that are consistent with the recommendations of OECD recommendations (OECD 2013b). The guidelines provide international recommendations on collecting, reporting and analysing subjective well-being data across the three distinct components and represent a break-through moment in detailing best measurement practice of this well-being domain.

##### 12.1.2.1 The OECD well-being indicators

Table 44. OECD well-being indicators: Subjective well-being

Headline	Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affect balance</li> </ul>

Source: OECD, 2011; OECD, 2013c

182. *How's Life?* currently focuses on one headline indicator of subjective well-being, and has included one secondary indicator in its 2011 report. The headline indicator, **life satisfaction**, is based on survey questions that broadly follow the format recommended by the OECD guidelines: "Overall, how satisfied are you with life as a whole these days?", with responses ranging from 0 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied). The data comes from various national household surveys, including several General Social Surveys.

183. The supplementary secondary indicator, **positive affect balance**, is defined as the proportion of the population who reported experiencing more positive than negative emotions yesterday. It is based on responses to six different questions formulated as: "Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? ...how about worry?" Negative affect is measured by experiences of worry, anger and sadness, while positive affect is captured by experiences of enjoyment, feeling well-rested, and smiling or laughing a lot. Affect balance is then calculated for each respondent as the number of "yes" responses to

the questions on positive affect minus the number of "yes" responses to questions on negative affect. The data is drawn from the Gallup World Poll.

#### *12.1.2.2 The role of General Social Surveys in measuring subjective well-being*

184. Subjective well-being is a relatively new area for official statistics and, because of this there are few substantial existing data sources for subjective well-being measures. In many cases, General Social Surveys have been the vehicle of choice for national statistical offices moving to include subjective well-being measures in official statistics. This is something that aligns well with the role of General Social Surveys, particularly with respect to recommendations regarding the range of covariates that should be collected with subjective well-being measures (OECD, 2013b).

## **12.2 Coverage and coherence**

### *12.2.1 General inclusion of the dimension*

185. While subjective well-being data have recently become available within the national statistical systems of a majority of countries, General Social Surveys are not always the vehicle in which relevant questions have been included. Currently, only 8 countries (7 OECD) have included this dimension in the core of their social surveys. However, if the 2013 ad-hoc module of EU-SILC is taken into consideration, an additional 28 countries have some, if not regular, data of this type available. Further, EU-SILC is expected to integrate subjective well-being items into its core within the next few years.

- In Australia the General Social Survey has a core module on overall life satisfaction (Module 6) and one supplementary module provides information on stressors (Module 8).
- In Canada a single question on overall life satisfaction has been included in the core of its GSS since 2007.<sup>2</sup>
- In Europe, Eurostat launched an EU-SILC ad-hoc module on Well-Being in 2013 which encompasses both overall life satisfaction and affect balance. In the near future, the life satisfaction item will be included in the core of the EU-SILC instrument to underscore EU-SILC's ambition to serve as the core EU instrument connecting different quality of life dimensions.
- In Israel questions on subjective well-being are included in both the core (Chapter 13 – Satisfaction in General) and ad-hoc modules (the 2013 Social Survey had a specific Chapter on The Well-being of the Israel Population) of its Social Survey. This latter includes several questions to assess the satisfaction with the financial situation of households and negative emotions.
- In Korea subjective well-being is collected every year in the General Social Survey, although the question uses a five point scale.
- In the Netherlands two questions on subjective well-being (on life satisfaction and on happiness) are asked in their Social Cohesion and Well-being survey.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that in 2007, this question was restricted to persons aged 45 or older. Prior to 2003, different life satisfaction questions were asked. These however, are not reported below.

- In New-Zealand the General Social Survey has two questions to subjective well-being in its core module.
- In Poland the *Social Cohesion Survey* asks 4 questions on life satisfaction and positive emotions.

186. Colombia has included questions on subjective well-being in its questionnaire. In its ECV, Colombia covers a range of questions classified under subjective well-being that relate to satisfaction with the financial situation and current living conditions.

**Table 45. Number of social surveys and countries having included questions related to subjective well-being**

Number of social surveys and countries			
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc modules
Numbers	9 social surveys	0 social surveys	2 social surveys
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia (General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Canada (General Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Colombia (ECV)*</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> <li>• Korea (Social Survey)</li> <li>• Netherlands (Social Cohesion and Well-being)*</li> <li>• New-Zealand (New-Zealand General Social Survey)</li> <li>• Poland (Social Cohesion Survey)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European countries (EU-SILC)</li> <li>• Israel (Social Survey)*</li> </ul>
OECD countries	8	0	27
OECD partners	1	0	2**
<b>Countries not measuring dimension:</b>		Chile, Costa Rica, Japan, Mexico, Russian Federation, United States	

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\*The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC.

### 12.2.2 Comparison – OECD well-being framework and selected indicators

187. The OECD headline indicator of subjective well-being, life satisfaction, is collected by 9 countries (8 OECD) in their core General Social Survey, and in 39 countries when ad-hoc modules are considered. This indicator is broadly comparable across countries, question wording is almost identical, and the majority of countries use a 0-10 answer scale, although there are several exceptions (Israel, Korea, the Netherlands, Poland). Only Colombia, Israel and Poland use different response options.

