

Statistical bulletin

Quality of life in the UK: February 2023

An update on the UK's progress across 10 domains of national well-being: personal well-being, relationships, health, what we do, where we live, personal finance, economy, education and skills, governance, and the environment.

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1 . Main points

- The percentage of adults in the UK reporting very high levels of feeling things they do in life are worthwhile (31.7%), and very low levels of anxiety (35.4%) remained similar between the latest quarter (Quarter 3, July to Sept 2022) and Quarter 3 2021.
- The percentage of adults in the UK reporting very high levels of life satisfaction (24.2%) and happiness (30.5%) decreased between the latest quarter (Quarter 3 2022) compared with the same quarter last year (from 26.8% and 33.6%, respectively).
- Between January 2020 and December 2021, less than half of adults in the UK were mostly or completely satisfied with their health (44.7%) and their amount of leisure time (47.9%).
- In January 2023, 87.7% of adults in Great Britain reported that they can rely on people in their lives if they have a serious problem and 66.4% said that in general, they trust most people.
- In January 2023, 23.3% of adults in Great Britain reported they trust the government while 68.3% of adults agreed or strongly agreed that they do not have any say in what the government does.
- In Quarter 3 2022, 10.6% of young people were not in education, employment or training, similar to Quarter 3 2021 (10.4%). In Quarter 3 2022, the number of adults aged 16 to 64 years in the UK with no qualifications was 6.9% (similar to Quarter 3 2021 (6.8%)).
- At the end of December 2022, the UK's public sector net debt reached 99.5% of gross domestic product (GDP); and inflation, as measured by Consumer Price Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH), reached 9.2% in the 12 months to December 2022, down from 9.3% in November 2022.

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 (COVID-19) pandemic on data collection and people's opinions should also be considered. For more detail on data sources, see [Section 3: Measuring the data](#).

2 . Quality of life in the UK data

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

Data dashboard | Released 10 February 2023

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 10 February 2023

Latest data, time 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 - non-seasonally adjusted](#)

Dataset | Released 10 February 2023

Non-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 10 February 2023

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

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

Dataset | Released 10 February 2023

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

3 . Measuring the data

This release provides an update on 26 of the 44 indicators across 10 domains of national well-being, using the latest data available as of 25 January 2023. This bulletin is accompanied by the [Measures of National Well-being Dashboard: Quality of Life in the UK](#).

On 3 October 2022, we launched a review of the Office for National Statistics' Measures of National Well-being; the recommendations from this consultation will be published in Spring 2023, please see our [Response summary: Review of the Measures of National Well-being](#) for more information.

National well-being indicators

The 10 domains of national well-being that the UK public told us were the areas of life that mattered most to them are:

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

Within these 10 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.

The following indicators have been updated for this release:

- people rating their overall satisfaction with their life as very high
- people rating how worthwhile they feel the things they do in life are as very high
- people rating their happiness yesterday as very high
- people rating their anxiety yesterday as very low
- people who agree or strongly agree that they can rely on people in their lives if they have a serious problem
- people who in general trust most other people
- people reporting they are mostly or completely satisfied with their health
- people reporting some evidence of depression or anxiety
- unemployment rate among adults aged 16 years and over (seasonally adjusted)
- people who are mostly or completely satisfied with their current job
- people who are mostly or completely satisfied with the amount of leisure time they have
- people who gave unpaid help to clubs, groups, charities or organisations in the last 12 months
- people who provided unpaid help to groups, clubs or organisations at least once a month in the last 12 months
- people who engaged with the arts in person in the last 12 months
- people who on average take part in moderate-intensity sport and/or physical activity for at least 150 minutes a week
- people who agree or strongly agree that they feel like they belong to their neighbourhood
- median equivalised household disposable income (in real terms)
- people who are mostly or completely satisfied with the income of their household
- people who report finding it quite or very difficult to manage financially
- public sector net debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (non-seasonally adjusted)
- inflation rate (as measured by CPIH, all items 2015 = 100)
- young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET, seasonally adjusted)
- people aged 16 to 64 years with no qualifications
- people who tend to trust the national government
- people who agree or strongly agree that they do not have any say in what the government does
- total extent of protected areas in the UK (million hectares)

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, comparability, and timeliness. We have updated four existing indicators. Further information on the changes made can be found in our [Quality of life dataset](#).

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 datasets. 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 25 January 2023. Data sources for individual indicators can be accessed by following source links in our [National well-being dashboard](#) and our [Quality of life datasets](#).

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 our [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 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](#).

Comparability

Short-term change is assessed by comparison with 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.

Where available, [confidence intervals](#) are provided within the datasets alongside this release. 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 come from self-completion household surveys, the estimates may not be representative for individuals who do not live in private residential households.

4 . Strengths and limitations

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 our [Quality of life datasets](#)).

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. Our guidance page, [Uncertainty and how we measure it for our surveys](#) 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.

5 . Related links

[GDP first quarterly estimate, UK: July to September 2022](#)

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First quarterly estimate of gross domestic product (GDP). Contains current and constant price data on the value of goods and services to indicate the economic performance of the UK.

[Climate change insights: economy and transport, UK: February 2023](#)

Bulletin | Released 10 February 2023

Latest climate change-related analysis using a range of UK official statistics.

[Measuring Progress: What matters most to most to people in the UK and has that changed over time?](#)

Blog post | Released 10 February 2022

Summary of our GDP & beyond work including findings from the measures of national well-being consultation.

6 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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