

Statistical bulletin

Quality of life in the UK: August 2022

An overview of UK's progress across ten domains of national well-being – personal well-being, relationships, health, what we do, where we live, personal finance, economy, education and skills, governance, and environment. This bulletin provides the first update to the Measures of National Well-being dashboard since 2019.

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1 . Main points

- Levels of personal well-being deteriorated during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and in January to March 2022 continued to remain below their pre-coronavirus (October to December 2019) levels.
- In June to July 2022, people in Great Britain reported high levels of social capital; 86.8% of adults agreed that they can rely on people in their life if they have a serious problem, while 66.1% declared that in general they trust most people.
- Sports participation rates changed in May 2020 to May 2021, compared with earlier time-periods; 60.9% of adults in England reported participating in moderate intensity sport or physical activity for at least 150 minutes a week, a decline since May 2019 to May 2020 (62.8%).
- At the end of 2021, after almost two years of the coronavirus pandemic and the associated increases in public spending, the UK's public sector net debt reached 97.3% of Gross Domestic Product, the highest value since the early 1960's.
- Greenhouse gas emissions continued to decrease in the UK in 2020, with an estimated 405.5 MtCO₂e emitted (compared with 447.9 MtCO₂e in 2019); this decrease was related to the reduction in production and transport during coronavirus and was not sustained in 2021 (provisional 2021 estimate: 424.5 MtCO₂e).
- This bulletin is accompanied by the [Measures of National Well-being Dashboard: Quality of Life in the UK](#).

Estimates are from different data sources and therefore are representative for different geographies and time periods. Therefore, caution is advised when making comparisons between indicators and over time. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic on data collection and people's opinions should also be considered. For more detail on data sources, see [Section 15: Measuring the data](#).

2 . Personal well-being

Personal (subjective) well-being of individuals is central to understanding national well-being (see [Section 14: Glossary](#)).

Personal well-being data presented for the periods Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2020 to Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2021, sourced from the Annual Population Survey datasets year ending March 2020 to year ending June 2021, are affected by an error in the calculation of population weights. This affects the age breakdown of the population in Wales to a small extent. Breakdowns for the UK as a whole would be largely unaffected. We aim to explore the extent of this error on personal well-being estimates and revise them as necessary in September 2022.

In January to March 2022, 25.5% of adults aged 16 years and over in the UK reported a very high level of overall life satisfaction, while 32.2% reported a very high level of feeling that the things they do are worthwhile. For emotions felt the previous day, 30.5% of people rated their happiness as very high and 34.1% reported having felt very low levels of anxiety.

In January to March 2022, the four measures of personal well-being continued to remain below their pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) levels and the levels in January to March 2017, showing long-term deterioration in personal well-being in the UK (Figure 1).

However, there were short-term improvements since January to March 2021 with people reporting very high life satisfaction (an increase from 21.7% to 25.5%) and very high levels of happiness (an increase from 27.6% to 30.5%). The percentage of people reporting very high feeling that things they do in life are worthwhile and very low levels of anxiety remained stable from the previous year.

Figure 1: In January to March 2022, the four measures of personal well-being continued to remain below their pre-coronavirus levels (October to December 2019)

Percentage of adults giving a very high rating of their life satisfaction, whether they feel the things they do in life are worthwhile and happiness, and a very low rating of anxiety, UK, April 2011 to March 2022

Notes:

1. Questions: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?", "Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?", "Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?", and "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?"
2. Questions are answered on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely".
3. Very high estimates of life satisfaction, whether you feel the things you do in life are worthwhile and happiness are defined as answering 9 or 10 out of 10. Very low estimates of anxiety are defined as answering 0 or 1 out of 10.
4. For more information, see [Personal well-being user guidance](#).

Download the data

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A more detailed analysis of the changes in personal well-being levels since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic can be found in our [Personal well-being in the UK, quarterly Statistical bulletin series](#).

For fortnightly estimates of personal well-being, see our [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain Statistical bulletin series](#).

3 . Our relationships

People's relationships have an impact on their well-being outcomes, including quality of life and happiness.

In the UK, 4.3% of adults aged 16 years and over reported they were fairly or extremely unhappy with their relationship in January 2019 to December 2020. This represents a long-term improvement (decline), with the percentage of adults in unhappy relationships almost halving compared with 8.3% in January 2013 to December 2014. Following the peaks in January 2011 to December 2012 and January 2013 to December 2014, the percentage of adults in unhappy relationships has declined and remained stable since January 2015.

The percentage of adults feeling lonely often or always remained stable in recent years. In 2020 to 2021, 6.5% of adults aged 16 years and over in England reported feeling lonely often or always, no short-term change compared with 2019 to 2020 (6.4%). The incremental increase from 5.4% in 2016 to 2017 was not statistically significant (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The percentage of people reporting they were unhappy with their relationships and the percentage of people who felt lonely often or always have been generally stable in recent years

Percentage of people in fairly or extremely unhappy relationships, UK, 2015 to 2016 until 2019 to 2020, and the percentage of people who feel lonely often or always, England, 2016 to 2017 to 2020 to 2021

Download the data

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In terms of relationships with social support networks and communities, people in Great Britain appear to feel well connected. In June to July 2022, 86.8% of adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain strongly agreed or agreed that they can rely on people in their life if they have a serious problem. In the same period, 66.1% of adults declared that in general they trust most people. These are both metrics of social capital. High levels of social capital support a well-functioning society and can be expected to support national well-being. For more information, see our [Social capital in the UK: April 2020 to March 2021 bulletin](#).