188. The secondary indicator of the subjective well-being dimension, affect balance, is not included in the core module of any country. However, EU-SILC and Israel have used (quite different) affect questions in their ad-hoc modules in the past.

Table 46. Selected indicators on subjective well-being and comparability across the OECD

Social surveys having similar indicators to the OECD				
	Core modules	Rotating modules	Ad-hoc-modules	Number of countries
<i>Headline indicators</i>				
<b>Life satisfaction</b>	<b>Australia</b> The following question asks how satisfied you feel, on a scale from 0 to 10. Zero means you feel not at all satisfied and 10 means completely satisfied. Overall, how satisfied are you with life as a whole these days?		<b>EU-SILC</b> From 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely), how satisfied are you with life as a whole?	➤ 7 OECD countries in their core survey ➤ 1 partner in their core survey ➤ 26 OECD countries on an ad-hoc basis ➤ 2 partners on an ad-hoc basis
	<b>Canada*</b> Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 means very dissatisfied" and 10 means very satisfied, how do you feel about your life as a whole right now?			
	<b>Colombia (ECV)*</b> How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects: life in general? <i>Very satisfied / satisfied / not so satisfied / not satisfied at all</i>			
	<b>Israel*</b> Overall, how satisfied are you with your life? <i>Very satisfied / satisfied / not so satisfied / not satisfied at all</i>			
	<b>Korea*</b> Overall, how satisfied are you with your life in general these days? <i>Very satisfied/ moderately satisfied/ neither satisfied nor dissatisfied / moderately dissatisfied / very dissatisfied</i>			
	<b>Netherlands*</b> On a scale from 1(not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), can you tell me how satisfied you are with the life you lead now?			
	<b>New Zealand</b> I am going to ask you a very general question about your life as a whole these days. This includes all areas of your life. (Looking at showcard), where zero is completely dissatisfied, and ten is completely satisfied, how do you feel about your life as a whole?			

	<b>Poland**</b> Are you satisfied with your life in general?			
<i>Secondary indicators</i>				
<b>Affect</b>	<b>Poland**</b> Please specify how often during the last month have you felt happy?		<p><b>EU-SILC</b> During the past 4 weeks, did you feel very nervous / down in the dumps / calm and peaceful / downhearted and depressed / feel happy? <i>All of the time / most of the time / some of the time / a little of the time / none of the time / DK/R</i></p> <p><b>Israel</b> During the past 12 months, did you feel stressed/ depressed/ that you can cope with your problems/ full of energy/did worries disturb your sleep? <i>Always, often / sometimes, occasionally / seldom / never</i></p>	<p>➤ 27 OECD countries on an ad-hoc basis</p> <p>➤ 2 partners on an ad-hoc basis</p>

\*Yearly implemented core modules

\*\* Answering scale was not provided to the authors in English.

Notes: The partners Romania and Lithuania are covered under EU-SILC. Answer scale *yes/no* unless otherwise indicated.

### 12.2.3 Potential alternative indicators

189. Additional indicators of interest beyond those included in *How's Life?* are collected in General Social Surveys. These questions deal with respondents' meaning in life (eudemonia). However, as of this date very few countries collect data on these aspects of well-being.

**Table 47. Selected alternative indicators on subjective well-being (including core, rotating and ad-hoc modules)**

Focus	Questions (selected)	Country
<b>Eudemonia</b>	(Looking at showcard), where zero is not at all worthwhile, and ten is completely worthwhile, overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?	New Zealand (The New Zealand General Social Survey)

### 12.3 The statistical agenda ahead

190. In addition to the countries that are already including it, annual data on life satisfaction will be regularly available for a majority of OECD countries once EU-SILC has integrated the relevant item into its core survey. It is recommended that eventually, in line with the *OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being* (OECD 2013b), all participating countries move to include this item into their core General Social Surveys.

191. Advice on how to include questions on the other two subjective well-being domains, eudemonic and affect measures, is also provided by the *OECD Guidelines* and should be taken into account when adding relevant questions to General Social Surveys in the future.

## 13. GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEYS: AN AGENDA FOR THE NEXT DECADE

### 13.1 Overview

192. NSOs often face difficult decisions between the available resources and data demands by users. Resource limitations include financial constraints, but also limitations on respondent burden that can be imposed before response rates begin to erode. Finding a balance between meeting the needs of policy makers and the general public, on one hand, and the sustainability of official statistics, on the other hand, is an ongoing challenge. This issue is particularly salient where the demand is for new measures that have not traditionally been part of the core work of NSOs.

193. Demand for new data on the well-being outcomes experienced by individuals is strong and continues to increase. This demand is driven by two main forces. First, a strong policy demand for data both to assist in the evaluation of policy programmes and to support the analysis of what drives policy-relevant outcomes. An increasing focus on evidence-based assessment of the well-being outcomes of policy programmes by various government agencies creates a strong demand for data on social and economic outcomes that goes beyond information on income and labour market participation. While some of this information can be met through programme evaluations and administrative data, there is an ongoing need for high quality outcome measures that can serve as a benchmark at a national and international level.

194. Second, beyond immediate policy needs, better measures of key social and economic outcomes are needed to monitor well-being at the national and international level. It is increasingly accepted that well-being is a central goal of policy making (OECD, 2015a; O'Donnell et al, 2014), and that national statistical offices should collect and publish the information required to assess it. As discussed in Section 1, recent years have seen a proliferation of both national and international initiatives to measure well-being. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will further strengthen demand for data across a range of domains very similar to those used by the OECD for measuring well-being; this will play a major role in the demands placed on NSOs over the coming decade.

