

# Wellbeing in Canada: Progress towards measurement, policy, and practice

C P Barrington-Leigh

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## **Abstract**

Canada was an early adopter of subjective wellbeing and measures of social connection in its main-line surveys, and has recently begun integrating an avant garde Quality of Life framework in the federal government. Due to its federal structure, large size, and diverse Indigenous cultures and knowledge systems, it is also a challenging context for coalescing on standardized measures and approaches to wellbeing. This chapter reviews recent trends in measured life satisfaction across Canada and surveys the prominent contributions to measuring wellbeing and bringing evidence from it to inform decision making. There are a number of independent as well as coordinated efforts by First Nations in Canada to define, collect, and curate wellbeing data. A nascent country-wide civil society effort aims to bring a network of governments and practitioners together to share evidence and experience and to ensure that a shift towards wellbeing policy in the central government remains on course.

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# 1 Overview

Recently, the Canadian federal government has embraced a Quality of Life framework which privileges subjective measures such as life satisfaction as an “umbrella measure” to inform policy priority setting and decision making (Sanmartin et al., 2021). Accordingly, this chapter focuses on subjective life evaluations as a measure of wellbeing, and begins with an account of the history of life satisfaction in Canada, using available data from some prominent surveys. [Section 2](#) then describes the recent history of approaches to conceptualizing and measuring wellbeing in Canada.

Embracing such a specific definition of wellbeing is helpful for conceptually separating determinants from outcomes, but it implies a high bar or narrow scope for identifying policies that are explicitly motivated by this objective.

## 1.1 How’s life in Canada?

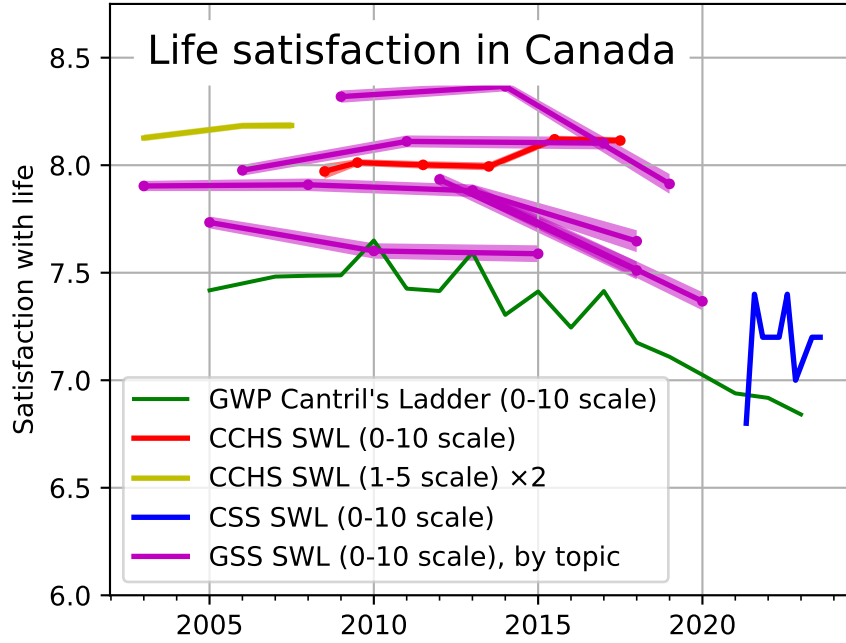
Canada has measured life satisfaction (LS), and some other measures of subjective wellbeing, since 1985 (Barrington-Leigh, 2013) in its General Social Survey (GSS), since 2005 in the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), and most recently in the Canadian Social Survey (CSS). The format evolved from a four-point scale to a five-point and then ten-point scale. Statistics Canada had by 2008–2011 settled on an 11-point (0–10) LS scale as an element of a core wellbeing module for social surveys.<sup>1</sup> [Figure 1](#) displays trends from the CCHS, the GSS, and the CSS, along with data for Canada from the Gallup World Poll. Importantly, these surveys *exclude* residents of First Nations reserves and some other Aboriginal settlements, and the GSS and CSS further exclude Canada’s three Territories — the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

Repeated cross-section surveys do not suffer from attrition, and thus are the best approach for tracking population trends. However, the importance of long-lived consistency in social survey statistics is evident when trying to compare GSS LS responses from year to year. Unlike the CCHS, the GSS questionnaire and its target population change substantially from year to year in rotating cycles. The differences in survey content preceding the LS question likely has some effect on responses (Bonikowska et al., 2014). Accordingly, the series of repeated topics in the GSS are plotted as several separate lines in [Figure 1](#).