For fortnightly estimates of loneliness for Great Britain, see our [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain Statistical bulletin series](#).

4 . Health

An individual's physical and mental health is an important component of their overall well-being.

The latest data available for this domain are representative for 2018, 2019 and 2020. At present, any potential impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on health indicators cannot be evaluated.

In 2018 to 2020, the average healthy life expectancy at birth was estimated at 63.6 years for females and 62.8 years for males in the UK. Between 2011 and 2020, healthy life expectancy remained relatively stable for both males and females at the UK level, with females having longer healthy life expectancy than males. However, further socio-economic and geographical inequalities in healthy life expectancy exist in the UK (see our [Health state life expectancies, UK: 2018 to 2020 bulletin](#)).

While this suggests that on the whole the UK population's lifetime health did not change, other indicators show that people's current health-related well-being varied over time.

In 2019 to 2020, 46.9% of people reported being mostly or completely satisfied with their health. No change has been observed over the short term (47.8% in 2018 to 2019), but the health satisfaction levels deteriorated over the long term (49.6% in 2014 to 2015). Although the health satisfaction levels remained stable between 2017 and 2020, the percentage of people reporting some evidence of depression or anxiety increased (Figure 3).

In 2019 to 2020, 21.8% of people reported some evidence of depression or anxiety, the highest rate since the beginning of data collection in 2009 to 2010. This represents a deterioration (increase) over the short term (19.8% in 2018 to 2019) and the long term (17.4% in 2014 to 2015).

Figure 3: The percentage of people satisfied with their health remained unchanged since 2018, while the percentage of people reporting some evidence of depression or anxiety increased over the same period

Percentage of people who are mostly or completely satisfied with their health, and the percentage of people reporting some evidence of depression or anxiety, UK, 2014 to 2015 until 2019 to 2020

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

More recent analysis on the prevalence of depressive symptoms among adults in Great Britain during the coronavirus pandemic can be found in our [Coronavirus and depression in adults in Great Britain article series](#).

5 . What we do

Participation in and satisfaction with work and leisure activities influences people's well-being, lifestyles and relationships.

In March to May 2022, the unemployment rate was estimated at 3.8% in the UK. This represents a short-term improvement (decrease) compared with 4.9% in March to May 2021, and a long-term improvement from 4.4% in March to May 2017. During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the unemployment rate rose above 5% between August 2020 and February 2021 but returned to the pre-coronavirus (December 2019 to February 2020) levels by October to December 2021. These fluctuations are coupled with changes in labour market inactivity and vacancy rates, and are explored in our [Labour market overview: July 2022 bulletin](#).

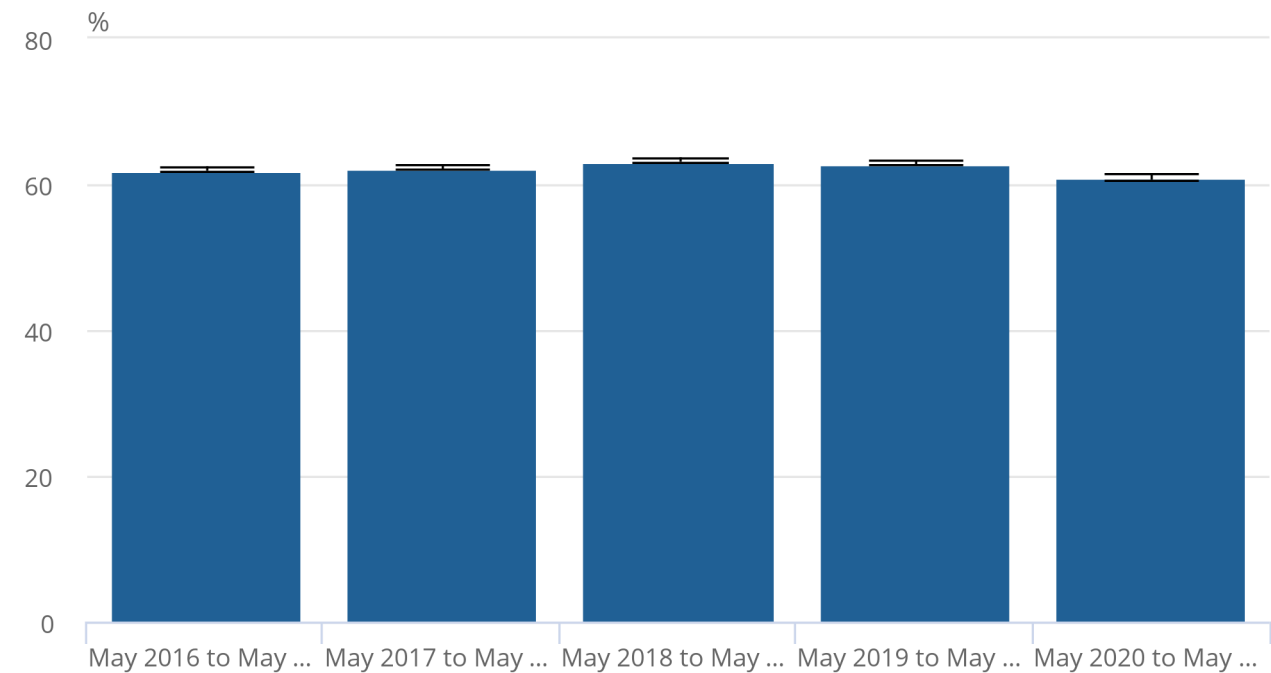
For leisure participation, in May 2020 to May 2021, 60.9% of adults aged 16 years and over in England reported participating in moderate intensity sport or physical activity for an average of at least 150 minutes a week (the NHS recommendation for adults). This represents a short-term decline since 2019 to 2020 (62.8%) and is the lowest rate recorded since 2016 to 2017 (Figure 4). However, this may be explained by data collection coinciding with periods of heightened coronavirus infection rates and restrictions.