195. Taken together, these demands create an imperative to get the most value out of existing data. While most household surveys carried out by national statistical offices have a clear role and are guided by international standards (e.g. labour force surveys), this is not currently the case for General Social Surveys. In fact, the opposite is largely true. General Social Surveys are often regarded as a vehicle for the collection of ad hoc data, and even where there is a clearly defined core set of measures collected on an ongoing basis, these are often not comparable across countries.

196. General Social Surveys collect a wide range of data addressing many of the topics that are of greatest importance from the perspective of measuring well-being. Some topics, in particular, are relatively well-covered both in terms of being included in most GSS and in terms of international comparability:

- **Income** data is collected almost universally in GSS (34 out of 35 OECD countries). Although there are some issues related to whether gross or net income is the focus, and whether information is collected through detailed question asked to each household member or through a single summary question, consistency is generally high.
- Information on **jobs and earnings** – particularly labour force status – is collected consistently in the GSS of almost all (34 out of 35) OECD countries and most of the partner countries covered by this review. This extends to other aspects of labour market performance relevant to **work/life balance** such as hours worked (32 out of 35 OECD countries).

- **Health** measures are included in almost all GSS, although the predominant measure available is limited to satisfaction with health status (33 of 35 OECD countries).
- **Education and skills** information is collected by all GSS, and comparable information on the highest education completed is available for almost all of these.
- Measures of **subjective well-being** are increasingly becoming available on a standardised basis in GSS. Although the number of countries with annual data is currently low, if the planned decision to include a measure of life satisfaction in the EU-SILC core goes ahead, broadly comparable data will be available for almost all OECD countries on a regular basis.

197. While some topics are relatively well-covered in existing GSS, this is not the case for others. Typically this happens not because the issue is considered unimportant, but because no international standards provide guidance on how the outcome in question should be measured. As a result, although many NSOs measure these outcomes, there is little consistency in the data collected.

- **Housing** data are collected in GSS by 34 OECD countries and all partner countries. However, the framing of the questions used varies extensively, particularly with respect to housing costs and crowding; there is even less consistency on other aspects of housing quality.
- Some information on aspects of **environmental quality** is available for 27 OECD countries, but only for water quality is information available for a large number of countries. Even here, differences in question wording and the underlying concept being measured limit comparability.
- Data on **personal security** are collected through GSS by 30 OECD and 3 partner countries. However, with the exception of information on feelings of safety when walking alone at night, the information collected is generally piecemeal and varies from country to country.

198. This review has also identified some areas where a lack of data reflects not just a lack of consistency across countries, but a lack of generally accepted survey questions. Four outcome areas are particularly affected in this way:

- Although information on hours worked (an aspect of **work/life balance**) is widely available, little information on time use and time stress is available within current GSS. There is a strong need to identify survey questions on these outcomes that could be applied in GSS and that could be validated by existing time use surveys.
- Information on **social connections**, although relatively rich in a few surveys (e.g. Australia, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand) is not collected at all many countries (29 out of 35 OECD countries have no data) and, even where collected, there is little consistency in the survey questions used. Although current proposals to revise EU-SILC may help address this, there is currently no consensus around the best approaches to measuring outcomes in this area.
- **Civic engagement and governance** is also poorly covered, with only 5 countries including relevant information in the core module of their GSS. Although a number of candidate measures are available that could be included in surveys, these are not currently widely used.
- Measures of **environmental quality** other than water quality are not widely available through GSS, with little standardization among current surveys.

### 13.2 The potential of General Social Surveys

199. Despite the limitations discussed above, a wide range of information is available from existing General Social Surveys. Table 48 provides an overview of the dimensions for which information is available in the GSS covered by this review. The table is organized so that each column relates to a dimension of the *How's Life?* well-being framework.

- Two ticks indicate that the survey considered collects information in its core module that is more or less comparable with the headline indicators used in the *How's Life?* report. The criteria used here to define comparable are fairly broad, and should not be taken as indicating that cross-national comparisons are possible in this area with existing data. In particular, even where surveys collect information on what is essentially the same indicator there are significant differences in the precise question wording or response scale used.
- A single tick indicates that the survey collects information on the relevant dimension of well-being, but that this either uses a different measure to the relevant headline indicator from *How's Life?* or that the measure is included in an ad hoc module rather than as part of the core module. The variety of measures used here is wide.
- The last two columns of Table 48 simply provide a summary of the number of outcome dimensions for which information is available either on the basis of *How's Life?* headline indicators (column 13) or on the basis of headline or an alternative indicator (column 14).

