

Statistical bulletin

Personal well-being in the UK: local authority update, 2015 to 2016

Estimates of personal well-being for UK local authorities from the financial year ending 2012 to financial year ending 2016.



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1 . Main points

This publication presents estimates of personal well-being for UK local authorities over the last 5 years.

For the first time we have published [interactive tools](#) which allow you to explore how personal well-being has changed in your area over the 5 year period, to compare multiple areas at once and to compare your local area to the UK overall.

It follows the publication of [headline personal well-being estimates for the UK](#), in July of this year.

2 . Statistician's quote

We have seen personal well-being improving on a UK-wide basis over the past five years. But today's data paints a richer picture, enabling people to explore what's been happening in their local area. This will help individuals, communities and local authorities to look at well-being locally alongside other traditional measures of progress.

Dawn Snape, Quality of Life, Office for National Statistics

3 . Background information

After extensive public consultation, we identified 10 aspects of life (or domains) that people said mattered to their well-being. These include: personal well-being, our relationships, our health, the economy, and the environment. [The National Well-being measures](#) report on indicators for all of these and have done since 2012. They are updated every 6 months with the latest picture across the UK.

When collected over time, personal well-being data can provide an indication of how the well-being of a nation is changing. Since 2011, we have asked personal well-being questions to adults in the UK, to better understand how they feel about their lives. The personal well-being questions are a part of the wider Measuring National Well-being programme, which aims to look beyond gross domestic product (GDP) at what matters most to people in the UK.

4 . Things you need to know

The 4 personal well-being questions are:

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

People are asked to respond on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”.

Every year since 2011, a large sample of UK adults aged 16 and over has answered these questions. We produce estimates of the mean ratings for all 4 personal well-being questions, as well as their distributions, using the thresholds that can be found in [background note 1](#).

[Previous research](#) has shown health, relationships and employment are all factors that matter to personal well-being, however it is also important to consider each area's local circumstances, when looking at the well-being of local authorities.

Personal well-being data will now be included within the main Annual Population Survey (APS) dataset rather than released as a separate dataset. As a result of this, it has been necessary to revise the personal well-being series. For more information see [Impact of transition to Annual Population Survey dataset](#).

5 . How do people rate their personal well-being in your area?

Personal Well-being Explorer, financial years ending 2012 to 2016

1. Comparisons between areas should be done so with caution as these estimates are provided from a sample survey. [Confidence intervals](#) should be taken into account when assessing differences.

Personal Well-being Interactive Maps, financial years ending 2012 to 2016

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6 . Related ONS publications

[Personal well-being in the UK: 2015 to 2016](#)
[Measuring national well-being in the UK, domains and measures: Sept 2016](#)
[Measuring National Well-being: At what age is Personal Well-being the highest?](#)
[Measuring National Well-being, What matters most to Personal Well-being?](#)
[Economic Well-being: Quarter 1 Jan to Mar 2016](#)
[Social capital across the UK: 2011 to 2012](#)

7 . Quality and methodology

The [Personal Well-being in the UK Quality and Methodology Information document](#) contains important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data
- the quality of the output: including the accuracy of the data, how it compares with related data
- uses and users
- how the output was created

8. Background notes

1. Labelling of thresholds

Table 1: Labelling of thresholds

Life satisfaction, worthwhile and happiness scores		Anxiety scores	
Response on a 10 point scale	Label	Response on a 10 point scale	Label
0 – 4	Low	0 – 1	Very low
5 – 6	Medium	2 – 3	Low
7 – 8	High	4 – 5	Medium
9 – 10	Very high	6 – 10	High

Source: Office for National Statistics

2. The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as [National Statistics](#), in accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#) and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.