

Subjective Well-Being in the European Union

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Paper Abstract: In recent years there has been an increased interest at the political level in many countries for complementing GDP per capita (Gross Domestic Product) with measures that would more accurately depict people's life situation and well-being, and the social development and progress of societies. In response to this demand, Eurostat, together with national statistical institutes, has developed a framework for measuring Quality of Life, organised along 8+1 dimensions. Eight of these dimensions concern the capabilities that people should have in order to pursue their self-defined well-being. They include indicators on how people are doing objectively (for example, how long people live) and how they perceive the respective aspect of their life (for example, how they assess their health), often collected within the same data source. The remaining dimension, named 'overall experience of life' refers to the personal perception of life in general. Data covering mainly the subjective appreciation of life in general, but also of its different aspects (e.g.: financial situation, jobs, accommodation, time use and social relations) has been collected for the first time by the European Statistical System in 2013 and published recently by Eurostat in June 2015. This paper describes the key messages from this publication. It regards mainly the relationship between objective and subjective indicators in different areas of quality of life, including income and material well-being.