**Table 48. GSS topic coverage**

	OECD well-being dimensions											Any measure	Headline Measures
	Income and wealth	Jobs and earnings	Housing	Health status	Work-life balance	Education and skills	Social connection	Civic engage	Environ-mental	Personal security	Subjective well-being		
Australia	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√		√√	√√	9	10
Canada	√√	√√	√	√√	√	√√	√	√		√	√√	5	10
Chile	√√	√√	√√	√√		√√		√				5	6
Columbia (ECV)	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√			√	√√	√√	6	9
Costa Rica	√√	√√	√√	√	√√	√√		√		√		5	8
EU (EU-SILC)	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√	**	8	11
Israel	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√√	9	11
Japan	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√						6	6
Korea	√√	√√		√√	√	√√	√√		√√	√	√√	7	9
Mexico			*	*		*			*			?	4
Netherlands	√	√√	√	√√	√√	√√	√	√√	√	√	√√	6	11
New Zealand	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√√	9	11
Poland	√√	√	√√	√		√√	√	√√		√	√√	5	9
Russian Federation	√		√	√√	√√	√√						3	5
United States	√√	√√	√√		√√	√√						5	5

√√ information collected in core survey, broadly comparable with *How's Life?* primary indicator; √ information available but not in core module and/or not comparable with *How's Life?* primary indicator; \* information will be available, but detailed questions not available at the time of publication; \*\* will be available from 2019 onwards.

200. Two key points are evident from an analysis of Table 48.

- The first is that, despite very different origins and purposes, there is a great deal of commonality in the topics covered by existing GSS across countries, and that for the majority of surveys these topics map well onto the OECD well-being framework used to frame this review. With the exception of Japan, the United States, and the Russian Federation, (and to a lesser degree Chile and Costa Rica) all of the surveys considered here cover the majority of OECD well-being dimensions. This shows that the current lack of cross-country comparability of measures does not reflect a fundamental difference of purpose in the various surveys, but rather the historical process whereby GSS have been adopted in different countries at different times with little in the way of co-ordination.
- A second important point to note from Table 48 is that existing data should allow for the meaningful analysis of the joint distribution of well-being outcomes in many OECD (and partner) countries. Developing measures of multiple disadvantage, drawing on information on the joint distribution of well-being outcomes, was one of the key recommendations of the *Report of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress* (Stiglitz, Sen, Fitoussi; 2009). However, while significant progress has been made in regard to many recommendations from the Commission, very little progress has been made in looking at multiple disadvantages across the different dimensions of well-being or at how advantages and disadvantages in different areas cumulate for individuals.

201. Although available data do not allow a consistent cross-country comparison of the joint distribution of outcomes for the OECD as a whole, some obvious steps could be taken. First, several OECD member states are well-placed to undertake a within-country analysis in this area. Notably, Australia, Israel, and New Zealand are particularly well-positioned, but other countries including Canada, Korea, the Netherlands, and Poland have sufficient data to undertake useful analysis. Going beyond these countries, there is one area of the world where cross-country analysis of the joint distribution of outcomes is possible. By virtue of EU-SILC, comparable data is available for all European Union countries covering 8 well-being dimensions (and allowing analysis of all 11 dimensions of well-being in a more limited manner). Given that European Union countries account for 29 of the OECD's 35 member countries, this suggests that there is considerable scope to use EU-SILC to explore the joint distribution of outcomes across countries and over time. Some preliminary work in this area has already been undertaken by Eurostat, but more detailed work would be welcome.

### 13.3 Next steps

202. A number of factors limit the ability to move toward a coherent system of well-being statistics grounded in a consistent approach to General Social Surveys. These include limited financial resources for development, limited expertise within national statistical offices on some of the subject areas covered by GSS, weaknesses in the levers connecting policy needs with the priorities of national statistical offices, and a lack of consensus on the best approach to measure a number of outcome areas. Another important issue is the genuine tension between the need for information on issues that are of direct relevance to a particular country and a desire for coherence across countries in which outcomes to measure and how to measure them. This last issue is not, in principle, an obstacle to greater harmonization among GSS, as a balanced approach would identify a limited number of core measures for which international comparability is a priority and leave space for the inclusion of other topics. In practice, the issue is more challenging, as any move towards greater coherence will involve changes to existing surveys that potentially disrupt time series. Relatively small technical issues can also be important. For example, a different response scale

might be needed for international comparability than the country currently uses, or similar questions in a survey could create problems with survey flow and respondent comprehension.<sup>3</sup>

203. Although these are important challenges, they are not unique to GSS and can be overcome. Similar issues have faced household income and labour force statistics in the past, and this has not prevented international harmonization in these areas. With this in mind, several concrete steps could be taken that would significantly enhance the quality of GSS data and their consistency across countries. In particular:

- International statistical bodies should **support the development of a professional community of GSS statisticians** in the same way that such communities exist for other parts of official statistics such as labour market statistics, income distribution statistics, or national accounts. In particular, opportunities for GSS staff to share expertise and experience either within existing conferences or through dedicated working groups should be pursued.
- An area for particular focus on the part of inter-governmental organisations and GSS staff is to identify a **core set of topics** that all General Social Surveys would cover, and to reach agreement on a **parsimonious set of questions** that could be used to cover these topics.
- Guidelines setting out best practice in survey development exist for many types of official survey, including labour force surveys, time use surveys and victimisation surveys. However, no set of guidelines setting out international best practice for GSS currently exist. If progress is made on agreeing a core set of topics, international organisations could contribute to the quality and consistency of GSS by **convening staff from NSOs and relevant experts** to draft an **initial set of guidelines for harmonising GSS**.
- One precondition for implementing a core set of measures in a consistent way across countries is that there are valid instruments for measuring the relevant concepts. A key priority for the continued development of GSS is therefore the production of **guidelines on the measurement of social connections, civic engagement and governance, and aspects of environmental quality** relevant to current well-being.
- One advantage of GSS is the ability to analyse the joint distribution of outcomes. However, despite the existence of a number of suitable datasets, little has been done in this area. A priority for future work should be to **utilize existing GSS datasets** for exploratory **analysis of the joint distribution of well-being outcomes across individuals**.