Cantril’s Ladder, an alternative wording for eliciting overall life evaluations, is the form used in the Gallup World Poll (Cantril, 1965; Gallup, 2014), while Statistics Canada uses LS. Interestingly, while the Cantril’s Ladder question has different wording, and possibly subtly different meaning, from the LS question, and is known to elicit lower average answers than LS (Helliwell et al., 2010), the trend since 2015 is consistent with that of the GSS. Their trajectories are also consistent with the more recent CSS. Together, these surveys show a decrease in average reported wellbeing in the years prior

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<sup>1</sup>This form was subsequently designated as the preferred standard by the OECD (2013).



**Fig. 1.** Life satisfaction in Canada according to several different surveys. Where shown (CCHS and GSS), shaded bands show 95% confidence intervals.

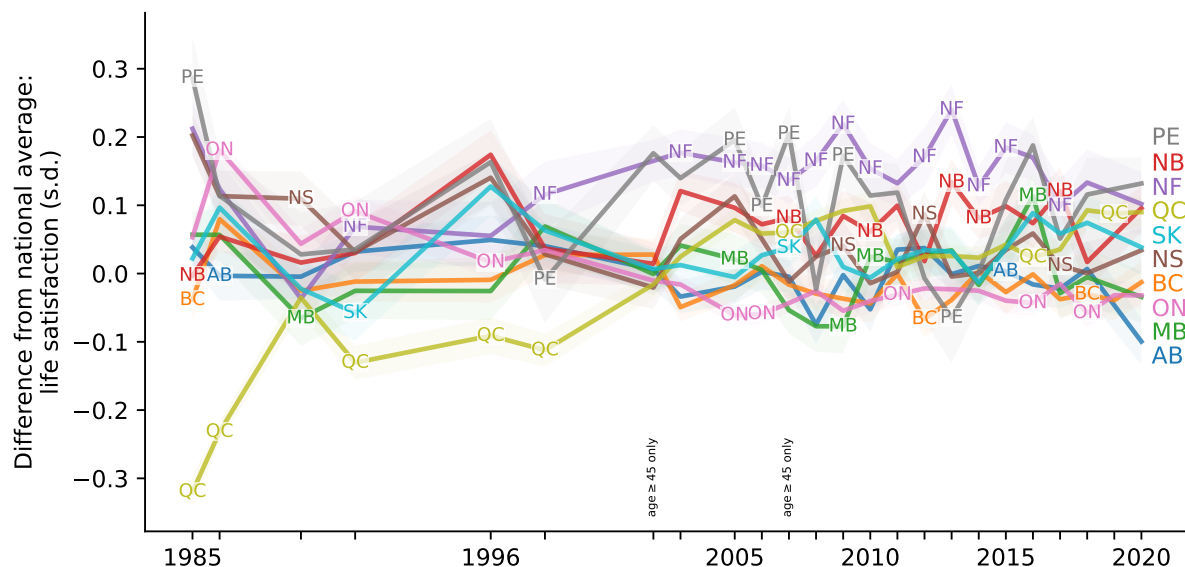
to the COVID-19 pandemic, with no sign of recovery so far.<sup>2</sup>

Because life satisfaction is in principle affected by everything, it is difficult to explain changes in the average. Of the many possible dimensions by which to break down the observed trends, geography often comes to mind first. In order to compare trends across provinces, Barrington-Leigh (2013) normalized LS responses within each survey year. This accommodates different survey content year to year, as well as the dissimilar scales prior to 2003. Figure 2 shows the result: estimated province deviations from the population mean, measured as standard deviations, starting in 1985 when Statistics Canada first introduced a LS question. Using the CCHS, provinces can be compared without normalizing responses (Figure 3), but over a shorter timespan.