Figure 4: In 2020 to 2021, the rate of participation in moderate intensity sport or physical activity in England has been the lowest since 2016 to 2017

Percentage of adults who on average take part in moderate intensity sport or physical activity for at least 150 minutes a week, England, May 2016 to May 2017 to May 2020 to May 2021

Figure 4: In 2020 to 2021, the rate of participation in moderate intensity sport or physical activity in England has been the lowest since 2016 to 2017

Percentage of adults who on average take part in moderate intensity sport or physical activity for at least 150 minutes a week, England, May 2016 to May 2017 to May 2020 to May 2021



Source: Sports England – Active Lives Survey

Notes:

1. Moderate intensity activity is defined as an activity which raises heart rate; most sports and physical activities are included (aside from gardening).
2. Bouts of 10 or more minutes of activity are added up to average weekly activity levels.
3. Moderate intensity activity of 150 minutes a week is the NHS recommended amount for adults.

In October 2021 to March 2022, 86.8% of adults aged 16 years and over in England declared that they engaged with the arts sector in person in the last 12 months. In June to July 2022, 29.2% of adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain reported that they volunteered (gave unpaid help to clubs, groups, charities or organisations) in the previous 12 months, and 58.9% reported doing so at least once a month.

While people's involvement in work and leisure activities was disrupted by coronavirus, it is worth noting that sustained levels of job and leisure satisfaction were observed pre-coronavirus until 2019 to 2020. In 2019 to 2020, in the UK, 58.4% of adults aged 16 years and over declared being mostly or completely satisfied with their current job, while 45.0% reported being mostly or completely satisfied with the amount of leisure time they have. The percentages of people satisfied with their job and leisure time remained unchanged over the short term, compared with 2018 to 2019. However, job satisfaction has been improving incrementally over the long term since 2013 to 2014. The percentage of people satisfied with their leisure time increased between 2013 to 2014 and 2014 to 2015, but there was no long-term change between 2014 to 2015 (44.7%) and 2019 to 2020 (45.0%).

6 . Where we live

Where people live, the quality of their local area and their community, and how they feel about it can have a significant impact on the well-being of individuals.

In the year ending March 2020, the personal crime incidence rate was estimated at 49.8 offences per 1,000 adults in England and Wales. This represents a long-term improvement (decrease) compared with an estimated 65.9 crimes per 1,000 adults in the year ending March 2015, a reduction by more than two-fifths from the year ending March 2011 (Figure 5).

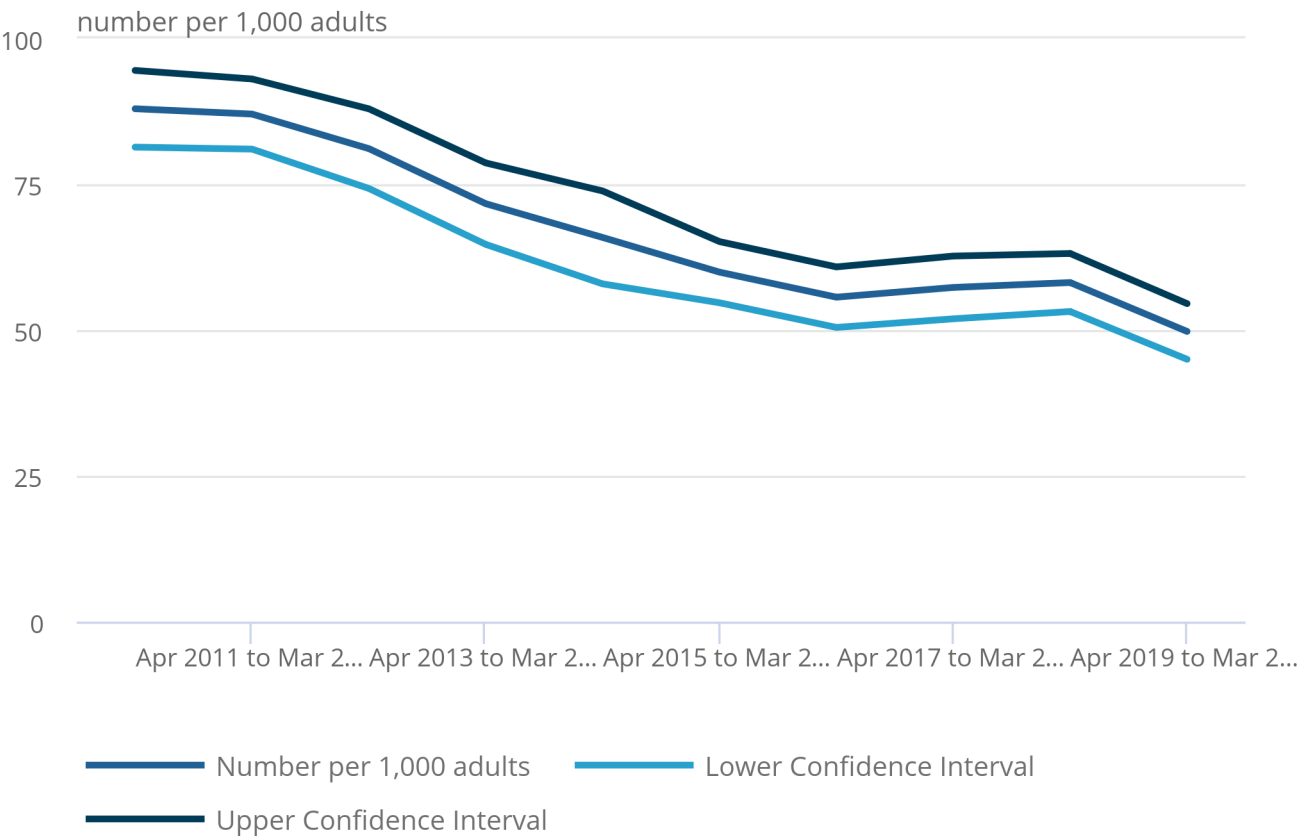
Patterns of crime over the last two years have been affected substantially by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and government restrictions on social contacts. While periods of national lockdown have seen decreases in the incidence of many types of crime, fraud and computer misuse offences have increased substantially. Estimates from the Telephone Crime Survey for England and Wales for the year ending March 2022 compared with the pre-coronavirus year ending March 2020 showed no statistically significant change in total crime.