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<sup>3</sup> This has already proved to be an issue with respect to questions on subjective well-being. The *OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being* (2013b) – based on an extensive review of the evidence – identify that a 0-10 end labelled scale represents best practice in collecting measures of life evaluation. However, many national statistical offices use shorter 4, 5, or 7 point labelled Likert scales as a standard throughout their General Social Surveys. This forces a choice between adhering to international best practice in collecting measures of life evaluation at the price of using different response scales within a single survey, or collecting life evaluation data that cannot readily be compared internationally and is of lower quality.

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## APPENDIX A

## A.1 – Submissions to the OECD review on General Social Surveys

Submitted questionnaires that do not fall under the definition of a General Social Survey are indicated in italics.

Country	Submitted Questionnaires	Inception Date
<b>Australia</b>	General Social Survey	2002
<b>Austria</b>	EU-SILC	2003
<b>Belgium</b>	EU-SILC	2003
<b>Canada</b>	The General Social Survey – GSS	1985
<b>Chile</b>	Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional – Casen	1985
	<i>Encuesta de Calidad de Vida en Salud</i>	2000
	<i>Encuesta de Calidad de Vida Urbana</i>	2007
<b>Colombia</b>	Quality of Life National Survey – ECV	1991
	Time Use National Survey – ENUT	2012
	<i>Great Integrated Household Survey – GEIH</i>	2012
	<i>National Income and Expenditure Survey – ENIG</i>	
	<i>Domestic Tourism Expenditure Survey – EGIT</i>	
<i>Social Protection Longitudinal Survey – ELPS</i>		
<b>Costa Rica</b>	Encuesta Nacional de Hogares – ENAHO (National Household Survey)	1986
<b>Czech Republic</b>	EU-SILC	2005
<b>Denmark</b>	Household Budget Survey (EU-SILC)	1994
<b>Estonia</b>	EU-SILC	2004
<b>Finland</b>	Tulo- ja elinolotutkimus (Survey on Income and Living Conditions) (EU-SILC)	1977
<b>France</b>	Statistiques sur les ressources et les conditions de vie - SRCV (EU-SILC)	2004
<b>Germany</b>	EU-SILC	2005
	<i>Einkommens- und Verbrauchsstichprobe – EVS (National Income and Expenditure Survey)</i>	1963
	<i>Zeitverwendungserhebung – ZVE (Time Use Survey)</i>	1991
<b>Greece</b>	EU-SILC	2003
<b>Hungary</b>	Háztartási Költségvetési és Életkörülmény Adatfelvétel (Household Budget and Living Conditions Survey) (EU-SILC)	1949
<b>Iceland</b>	EU-SILC	2004
<b>Israel</b>	Social Survey	2002
<b>Japan</b>	Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions	1986
<b>Korea</b>	Social Survey	1977
<b>Latvia</b>	EU-SILC	2005
<b>Lithuania</b>	EU-SILC	2005
<b>Luxembourg</b>	EU-SILC	2003

<b>Mexico</b>	Encuesta Nacional de Hogares – ENH	2015
<b>Netherlands</b>	EU-SILC	2005
	Social Cohesion and Well-being	2013
<b>New Zealand</b>	The New Zealand General Social Survey – NZGSS	2008
<b>Norway</b>	EU-SILC	2003
<b>Poland</b>	EU-SILC	2005
	Social Cohesion Survey	2011
	<i>Household Budget Survey</i>	1999
<b>Portugal</b>	Inquérito às Condições de Vida e Rendimento – ICOR (EU-SILC)	2004
<b>Romania</b>	EU-SILC	2007
<b>Russian federation</b>	Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions	2011
	<i>Sample survey of household budget</i>	1952
	<i>Sample survey on population income and participation in social programs</i>	2012
<b>Slovak Republic</b>	EU-SILC	2005
<b>Slovenia</b>	EU-SILC	2005
<b>Spain</b>	Encuesta de Condiciones de Vida (EU-SILC)	2004
<b>Sweden</b>	<i>Undersökningarna av levnadsförhållanden (Living Conditions Survey) (EU-SILC)</i>	1975
<b>Switzerland</b>	Revenus et conditions de vie des ménages en Suisse (EU-SILC)	2007
<b>Turkey</b>	Income and Living Conditions Survey (EU-SILC)	2006
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Family Resources Survey – FRS/Survey on Living Conditions – SLC (EU-SILC)	1992
<b>United States</b>	American Community Survey	2005
	<i>The Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement to the Current Population Survey</i>	1947

## A.2 – Australia: General Social Survey

### Geographical coverage:

- Australia

### Date of implementation:

- 2002

### General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:

- A core module plus some content expanded with more detail in some years and some additional content that can be added on rotational basis.