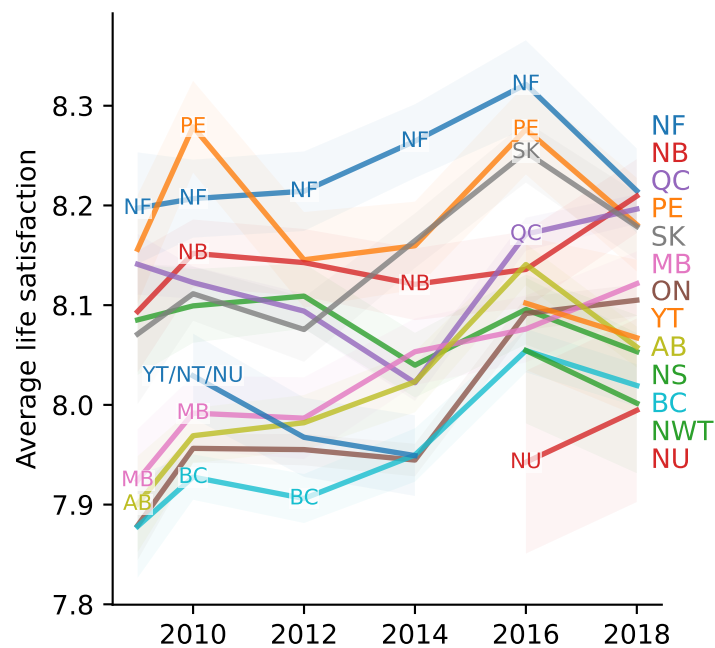
There is remarkable coherence in trends and consistency in the ranking of provinces over time and between the GSS and CCHS. The sustained rise of LS in Quebec over 25 years, evident in Figure 2, was analyzed by Barrington-Leigh (2013). In general, the other most populous provinces tend to have the lowest life satisfaction averages. In the CCHS data, there is a significant rise over time in most provinces since the 11-point life satisfaction question was deployed in the CCHS (2009). However, Statistics Canada warns that there may be trouble comparing CCHS data from prior to 2015 with that of more recent cycles.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>In Figure 1, sample sizes are  $\sim 1000$  per year for the GWP,  $\sim 20$  times larger for the GSS and CSS, and  $\sim 100$  times larger for CCHS. The smaller sample results in GWP data looking a little noisy. The CSS data also look somewhat variable, possibly due to the fast-changing experiences during/after COVID.

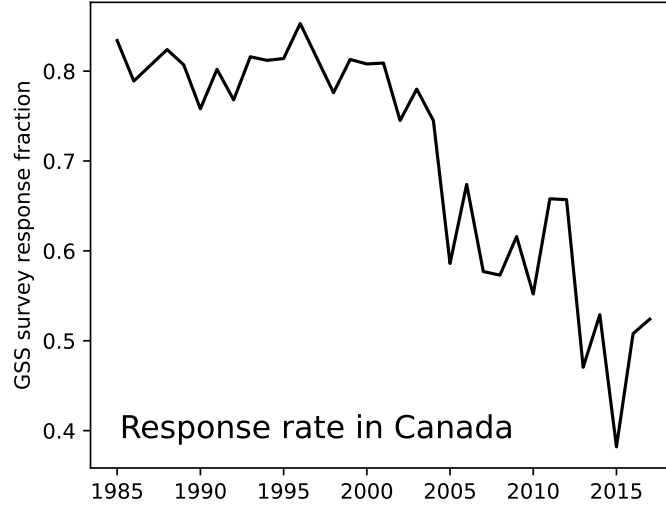
<sup>3</sup>See “Canadian Community Health Survey - Annual Component (CCHS): Summary of changes”,



**Fig. 2.** Life satisfaction trends across provinces (GSS)



**Fig. 3.** Life satisfaction trends across provinces (CCHS). The CCHS includes the Territories separately in the most recent available cycles, but in previous public releases, data for the territories were combined (“YT/NT/NU”). The shaded bands around each line represent confidence intervals, reflecting the size of the sample and its variance in each province and territory.



**Fig. 4.** Decreasing response rate to Statistics Canada GSS.

The difficulties in comparing measured LS over time, and in explaining differences and trends, may be evident from this brief examination of the Canadian case. A further challenge facing all national statistical agencies is the decline in response rates to social surveys. Figure 4 shows the historical response rates to the GSS: after being stable near 80% for over a decade, the fraction of Canadians willing to respond is on a long-term decline. While some social statistics can increasingly be derived from administrative data, there is for subjective variables no alternative to a survey.