Figure 5: Incidence rates of personal crime have been falling in England and Wales between the year ending March 2011 and the year ending March 2020.

Incidence of personal crime, England and Wales, April 2010 to March 2011 until April 2019 to March 2020

Figure 5: Incidence rates of personal crime have been falling in England and Wales between the year ending March 2011 and the year ending March 2020.

Incidence of personal crime, England and Wales, April 2010 to March 2011 until April 2019 to March 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime Survey for England and Wales

Notes:

1. Presented estimates are based on data collected from face-to-face interviews using the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). The methodology of data collection changed during the coronavirus pandemic, and from May 2020 onwards data have been collected using the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW). Data on personal crime incidence collected using TCSEW are not directly comparable with those presented in this bulletin and have not been included. [The Office for National Statistics' guidance explains comparability between the face-to-face CSEW and the TCSEW.](#)

In the year ending March 2022, 67.7% of females and 91.1% of males in England and Wales reported feeling very or fairly safe when walking alone after dark in their local area. This represents no short-term change for either females or males since the year ending March 2021 (69.5% and 89.5%, respectively).

For accessibility of local spaces, 60.9% of people in England reported that they accessed the natural environment in the last 14 days in March 2022. This represents no short-term change when compared with March 2021 (63.2%). Between June 2020 and March 2022, the percentage of people visiting the natural environment remained generally stable. April 2020 (the first month of data collection, and the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic and the first national lockdown) saw the lowest proportion of people (49.0%) reporting accessing the natural environment.

7 . Personal finance

How households and individuals are managing financially influences their life satisfaction, happiness and anxiety levels.

The estimates in this domain are representative for periods up to March 2021. Therefore, more recent changes to people's financial well-being are not covered in this bulletin.

In the financial year ending March 2021, the median household disposable income in the UK was estimated at £31,385. This represents a short-term increase (improvement) from £30,762 in the financial year ending March 2020, and long-term increase (improvement) from £29,237 in the financial year ending March 2016 (Figure 6). All household disposable income estimates are adjusted for inflation and expressed in 2020 to 2021 prices.

Figure 6: In the financial year ending March 2021, median household disposable income has increased (in real terms) compared with the financial year ending March 2020 and the financial year ending March 2016

Median equivalised household disposable income (in 2020 to 2021 prices), UK, financial year ending 1999 to 2000 until financial year ending 2020 to 2021

Notes:

1. All estimates are adjusted for inflation to 2020 to 2021 prices, using the Consumer Prices Index including owner-occupiers' housing costs (CPIH).
2. The median disposable household income is the estimate for the "middle household" if all households in the UK were sorted in a list by their disposable income.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

The percentage of individuals living in households with less than 60% of relative median household income (before housing costs) remained stable over time until March 2021. In April 2020 to March 2021, it was estimated that 15.8% of people in the UK live in low-income households, no change over the long term from 16.4% in April 2015 to March 2016. Please note that the relative low-income data do not account for inflation, so the estimates and change over time may be different in real terms.

The subjective measures of people's financial well-being suggest overall improvement until 2019 to 2020. In 2019 to 2020, prior to the current increases in the cost of living, 44.5% of adults aged 16 years and over in the UK reported being satisfied with the income of their household, a long-term improvement compared with 42.8% in 2014 to 2015. While no change was evident in the percentage of people who find it difficult to manage financially over the same five-year period, it did improve (decrease) by 5.3 percentage points over the decade since 2009 to 2010. In 2019 to 2020, 7.0% of adults aged 16 years and over reported finding it quite or very difficult to manage financially in the UK. However, at present the rising inflation and increasing cost of living are becoming a major source of concern for the public and can be expected to have an impact on people's attitudes and financial well-being in the immediate future. For more information, see our [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 20 to 31 July 2022 bulletin](#).

8 . Economy

Economy is an important contextual domain for national well-being as it affects the UK's income and wealth, and ability to provide public services. It also more broadly supports jobs, wealth creation and standards of living.