### Key methodological features

- Name of the Survey: Australia GSS
- Frequency: Every four years
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: not specified
  - Number of households: 17 158 (2010)
- Response rates: More than 80% (87% – 2010)
- Sample design:

- Stratified or clustered
- Multi-stage
- Data collection: Face to face interview

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Cyclical component of the 2010 GSS:
  - New 2010 Perceived level of life satisfaction overall
  - New 2010 Financial resilience and exclusion
  - New 2010 Social disorder
  - New 2010 Experience of homelessness
  - Voluntary work – additional detail every second survey
  - Health – some addition health affordability items
  - Education – additional field and level of study items
  - Social capital – additional acceptance of other cultures item
- Cyclical component of the 2014 GSS:
  - Sexual orientation,
  - Experiences of discrimination,
  - Work/life balance (time stress),
  - Parental education attainment,
  - Long term health conditions,
  - Barriers to employment.

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press Releases
  - Electronic media
  - Confidentialised Unit Record File (a user accessible table builder product (starting 2014 cycle), and paid consultancy services)
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4159.0.55.0022010?OpenDocument>

- Survey results:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyCatalogue/C6BF68E57D3A308CCA256E21007686F8?OpenDocument>

**A.3 – Canada: General Social Survey**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Canada

**Date of implementation:**

- 1985

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module and rotating modules on fixed subjects. Ad-hoc new/supplementary modules may be added for a given theme/cycle.

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: The General Social Survey (GSS)
- Frequency: Every year (except 1987)
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: not specified
  - Number of households: 23 093 (Cycle 26)
  - Response rates: 65.7% (Cycle 26)
- Sample design: Stratified
- Data collection: In addition to telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews are conducted in the territories for the victimisation cycles only. For the Cycle 27 S.I. Main Survey and the Cycle 28 Victimization Internet Pilot Survey, all respondents were contacted by telephone and then redirected to an electronic questionnaire. Where feasible, this approach will be implemented for future GSS cycles.

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

The GSS covers one topic in depth each year, the links for the five most recent surveys are included below. Generally speaking, each of the themes is repeated approximately every five years.

- Cycle 29: Time use
- Cycle 28: Victimization
- Cycle 27: Social Identity
- Cycle 27: Giving, volunteering and participating
- Cycle 26: Caregiving and Care Receiving
- Cycle 25: Family
- Cycle 24: Time Stress and Well-being

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Electronic media
  - Public Use Microdata Files (PUMFs), Provision of PUMFs and Analytical Files to Research Data Centres (RDCs), Real Time Remote Access (RTRAs), Custom Tabulations, CANSIM or other Summary Table products
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

**A.4 – Chile: Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Chile

**Date of implementation:**

- 1987

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A questionnaire with seven fixed modules

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (Casen)
- Frequency: Every two or three years
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 294 791 (Casen 2011)
  - Number of households: 86 854 (Casen)
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
  - Multi-stage
- Data collection: Face to face interviews, telephone interviews, mail, internet registration, administrative sources

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- 2016 module: Access to services
- 2015 module: Social and cultural participation and material deprivation
- 2014 module: Material deprivation
- 2013 module: Well-being
- 2012 module: Housing conditions
- 2011 module: Intergenerational transmission of disadvantages
- 2010 module: Intra-household sharing of resources
- 2009 module: Material deprivation
- 2008 module: Over-indebtedness and financial exclusion
- 2007 module: Housing conditions
- 2006 module: Social participation
- 2005 module: Intergenerational transmission of poverty

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press releases
  - Electronic media
  - Ministry of Social Development Web Site
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- [http://observatorio.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/casen/casen\\_obj.php](http://observatorio.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/casen/casen_obj.php)

**A.5.A – Colombia: Quality of Life National Survey****Geographical coverage:**

- Colombia

**Date of implementation:**

- 1991

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent**

- A core module and ad-hoc supplementary modules

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Quality of Life Survey (ECV)
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 73 155
  - Number of households: 21 564
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
  - Multi-stage
- Data collection: Face to face interview

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Training for work, agriculture and livestock activities, family businesses (1997)
- Labour of children aged 5 to 11 years, preferences and habits on TV, training for work (2003)
- Food security, rural component (form of exploitation, land tenure, funding sources) (2008)
- Rural component (form of exploitation, land tenure, funding sources) (2010)
- Rural component (technical assistance, use of the financial system, insurance, land tenure, income) (2011)
- Food security (2012)

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Electronic media
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Results:

<https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/en/statistics-by-topic-1/poverty-and-life-conditions/calidad-de-vida-ecv>

- Microdata:

[http://formularios.dane.gov.co/Anda\\_4\\_1/index.php/catalog/MICRODATOS](http://formularios.dane.gov.co/Anda_4_1/index.php/catalog/MICRODATOS)

**A.5.B – Colombia: Time Use National Survey**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Colombia

**Date of implementation:**

- 2012

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Time Use National Survey (ENUT)
- Frequency: Every three years

- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 148 942
  - Number of households: 43 500
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
  - Multi-stage
- Data collection: Face to face interview

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

n/a

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Electronic media
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:

[http://formularios.dane.gov.co/Anda\\_4\\_1/index.php/catalog/214/related\\_materials](http://formularios.dane.gov.co/Anda_4_1/index.php/catalog/214/related_materials)

- Results:

[http://formularios.dane.gov.co/Anda\\_4\\_1/index.php/catalog/214](http://formularios.dane.gov.co/Anda_4_1/index.php/catalog/214)

<https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/en/statistics-by-topic-1/poverty-and-life-conditions/encuesta-nacional-del-uso-del-tiempo-enut>

**A.6 – Costa Rica: Encuesta Nacional de Hogares**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Costa Rica

**Date of implementation:**

- 2010
- Before that year, and since 1986 it existed as the Household Survey of Multiple Purposes, with some variations in the current.