Despite the challenges, numerous studies using Canadian data have shed light on the determinants of wellbeing,<sup>4</sup> and a public dataset exists of local-level LS averages, with possibly globally-unmatched geographic resolution (Helliwell, Shiplett, and Barrington-Leigh, 2019). A number of other specialized Statistics Canada surveys have posed the LS question, along with other important measures of wellbeing, including other domain-specific satisfaction questions. The GSS especially has been useful for quantifying social dimensions of Canadians’ lives, such as trust, social identity, and social interactions, which are known to be important determinants of LS. The recent quarterly CSS includes a number of such factors, including a sense of meaning and purpose, self-rated mental health, future outlook, loneliness, having someone to count on, a sense of belonging to a local community, and a measure of difficulty meeting household financial needs. In contrast to the U.K.’s measurement of the ONS4 *dimensions* of wellbeing, the CSS relies on LS

<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=3226>.

<sup>4</sup>For example, see Barrington-Leigh and Behzadnejad (2017a,b), Barrington-Leigh and Lemermeier (2021), Barrington-Leigh and Lemermeier (2023), Bonikowska et al. (2014), Burton and Phipps (2011), Burton and Phipps (2008), Gee and Vevers (1990), Helliwell (2002), Helliwell and Barrington-Leigh (2010, 2011), Helliwell, Shiplett, and Barrington-Leigh (2018, 2019), Helliwell, Shiplett, and Bonikowska (2020), Hill (2004), O’Sullivan (2011), and Shi et al. (2019).

and a sense of meaning and purpose as the only overarching indicators of wellbeing. In this approach, the aim is to track important determinants of wellbeing, rather than multiple dimensions of wellbeing.

## 2 Wellbeing initiatives in Canada

As in other countries, there is a long history in Canada of striving to define comprehensive and appropriate measures of social progress. Often these have been branded using the language of “well-being” or “quality of life” (QoL). The value of having such a cross-cutting index or measure of success includes being able to evaluate the success of government programs in a consistent and holistic way, as well as communicating and gauging an overall objective for society or for jurisdictions within the country.

For instance, in October 1999 Lucienne Robillard, a cabinet minister and President of the Treasury Board of Canada, tabled a report called *Managing for Results*, which announced a new effort to link societal indicators into “a more comprehensive performance framework to help provide a broader context both for measuring performance and developing policy” (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019). This led to a substantial report<sup>5</sup> by the Treasury Board Secretariat in 2000 on defining, measuring, and reporting on QoL with a vision for a comprehensive federal performance measurement and reporting process (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2020). The Treasury Board’s *Quality of Life Indicators* were developed and published annually between 2004 and 2010 — and then they were dropped.

Another federal government agency, the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, developed its own indicators of *Well-being in Canada*, measured and reported between 2009 and 2014 — and then they were dropped. Meanwhile, Indigenous Services Canada defined the “Community Well-Being index”<sup>6</sup> using four domains — education, labour force activity, income, and housing — in 2004 and reported it for census years up until 2016 (O’Sullivan, 2011). In 2017, Veterans Affairs Canada defined a *A Veteran Well-being Surveillance Framework*, which is still in use in 2024.<sup>7</sup>

This account of federal government initiatives demonstrates that proposing a universal evaluation framework has proven difficult, and faces both conceptual and political challenges. Indeed, it may be that the more any definition of wellbeing, or framework for measuring it, becomes prominent in a government’s policy platform or accountability framework, the more it risks being considered a partisan brand when the government changes.

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<sup>5</sup>The report is entitled *Quality of Life - A Concept Paper: Defining, Measuring and Reporting Quality of Life for Canadians* and is available at [https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pubs\\_pol/dcgpubs/pubsdisc/qol01-eng.asp](https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/pubsdisc/qol01-eng.asp)

<sup>6</sup>See <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016579/1557319653695>

<sup>7</sup>The development paper is available at <https://www.publications.gc.ca/site/fra/9.849051/publication.html> and a 2019 description of the index, with seven domains and 21 high level indicators, is available at <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/research/research-directorate/info-briefs/measuring-well-being>

## 2.1 The Quality of Life Framework

In April 2021, in accordance with a series of mandate letters from the Prime Minister in 2019, and in conjunction with the Federal Budget release, Canada’s Department of Finance (2021) published its work on a new Quality of Life Strategy. This conceptual framework and measurement strategy is intended to guide evidence-based budgeting and decision making at the federal level, and to strengthen integration and coordination between existing policy commitment frameworks.