The commentary in this section is based on annual figures. Monthly and quarterly data are also available on the Office for National Statistics' website.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affected the UK's economic well-being by bringing large parts of the economy to a halt and increasing social support spending. At the end of 2021, after almost two years since the beginning of coronavirus, public sector net debt (PSND) reached 97.3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is the highest value since the early 1960's, and a slight increase on the 95.6% of GDP recorded at the end of 2020. However, the year-on-year increase in PSND as percentage of GDP between 2020 and 2021 (1.7 percentage points) was much lower compared with the increase between 2019 and 2020 (13.2 percentage points).

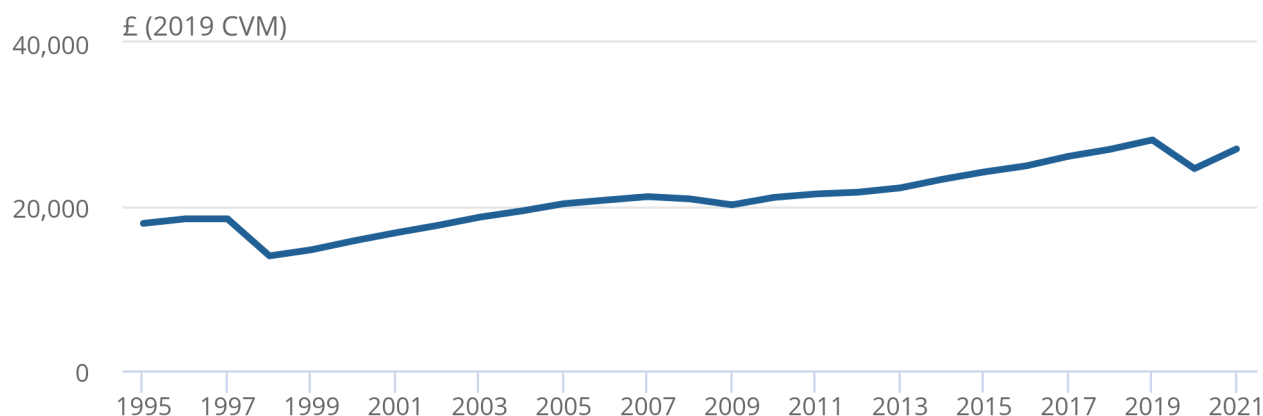
Net national disposable income per capita, was estimated at £27,023 in 2021. Compared with 2020, this represents a short-term improvement from £24,625, and a long-term improvement from £24,961 in 2016. However, as of 2021 the national disposable income per capita remained below the pre-coronavirus level (£28,125 in 2019).

Figure 7: Net national disposable income per capita has been generally increasing in the UK between 1995 and 2021

Real net national disposable income per head, 2019 chained volume measure, seasonally adjusted, UK, 1995 to 2021

Figure 7: Net national disposable income per capita has been generally increasing in the UK between 1995 and 2021

Real net national disposable income per head, 2019 chained volume measure, seasonally adjusted, UK, 1995 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – National Accounts

Notes:

1. Net national disposable income per head is a measure of all the national income available to UK residents and institutions after deduction of capital consumption.
2. Estimates are seasonally adjusted and presented at 2019 chained volume measures (CVM).
3. Data are subject to revision as part of the annual National Accounts Blue Book update.

In 2021, the UK's annual average inflation rate, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH), was estimated at 2.5%, an increase from 1.0% in 2020.

In June 2022, the inflation rate continued to grow in the UK past the initial economic recovery and reached 8.2%. The effect of rising inflation on the cost of living is now becoming a major source of concern for the public and can be expected to have an impact on national well-being in the immediate future.

9 . Education and skills

Education and skills contribute to personal and national well-being by improving individuals' socio-economic outcomes.

In 2020, the estimated value of the UK's human capital, measured as the total net present value of working age adults' projected lifetime earnings in real terms, was £23.8 trillion, an increase (improvement) over both the short term (£23.5 trillion in 2019) and the long term (£23.1 trillion in 2015). The over-time increase in the UK's human capital can be mainly explained by the rise in the number of working-aged people (those aged 16 to 65 years) with at least an undergraduate degree, or equivalent, as their highest level of qualification.

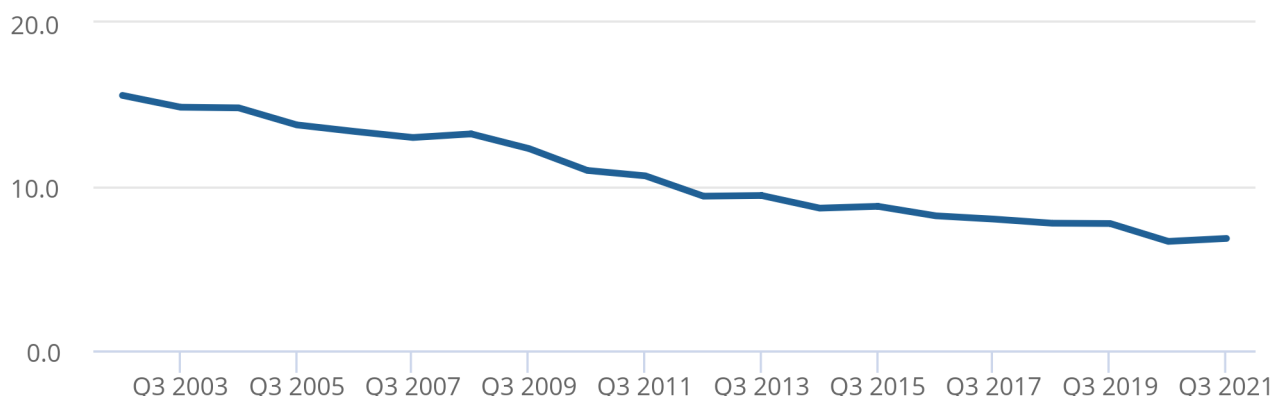
In July to September 2021, 6.8% of adults aged 16 to 64 years were estimated to have no qualifications. This represents a long-term improvement (decrease) from 8.2% in July to September 2016 and is less than half of the percentage reported in July to September 2002 (15.6%).