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module and rotating modules on fixed subjects and ad-hoc complementary modules

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHO)
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 38 353
  - Number of households: 11 405
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered

- Multi-stage
- Data collection: Face to face interview and telephone interview

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Breastfeeding (2010)
- Household consumer expenses (2013, 2014)
- Vaccination (2010)
- Child and adolescent labour (2011)
- Culture (2012)
- TIC'S (2012)
- Cervical cancer detection (2014)
- Victimization (2010, 2014)

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press releases
  - Electronic media
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- 2015 results:

[http://www.inec.go.cr/wwwisis/documentos/INEC/ENAHO/ENAHO\\_2015/ENAHO\\_2015.pdf](http://www.inec.go.cr/wwwisis/documentos/INEC/ENAHO/ENAHO_2015/ENAHO_2015.pdf)

**A.7 – European countries: EU-SILC**

**Geographical coverage:**

- 34 countries, representing 26 OECD countries:
  - Austria\*
  - Belgium\*
  - Bulgaria
  - Croatia
  - Czech Republic\*
  - Denmark\*
  - Germany\*
  - Estonia\*
  - Finland\*
  - FYROM
  - Iceland
  - Ireland\*
  - Greece\*
  - Spain\*
  - France\*
  - Italy\*
  - Cyprus<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to “Cyprus” relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution

- Latvia\*
- Lithuania\*
- Luxembourg\*
- Hungary\*
- Malta
- Netherlands\*
- Norway\*
- Poland\*
- Portugal\*
- Romania
- Serbia
- Slovenia\*
- Slovakia\*
- Sweden\*
- Switzerland\*
- Turkey\*
- United Kingdom\*

Note: \*OECD countries

**Date of implementation:**

- 2003 for some countries; Full implementation in all EU countries in 2007

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module and ad-hoc supplementary modules

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: EU Statistics on Income and Living conditions (EU-SILC)
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 520 215 achieved sample size for persons 16+ in 2011 for EU28 plus Iceland, Switzerland and Norway.
  - Number of households: 240 235 achieved sample size in 2011 for EU28 plus Iceland, Switzerland and Norway.
- Response rates: Ranges from 47% - 97% depending on the country
- Data collection: Face to face interviews, telephone interviews, mail, internet registration

**List of ad-hoc modules:**

- 2015 module: Social and cultural participation and material deprivation
- 2014 module: Material deprivation
- 2013 module: Well-being
- 2012 module: Housing conditions
- 2011 module: Intergenerational transmission of disadvantages
- 2010 module: Intra-household sharing of resources
- 2009 module: Material deprivation
- 2008 module: Over-indebtedness and financial exclusion

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is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the “Cyprus issue”.

Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

- 2007 module: Housing conditions
- 2006 module: Social participation
- 2005 module: Intergenerational transmission of poverty

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publications
  - Press Releases
  - Electronic media
  - Online databases;
  - Micro-data available on CD ROMs to researchers and policy users to outside users

**For more information:**

- <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-conditions/overview>

**A.8 – Israel: Social Survey**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Israel

**Date of implementation:**

- 2002

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module and rotating modules on fixed subjects
- A core module and ad-hoc supplementary modules

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Social Survey
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 9 500
  - Number of households: not specified
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Multi-Stage
- Data collection: Face to face interviews

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Pensions coverage and retirement saving (2002 + 2012)
- Multidimensional measurement of welfare (2003 + 2007 + 2013)
- Educational frameworks for children (2004)
- Participation in Labor Force (2005)
- Unpaid Caregiving (2006)
- Satisfaction with Gov. Services (2007 + 2015)
- Social Mobility (2008)
- Religious Observance & Family Life (2009)
- Health and Way of Life & Computer usage (2010)

- Life Long Learning & Usage of Languages (2011)
- Workers organizations (2012)
- Environment & Social Capital (2014)
- Civil Involvement (2015)

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press releases
  - Electronic media
  - Table Generator on the ICBS web site
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:  
[http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/?Mival=cw\\_usr\\_view\\_SHTML&ID=576](http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/?Mival=cw_usr_view_SHTML&ID=576)
- Results:  
<http://surveys.cbs.gov.il/Survey/surveyE.htm>

**A.9 – Japan: Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Japan

**Date of implementation:**

- 1986

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions (conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare)
- Frequency: Every year (health related questions and residential information are surveyed every 3 years)
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 740 000 (100 000 for income and savings related questions)
  - Number of households: 300 000 (40 000 for income and savings related questions)
- Response rates: Between 50 and 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
  - Multi-Stage
- Data collection: Enumerator distributes the questionnaire and collects, at a later date, the questionnaire filled out by the respondent.

