125 years
Statistics
Netherlands
Monitoring inclusive and sustainable well-being in the Netherlands

Presentation for the UNECE Seminar on Measurement of Well-being

Edwin Horlings
8-9 July 2024
“brede welvaart”
International statistical framework

An international framework, based on scientific research, provides authority and guarantees neutrality.
Adapted and expanded framework

– The CES Recommendations are the basic framework
– Need to adapt and expand the framework
  - Reduction of themes to more manageable proportions
  - Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals
  - Interpretation of statistical outcomes
– Technical and methodological challenges
  - Selection criteria for indicators
  - Decision rules for observations
  - Visualisations
“Brede welvaart”
(inclusive and sustainable well-being)

Well-being concerns the quality of life here and now as well as the extent to which this quality is achieved at the expense of later generations or of people in elsewhere in the world.
Dimensions of well-being

Well-being “Here and Now”

Well-being “Elsewhere”

Well-being “Later”

Quality attributes of individuals, the quality of the environment in which they live, their material welfare and subjective well-being

Distribution

The resources future generations will need to achieve at least the same level of well-being

The effects of decisions taken by people in a country on consumption and income and on the stock of capital goods in other countries
Integrating the SDGs

- an international agenda and framework, co-signed by Dutch government
- provide statistics on policy-relevant themes without having to interpret government policy
Framework for SDG indicators in context

- **Resources and opportunities**: rights, freedoms and other possibilities that people have; capacity of infrastructures and systems; access to and affordability of services
- **Use**: number of people, households, companies who use resources and opportunities, including aspects of behavior
- **Outcomes**: positive and negative effects of use
- **Subjective assessment**: people's subjective assessment of outcomes, including satisfaction, concerns, expectations
Resources and opportunities
What resources are used to maintain and improve the healthcare system? Is healthcare affordable and accessible?

Subjective assessment
Are people satisfied with their own health and with the Dutch healthcare system?

Use
What behavior do people exhibit that affects their health? How do they use health care?

Outcomes
What is the current physical and psychological health of the population and the quality of care?
Monitor

Brede Welvaart

& de Sustainable Development Goals

2024
Visualisations

**Key**

Medium-term trend (8 years)
Change (most recent year)

- Improvement in well-being
- No change
- Deterioration in well-being
- Insufficient data (quality)

**Trends in well-being**
Here and now
Dimensions of the CES Recommendations

"here and now"

"later"

"elsewhere"
## Dashboards

- **Sparse:** as little information as possible to make understanding easier for users
- **Colours to signal significant observations**
- **No composite index**
Distribution of well-being

- Individual indicators by sex, age, education level, country of origin/birth
- Cumulative differences for c. 7,000 individuals

Highest completed level of education

- **Low**: 31.7% (Low), 59.8% (Medium), 8.5% (High)
- **Medium**: 17.9% (Low), 62.8% (Medium), 19.2% (High)
- **High**: 8.9% (Low), 54.2% (Medium), 36.9% (High)
Regional well-being

12 provinces
40 regions
345 municipalities
3 Caribbean islands

regionale Monitor Brede Welvaart 2023 [regional Monitor of Well-being]
(https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/visualisaties/regionale-monitor-brede-welvaart)
From indicators to a narrative
Number of indicators

“here and now”
29

“later”
22

“elsewhere”
17

Everything included (SDGs, resilience) around 300 indicators
Layering conclusions

MBW&SDGS IN A NUTSHELL
3-pager
conclusions about concepts

SUMMARY
short, easier to read
indicators linked to concepts

MAIN OBSERVATIONS
bullets, shorter, less complicated
indicators linked to concepts

FULL TEXT
detailed description of indicators
expert knowledge, nuance, complicated
Main conclusions in 2024

The Netherlands is a social and prosperous society 'here and now'
- A close-knit society with high subjective well-being, high material prosperity and a lot of work
- Not everyone benefits from high material prosperity

With current developments, the next generation will achieve lower well-being 'here and now'
- Natural capital is deteriorating
- The economy is only slowly becoming more sustainable
- Essential institutions appear to be at a standstill
- Young adults have been lagging behind for two years in a row
Critical evaluation (the seven-year itch)
Publications

15 May  “Accountability Day” ➔ MBW & SDG’s (since 2018)

17 September  “Budget Day” ➔ Factsheets Well-being for each department (since 2023)

25 September  International SDG Day ➔ SDGs International (since 2016)

30 November  MBW-SDG Caribbean Netherlands (since 2023)

7 December  Regional MBW (since 2020)
First observations

- Usefulness and accessibility in relation to usage
- ‘Indicator creep’
- Match with major societal challenges and themes
- Communicating about recognisable groups
- Incomparable international frameworks
Four capitals of well-being ‘later’

- Economic capital, Natural capital, Human capital, Social capital are ubiquitous
- Hard to explain what they mean in real life
- Appear to have a strong economic bias
- Social capital is a reservoir for everything not included in economic, human or natural capital
‘Top-down’ bias

Subjective well-being

- Pay more attention to deprivation
- Measure well-being of recognisable groups (e.g. old-age pensioners or households living on social security)
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Statistical framework of the future
125 years reliable statistics