Figure 8: In July to September 2021, the percentage of working-aged adults with no qualifications was less than half that in July to September 2002

Percentage of adults aged 16 to 64 years with no qualifications, UK, July to September 2002 to July to September 2021

Figure 8: In July to September 2021, the percentage of working-aged adults with no qualifications was less than half that in July to September 2002

Percentage of adults aged 16 to 64 years with no qualifications, UK, July to September 2002 to July to September 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Labour Force Survey

Notes:

1. Estimates for 2002 to 2007 are based on a population of men aged 16 to 64 years and women aged 16 to 59 years. Women aged 60 to 64 years who were in employment are also included.
2. In 2011, the survey question was altered to improve picking up qualifications obtained outside the UK. This has been partly responsible for the drop in percentage of those with no qualifications between 2010 and 2011.
3. Estimates exclude respondents who did not state their qualifications or did not know if they had a qualification.

In January to March 2022, 10.4% of young people aged 16 to 24 years in the UK were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET); no change over the previous five years (11.2% in January to March 2017). However, it is an improvement compared with all quarters between January to March 2010 and April to June 2015.

10 . Governance

Good governance, underpinned by trust and political engagement of the citizens, contributes to better social and economic outcomes.

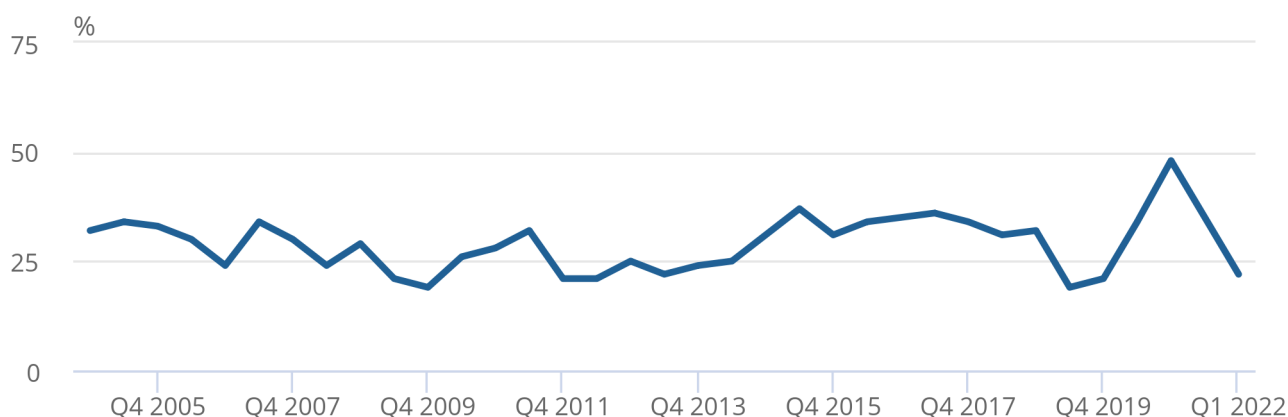
In the UK, the percentage of people who tend to trust the national government fluctuated between 2004 and 2022, becoming increasingly volatile since November 2018. In January to February 2022, 22% of adults aged 15 years and over in the UK said that they tend to trust the national government. This is a short-term deterioration (decrease) by 26 percentage points since February to March 2021. In February to March 2021, 48% of adults agreed that they tend to trust the government, the highest percentage recorded since 2004.

Figure 9: Trust in national government has peaked in February to March 2021 and fallen since

Percentage of people who tend to trust the national government, UK, October to November 2004 to January to February 2022

Figure 9: Trust in national government has peaked in February to March 2021 and fallen since

Percentage of people who tend to trust the national government, UK, October to November 2004 to January to February 2022



Source: Eurobarometer

Notes:

1. Respondents were asked if they "tend to trust" or "tend not to trust" a range of institutions, including the national government.

For civic engagement, in June to July 2022, 65.8% of adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain reported feeling that they do not have any say in what the government does.

11 . Environment

Natural environment provides services that make human life possible and, as such, can affect people's quality of life.

In March 2021, 40.6 million hectares of the UK's land and sea were designated as protected areas, both a short-term and a long-term improvement compared with 28.6 million hectares in 2019 and 23.5 million hectares in 2016. The percentage of UK energy consumed from renewable sources was 13.6% in 2020, a long-term improvement by 6 percentage points from 7.6% in 2015.