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Not applicable

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press releases
  - Electronic media
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:  
<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/chousahyo/index.html#00450061> (in Japanese)
- Press Release:  
<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/list/20-21kekka.html> (in Japanese)  
<http://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/NewList.do?tid=000001031016> (in Japanese)  
<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/database/db-hss/cslc-report.html>

**A.10 – Korea: Social Survey**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Korea

**Date of implementation:**

- 1977

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module (The Social Survey consists of 10 sectors, and is conducted by 5 sectors every year-two year cycle per sector)

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Social Survey
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 37 243
  - Number of households: 17 664
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
- Data collection: Face to face interview

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- The Social Survey consists of 10 sectors, and is conducted by 5 sectors every year to reduce response burden (two year cycle per sector)
- 10 sectors: Family, Labor, Health, Environment, Education, Income & Consumption, Welfare, Culture & Leisure, Safety, Social Participation.

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press releases

- Electronic media
- Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:  
[http://www.kostat.go.kr/survey/society/ss\\_dl/1/index.board](http://www.kostat.go.kr/survey/society/ss_dl/1/index.board)
- Press Release:  
<http://kostat.go.kr/portal/english/news/1/1/index.board>

**A.11 – Mexico: Encuesta Nacional de Hogares****Geographical coverage**

- Mexico

**Date of implementation:**

- 2015

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module and ad-hoc supplementary modules

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENH)
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of households: 64 000
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
- Data collection: Face to face interviews

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- For 2015, the ad hoc supplementary module was: Households and environment (first quarter), Information and communication technology (Second quarter), Housing (third quarter) and water supply and use (last quarter).

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Electronic media
  - Micro data available to outside users

**A.12 – Netherlands: Social Cohesion and Well-being****Geographical coverage:**

- The Netherlands

**Date of implementation:**

- 2013

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Social Cohesion and Well-being
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 7 500
- Response rates: Between 50 and 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
- Data collection: Internet interviews

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Not applicable

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Electronic media

**For more information:**

- [www.statline.cbs.nl](http://www.statline.cbs.nl)

**A.13 – New Zealand: General Social Survey**

**Geographical coverage:**

- New-Zealand

**Date of implementation:**

- 2008

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module, rotating modules on fixed subjects as well as room for ad-hoc supplementary content

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: The New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS)
- Frequency: Every two years
- Sample size:
  - Number of households and individuals: 8 500
- Response rates: Between 50 and 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
  - Multi-stage
- Data collection: Face to face interviews

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- 2014: Social Networks and Support
- 2016: Civic and Cultural Participation
- 2018: Housing and Physical Environment
- 2020: to be confirmed

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press Releases
  - Electronic media
  - Micro-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:

<http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/surveys-and-methods/completing-a-survey/faqs-about-our-surveys/nzgss/gss-questionnaire-2014.pdf>

- Press release:

[http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/people\\_and\\_communities/Well-being/nzgss-info-releases.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/Well-being/nzgss-info-releases.aspx)

**A.14 – Poland: Social Cohesion Survey****Geographical coverage:**

- Poland

**Date of implementation:**

- 2011

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Social Cohesion Survey
- Frequency: Every 4-5 years (next edition in 2015)
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 27 000 (effective sample size: 13 246 surveyed individuals)
- Number of households: 27 000 (effective sample size: 14 873 surveyed households)
- Response rates: Between 50 and 80%
- Sample design:
  - Multi-Stage
- Data collection: Face to face interviews

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Not applicable

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:

- Publication
- Press releases
- Electronic media
- Meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Results:

<http://stat.gov.pl/en/topics/living-conditions/living-conditions/quality-of-life-social-capital-poverty-and-social-exclusion-in-poland,4,1.html>

**A.15 – Russian Federation: Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions**

**Geographical coverage:**

- Russian Federation

**Date of implementation:**

- 2011

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent:**

- A core module

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: Comprehensive Monitoring of Living Conditions
- Frequency: Every two years
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: 136 000
  - Number of households: 60 000
- Response rates: Not applicable
- Sample design:
  - Multi-Stage
- Data collection:
  - Face to face interviews
  - Telephone interview
  - Mail
  - On-line / Internet

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Not applicable

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Publication
  - Press releases
  - Electronic media
  - Micro-and meta-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:

[http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/KOUZ/survey0/index.html](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/KOUZ/survey0/index.html)

- Results:

[http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/KOUZ/survey0/index.html](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/KOUZ/survey0/index.html)

**A.16 – United States: American Community Survey****Geographical coverage:**

- USA

**Date of implementation:**

- 2005

**General structure of the General Social Survey or equivalent**

- A core module

**Key methodological features:**

- Name of the Survey: American Community Survey
- Frequency: Every year
- Sample size:
  - Number of individuals: not specified
  - Number of households: 3.54 million addresses and 20 000 Group Quarter residences
- Response rates: More than 80%
- Sample design:
  - Stratified or clustered
  - Multi-Stage
- Data collection:
  - Face to face interviews
  - Telephone interview
  - Mail
  - On-line / Internet

**List of ad-hoc and rotating modules:**

- Not applicable

**Data Dissemination:**

- Form of data dissemination of the results:
  - Press releases
  - Electronic media
  - Micro-data available to outside users

**For more information:**

- Questionnaire:

<https://respond.census.gov/acs>

- Results:

[http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data\\_documentation/data\\_main/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/data_main/)

- Other information:

[www.census.gov/acs](http://www.census.gov/acs)

## **APPENDIX B: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development