Some distinguishing features of Canada’s framework are that (i) subjective wellbeing — and specifically life satisfaction — stands as a *headline indicator* outside and above the five quality of life *domains*, which are called Prosperity, Health, Society, Environment, and Good Governance; (ii) questions of long-run sustainability and questions of poverty, equity, and distributions are handled by overarching lenses, rather than reduced to a set of scalar indicators within any domain; and (iii) the quantitative indicators used to track each domain are considered “evergreen”, i.e., always provisional and subject to supplanting or supplementing as better data become available (Sanmartin et al., 2021). Some of those indicators are already available as data devolved to the scale of local city-level jurisdictions, and over time Statistics Canada plans to make numerous dimensions of disaggregated data available.

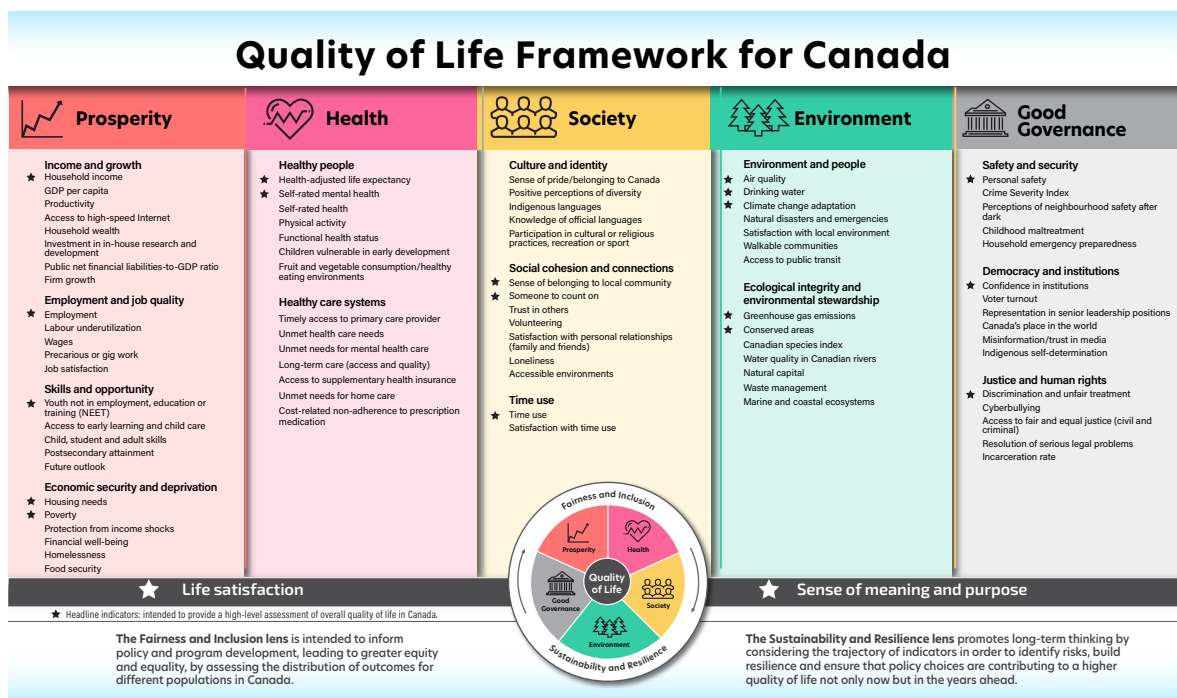
These features are farsighted, facilitate use in policy of academic evidence on life satisfaction, and have already inspired a similar framework in Australia (Treasury, 2023).

In January 2022, Statistics Canada (2022) published an ambitious and remarkable manifesto entitled “The System of National Quality-of-Life Statistics: Future Directions”. It lays out the intent to build a knowledge base within Statistics Canada that can support decision making based on characteristics at the individual level and on the latest data. This “what works” and “what is likely to work best” knowledge will eventually be available to individual citizens, as well as informing social interventions, service provision, and government budgeting through simulation and prediction of full distributional outcomes. Part of this agenda is to transcend the existing paradigm in which social statistics are oriented around individual surveys, and instead to track integrated outcomes all in one place (see also Hicks, 2022). According to the Future Directions document (Statistics Canada, 2022), the system will lead to:

“... major improvements in the operation of labour markets, health, learning and other social dimensions of life in Canada, both on average and for all population groups — and direct benefits to individuals as they make big decisions in the social, health and labour domains of life.”