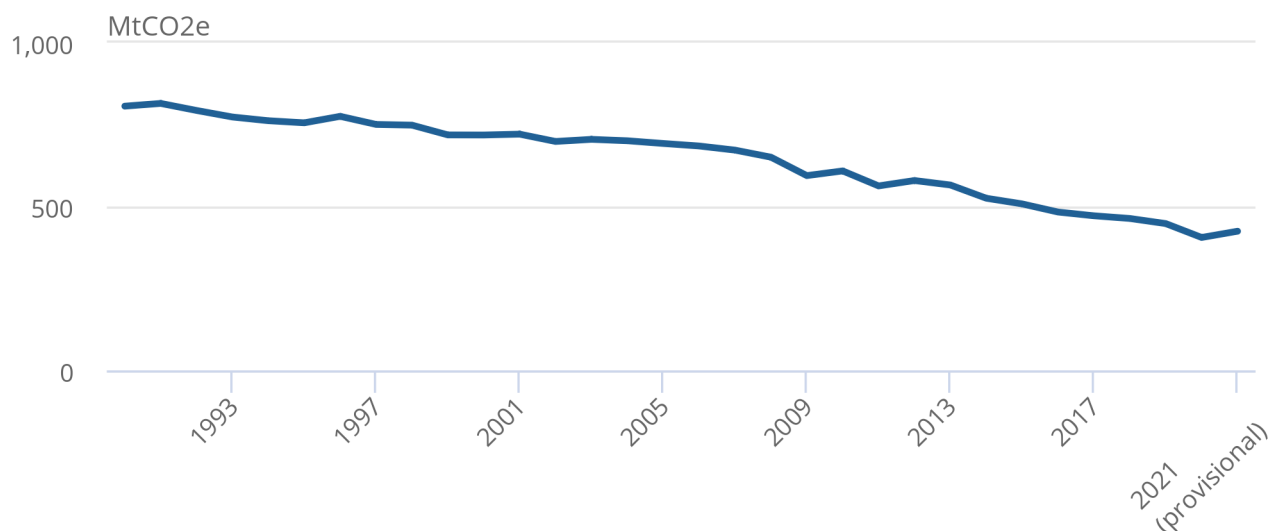
The UK's greenhouse gas emission rates improved (decreased), and almost halved between 1990 and 2020. An estimated 405.5 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (MtCO₂e) greenhouse gas were emitted in the UK in 2020, an improvement over both the short term (447.9 MtCO₂e in 2019) and the long term (507.9 MtCO₂e in 2015). However, it should be noted that the decrease in greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 was related to the reduction in production and transport in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The provisional greenhouse gas emission estimate for 2021 is 424.5 MtCO₂e, a short-term deterioration (increase) since 2020 but sustained long-term improvement (decrease) since 483.1 MtCO₂e in 2016.

Figure 10: UK greenhouse gas emissions almost halved between 1990 and 2020

Total greenhouse gas emissions, UK, 1990 to 2021

Figure 10: UK greenhouse gas emissions almost halved between 1990 and 2020

Total greenhouse gas emissions, UK, 1990 to 2021



Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – UK territorial greenhouse gas emissions national statistics

Notes:

1. The 2021 estimate is provisional and subject to revision when the final UK greenhouse gas emission statistics for 2021 will be published.
2. Presented estimates are produced on the basis of UK territory (for example, emissions within the UK territory). The Office for National Statistics also publishes greenhouse gas emission figures that are compiled on the UK resident's basis (for example, include emissions from UK residents abroad and exclude domestic emissions from non-UK residents).

As coronavirus had an impact on reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, the recycling rate for waste from households also decreased. In 2020, 44.4% of household waste was recycled, a small deterioration compared with 46.0% in 2019. Over the long term, no change from 44.5% in 2015 was observed.

12 . Future developments

The Measures of National Well-being (MNW) framework was developed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in 2011 to monitor and report on “how the UK is doing” by producing indicators on the well-being of the nation through the 10 areas of life people told us mattered most to their well-being.

Reflecting on whether changes to society from the framework's development to now – including for example changes brought about by the UK's exit from the European Union, the Coronavirus pandemic or the current cost of living challenges, will have affected what matters most to well-being in the UK today; our assessment is that the ten areas of life that were identified as important back in 2011, remain important today. However, at the more detailed level, we want to make sure the 44 measures captured under the framework are still the best measures of well-being in the UK.

On 3 October 2022, we launched a review of the existing Office for National Statistics (ONS) Measures of National Well-being to make sure we are still capturing what is most important to the well-being of the UK public today. The review will also consider how we should best communicate the national well-being insights. The collected feedback will be incorporated into a recommendations report, due to be published in Spring 2023.

National well-being constitutes one of the core pillars of the ‘Beyond GDP’ approach to measuring a nation's progress. As such, this release is being published alongside the latest [economic](#) and [climate change](#) insights to provide a more complete picture of the welfare of the UK and the UK public. Please see the [blog - Measuring Progress: it's not just about GDP](#) for more detail on the statistical releases published today.

13 . Quality of life in the UK data

[Measures of National Well-being Dashboard: Quality of Life in the UK](#)

Data dashboard | Released 12 August 2022

Data dashboard providing an overview of the UK's progress against 44 indicators across the 10 domains of national well-being. National level data, trend over time and the assessment of change are presented for each indicator. The data sources and associated insight reports for each indicator can be accessed through the dashboard by following the links in chart subtitles.

[Measuring national well-being: domains and measures](#)

Dataset | Released 12 August 2022

Latest data, times series data and detailed information for the measures of national well-being. Includes estimates for all indicators from each domain, sub-national breakdowns (where available), and links to the data sources and associated release.

[Quarterly personal well-being estimates – seasonally adjusted](#)

Dataset | Released on 12 August 2022

Seasonally adjusted quarterly estimates of life satisfaction, feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile, happiness and anxiety in the UK.

[Quality of information for quarterly personal well-being estimates](#)

Dataset | Released on 12 August 2022

Confidence intervals and sample sizes for quarterly estimates of personal well-being in the UK.

[Quarterly personal well-being estimates – non-seasonally adjusted](#)

Dataset | Released on 12 August 2022

Non-seasonally adjusted quarterly estimates of life satisfaction, feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile, happiness and anxiety in the UK.