This vision, somewhat of a holy grail of social sciences, is clearly a long-run objective. The January 2022 paper outlines the state the system could have achieved by 2027–2032, but explicitly admits that human capacity at Statistics Canada may be a limiting factor. It may be obvious to state that the acceleration of use and abilities of machine learning will likely transform our approach to prospective policy evaluation, and may be consistent with the level of ambition currently evident in the Canadian civil service.





**Fig. 5.** Canada's Quality of Life Framework. Five domains organize a set of best available indicators, which may be updated over time. Two subjective life evaluation measures are overarching, and two lenses addressing distributional issues and long time scales, respectively, apply to all domains and indicators. Source:

<https://www160.statcan.gc.ca/infosheet-infofiche-eng.htm>

## 2.2 Non-governmental initiatives

The federal government’s efforts to define transparent objectives are part of broader efforts across governments and civil society to move “beyond GDP”. Barrington-Leigh (2022) and Barrington-Leigh and Escande (2018) reviewed such efforts, including those in Canada, but a few initiatives outside the federal government’s QoL framework cannot go unmentioned in this section.

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) was developed by the Atkinson Charitable Foundation between 1999 and 2011, and consists of 64 indicators, largely available from Statistics Canada, organized into eight domains and further aggregated into a single index. It was intended to provide a lens for decision making, and a complement to the policy focus on economic growth. The most recent CIW report is from 2016, with data up to 2014, and it includes several progressive policy suggestions in addition to an account of the trends in the index.<sup>8</sup> These proposals include a universal basic income, national education strategy, and a more upstream approach to health.

The (eponymous) organization behind the CIW has also partnered with several Canadian communities to field social surveys of its own design, including in Ontario, the Yukon, and Nova Scotia. Such local surveys may in some cases be large enough to glean some useful data and inference, or they may act more to raise awareness of modern measures of wellbeing and as seeds of changing the conversation about policy making. The largest case is that of Engage Nova Scotia, an organization which has used a province-wide CIW-based wellbeing survey as part of its mission to build awareness, relationships, and new policy priorities for wellbeing at all levels across the province.

Another national effort at measuring wellbeing and influencing related policy is the Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being, developed and maintained by UNICEF Canada between 2013 and 2019. This “Index” is a collection of 125 indicators organized into nine domains, one of which (“Are we happy and respected?”) lies in the center, or at the root, of the other eight<sup>9</sup> and is composed of subjective survey response questions including life satisfaction. Unlike the CIW, the constituent indicators are only reported individually, without aggregating within or across domains.

In addition to these national initiatives, there are a number of other important local and regional wellbeing policy efforts across Canada. One outstanding case is Engage Nova Scotia, an organization which uses a wellbeing framing and a large, repeated province-wide wellbeing survey to build awareness, relationships, and new policy priorities at all levels across the province.

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<sup>8</sup>The report is available at [https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/c011676-nationalreport-ciw\\_final-s\\_0.pdf](https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/c011676-nationalreport-ciw_final-s_0.pdf).

<sup>9</sup>See <https://www.unicef.ca/en/what-canadian-index-child-and-youth-well-being> for diagrams and details.

## 2.3 Indigenous wellbeing

An important question for any effort to promote wellbeing measurement standards or wellbeing knowledge mobilization for policy in Canada is how to represent Indigenous peoples’ perspectives on wellbeing. This might mean recognizing distinct approaches, or it could mean incorporating Indigenous knowledge about wellbeing into a country-wide framework, as has happened to some extent in New Zealand.

The current status of the federal Quality of Life framework could be described as not yet reflecting the distinctiveness of Indigenous knowledge. On the other hand, the situation in Canada is entirely different from countries like New Zealand, where one ethnic group, the Maori, make up the vast majority of the Indigenous population, and 17% of the country’s overall population. In Canada the situation is much more fractured. Inuit, Métis, and over 50 distinct First Nations may have different concepts around wellbeing and, as importantly, different political and legal relationships to Canada. First Nations also differ in their proclivities to participate in frameworks or programs originating in the federal government or from “Western” academic thinking more generally. This latter outcome arises both from a history of betrayal and from a historical Western focus on overly-narrow economic outcomes as proxies of wellbeing, which lies in contrast to most Indigenous conceptions of wellbeing.

This is in spite of a similarity which may be noticed between Indigenous descriptions of wellbeing and the type of social- and place-based connectedness which looms large in the academic literature on life satisfaction. That is, while some Western academic, NGO, and governments bundle objective measures of environmental service sufficiency and long-run sustainability together with human outcomes under a “wellbeing” banner, many Indigenous frameworks and empirical evidence from the life satisfaction approach emphasize instead relationships between people and environment. For instance, the Chair of the Métis Data Governance Committee in BC writes that “health and wellness is rooted in community, culture, self-determination, language, spirituality, and *connection to the land*” (Métis Nation and BC Ministry of Health, 2022).

There are many Inuit, Métis, and First Nation projects which define wellbeing, often described as “health and wellness”, and which propose corresponding policy frameworks (First Nations Health Authority Nation and BC Ministry of Health, 2021; Podlasly et al., 2020).<sup>10</sup> For instance, the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation (e.g., 2015, 2020) has developed wellbeing frameworks and, with various partners, released a series of guides for policy implementation (Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, 2018a,b). The Nisga’a Lisims Government in northern British Columbia has developed their own Quality of Life strategy (2013), framework (2014), and repeated community survey (2018–), the latter to gauge “how well a person is living their daily life.”<sup>11</sup> An important

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<sup>10</sup>Others are focused on adapting a social determinants of health framework to an Indigenous context (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2014). This strays somewhat further from the wellbeing approach, in the sense of the perspective of clarifying determinants versus objectives, but there is overlap in content across these frameworks.

<sup>11</sup>See <https://www.nisgaanation.ca/about-1>.

intent of this effort is to be able to track and evaluate the impacts of the Nisga’a Final Agreement, an early example of a “modern treaty” for Indigenous land claims in Canada (Bouchard et al., 2021). As well as proposing a 22-indicator health and wellness framework, a report from First Nations Health Authority Nation and BC Ministry of Health (2021) suggests seven priority actions for policy to nourish the First Nations roots of wellness. Bouchard et al. (2021) review the shortcomings of previous central government efforts at measuring Indigenous wellbeing in Canada and emphasize the importance of collaborative and Indigenous-led initiatives to articulate wellbeing concepts and policy frameworks.

Despite the diversity across Canada’s First Nations, there is some coordination across the country on efforts to ensure data sovereignty in the future. The First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) considers the choice of what to measure, and the ownership, control, access, and possession of data, to be fundamental to address the long-term wellbeing of First Peoples. It coordinates a First Nations Regional Health Survey, and corresponding Regional Social Survey among regional governance organizations across Canada.

## 2.4 Canadian Wellbeing Knowledges Network

In an effort to hasten the impact of wellbeing science on policy and practice in Canada, a series of online meetings between key invited practitioners and policy makers interested in “wellbeing budgeting” was convened in 2020–2021. This was followed by a public conference in May 2021, entitled “Policies for Better Lives: Strategies for life satisfaction and human wellbeing”. It generated a number of specific policy proposals inspired by the life satisfaction evidence, and cemented a nascent wellbeing policy community which evolved into the Canadian Wellbeing Knowledges Network (CWKN). As an informal organization, the CWKN organized a further series of private reflections and strategy discussions, surveyed the existing wellbeing policy initiatives across Canada, and organized a two-day meeting in Ottawa, called “Wellbeing Ahead!”, which was attended by a federal cabinet minister and President of the Treasury Board, Mona Fortier; a federal senator, Margo Greenwood; the Chief Statistician, Anil Arora; as well as many Network members. The CWKN is still at an embryonic stage with respect to its ambition to provide capacity-building support and consultation for local governments, Indigenous groups, organizations, Provincial and Territorial governments, and federal departments working to inform policy making with evidence on wellbeing.

## 3 Evidence of effectiveness of wellbeing initiatives

An increased focus on measuring what matters can have broad impacts on policy by subtly shifting objectives and decision-making discussions, even before measurements can be quantified as causal outcomes of changes in policy and practice.