14 . Glossary

Measures of national well-being

There are ten domains of national well-being that the UK public told us were the areas of life that mattered most to them:

- personal well-being
- our relationships
- health
- what we do
- where we live
- personal finance
- economy
- education and skills
- governance
- environment

Within these ten domains there are 44 indicators of national well-being. The indicators include both objective measures (for example, unemployment rate) and subjective measures (for example, job satisfaction) to provide a comprehensive picture of the nation's well-being and societal progress.

Personal well-being

In the UK, personal well-being has been measured since April 2011 using questions on:

- life satisfaction
- whether we think the things we do in life are worthwhile
- happiness
- anxiety

For more information, see the [Personal well-being user guidance](#).

Social capital

Social capital is a term used to describe the extent and nature of our connections with others and the collective attitudes and behaviours between people that support a well-functioning, close-knit society.

It is measured through the four core domains of:

- personal relationships
- social network support
- civic engagement
- trust and cooperative norms

For more information on measuring social capital, see the [Social capital in the UK: April 2020 to March 2021 bulletin](#).

15 . Measuring the data

National well-being indicators

This release provides an update on 44 indicators across 10 domains of national well-being, using the latest data available as of July 2022. The selection of indicators is based on the national well-being framework established by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in 2011, following a public consultation. Some changes to the data sources and specific indicators used, compared with previous releases, were necessary for this update to ensure data availability and comparability. We have updated three existing indicators and added three new ones to reflect the Government Statistical Service (GSS) social capital harmonised standard and improve measurement of social capital as part of national well-being.

We have only commented on the indicators where the latest estimate is available for 2019 to 2020 or later periods. For the majority, only the national level data are discussed. Any potential sub-population inequalities in the data are not captured.

The full set of national well-being estimates, including historical data and assessment of over-time change where possible, and the full list of indicator changes are available in the accompanying data tables. The sub-population breakdowns by country and the International Territorial Level 1 (ITL1) region, age and sex are also provided where possible.

All analysed data were known to be current as of 28 July 2022. Data sources for individual indicators can be accessed by following source links in our National well-being dashboard and our Quality of life data tables.

Data coverage

The data come from several data sources that differ in terms of covered geographies, sampled populations and periods of data collection. They are referenced throughout for each indicator and detailed in the accompanying datasets.

In 2020 and 2021, several of the data sources were affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in terms of the mode and timeliness of data collection or sample composition. Therefore, caution should be taken when making comparisons between indicators and over-time.

For the indicators where the UK-wide data are not available, alternative data sources may exist for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, but differences in methodology may affect comparability of the data. For national well-being data collected by the devolved administrations, see the Related links section.

Comparability

Short-term change is assessed by comparison to the previous year, or the latest previous figure if one year comparison is not available. Long-term change is defined as change over the previous five years or, if not available, the next previous figure.

Confidence intervals are provided within the data tables alongside this release (where available). Where changes over time are presented in this bulletin, associated confidence intervals are used to assess the statistical significance of the differences.

For some of the indicators that are not based on survey data, confidence intervals are not available. In those cases, change over time has not been assessed or has been assessed based on guidance from the data owner. When interpreting the latest estimates and the presented assessments of change, the potential impact of the coronavirus pandemic on individual's attitudes and survey responses, as well as the impact on data collection, should be kept in mind, given the major disruption COVID-19 caused in people's lives.

As most of the data comes from self-completion household surveys, the estimates may not be representative for individuals who do not live in private residential households.

16 . Strengths and limitations

Personal well-being data presented for the periods Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2020 to Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2021, sourced from the Annual Population Survey datasets year ending March 2020 to year ending June 2021, are affected by an error in the calculation of population weights. This affects the age breakdown of the population in Wales to a small extent. Breakdowns for the UK as a whole would be largely unaffected. We aim to explore the extent of this error on personal well-being estimates and revise them as necessary in September 2022.

Comparisons over time and between indicators must be made with caution as the estimates come from several data sources with different geographical coverage and data collection periods (for more information see [datasets](#)).

Data availability limits the timeliness of some of the insights, and so the effect of more recent socio-economic events (for example, the rising cost of living) on national well-being cannot be evaluated in this release.

The majority of the indicators are based on cross-sectional survey data. Information was collected from a sample of the population of interest at a point in time, and then weighted to adjust the estimates for representativeness of the population. Therefore, the estimates are subject to uncertainty, which is expressed using 95% confidence intervals (where available). This is a conservative method of assessing change, so it is possible that significant differences exist in the data that have not been identified using this method. The [ONS guidance on uncertainty](#) contains more information on how we measure and communicate uncertainty for survey data.

All analysis has been done on unrounded figures. Some figures may not sum because of rounding.

For the indicators where the UK-wide data are not available, alternative data sources may exist for the devolved administrations (Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), but differences in methodology affect comparability of the data. For national well-being data collected by the devolved administrations, see the [Scottish Government's National Indicator Performance](#), the [Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Wales: national indicators](#) and [Wellbeing of Wales releases](#), and the [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's Wellbeing in Northern Ireland](#).

17 . Related links

[GDP quarterly national accounts, UK: April to June 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 12 August 2022

Revised quarterly estimate of gross domestic product (GDP) for the UK. Uses additional data to provide a more precise indication of economic growth than the first estimate.

[Climate Change Insights, UK: August 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 12 August 2022

Quarterly publication bringing together the latest climate change-related statistics and analysis from a range of sources.