The life satisfaction approach offers a disciplined way to draw a line between evidence

and policy advice, while this may be harder with looser definitions. For instance, in the CIW report mentioned above, no clear connection is described between the proposed policies and the evidence from the index. Instead, 18 experts (not named in the report) were consulted for their opinions on “innovative and integrated policy directions” which would enhance the wellbeing of all Canadians. In other frameworks in which sustainability and social justice are bundled together, “wellbeing” risks becoming a largely rhetorical device to provide moral weight or attention for one’s policy platform.

While it is hard to find evidence of direct influence of the CIW on national policies, the CIW’s community wellbeing surveys have helped to change the conversation in local jurisdictions and regions, including the Yukon and Nova Scotia. These are the necessary steps in a long process of changing expectations from the bottom up.

Similarly, when asking whether the federal QoL framework has led to different decisions or allocations of public resources than would have happened without it, evidence is scant. Recent federal budgets have labeled funding programs according to QoL Framework domains which relate to anticipated program outcomes. This kind of labeling could occur as an *ex post* exercise, or it could already reflect a growing practice of upstream thinking about wellbeing outcomes and cross-department benefits and synergies when conceiving of spending. Either way, the ambitions of the federal initiative are far-reaching, and involve the long-term plan to build a knowledge base about the determinants of wellbeing at individual and group levels (Statistics Canada, 2022) suitable for informing a wide variety of decisions. Helliwell et al. (2022) review some early successes in applying a life satisfaction approach to program evaluation and to prospective cost-effectiveness estimates within the Canadian government.

Engage Nova Scotia, mentioned earlier, and its flagship program, the Nova Scotia Quality of Life Initiative, is growing in influence and reach by leveraging its wellbeing survey data and interactive online tools to explore wellbeing across the province. Its latest annual report mentions that it is now working with over 20 government departments and agencies on bringing their quality of life evidence and approach to policy discussions and priorities.

## 4 Key lessons learned to date

Due to the large number of governments and Indigenous governance structures in Canada, it is never possible to feel that everyone implicated by a discussion of “wellbeing in Canada” is represented at the table. This cannot therefore be a prerequisite for pursuing the mission of empowering organizations and governments to bring evidence on wellbeing to policy and practice. In the early experience of the CWKN, merely acting as a meeting point for people with similar needs or with complementary experience is a step towards better policy.

The CWKN has not prescribed a particular conceptual or measurement approach to wellbeing, and its membership holds diverse views about wellbeing. Nevertheless, much of the support cited for the idea that wellbeing evidence could inform policy tends to

be from the literature on life satisfaction — presumably due to its conceptual clarity. There is a balance, then, in disciplining the banner of “wellbeing policy” so as not to include anyone’s arbitrary policy platform, while at the same time attracting diverse contributions to knowledge about wellbeing.

One of the challenges faced by municipalities in Canada interested in adopting a wellbeing policy orientation is the cost of “reinventing the wheel,” i.e., formulating a local social survey or devising a wellbeing policy framework. A sensible but not inevitable solution is for top-down initiatives, for instance at the federal government level, to make their work easy to adapt or adopt by other stakeholders. Instantiating wellbeing frameworks and approaches with external partners may also be one key way to ensure their longevity beyond electoral cycles.

Ultimately, the aim is to change expectations, public discourse, and accountability around policy in order that the outcomes that matter are the transparent objectives of policy. These expectations are bottom-up changes, which is why a broad base of local wellbeing definition and measurement, community surveys and reflections, and local-government buy-in are critical aspects of wellbeing policy making for Canada.

## Actionable points

The following suggestions may be made in light of the wellbeing policy experience in Canada:

- Place a transparent, overarching indicator of wellbeing at the top of any evaluation framework, to allow for communication and synergies across government departments and programs
- Measuring social capital and trust as part of any policy program evaluation facilitates fuller evaluation of the monetary value of social impacts
- Especially in diverse cultural contexts, community support for wellbeing policy frameworks is best achieved through bottom-up processes to define wellbeing

Statistics Canada’s stated goal is to build a database able to inform analyses of wellbeing impacts of prospective policy. On the long run, this kind of knowledge must be open in order that it is available to civil society and other governments within Canada, and in order that it can leverage and inform experience outside Canada. A non-government or arms-length national organization could synthesize and mobilize such knowledge for all stakeholders in the country, also helping to ensure continuity of wellbeing policy accountability across changing governments.

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