# Subjective well-being

## Country approaches to measuring subjective well-being

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| **Questions on subjective well-being and their structure**

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<td>Based on the Canadian model, the following questions were added to Statistics Finland's 2009-2010 time use survey diary:</td>
<td>- &quot;How did you rate your health?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Was that moment pleasant or unpleasant?&quot; in the diary for each activity.</td>
<td>Several questions of measuring subjective well-being were included in the individual questionnaire. These questions covered sufficient time for different fields of life statements concerning the subjective feeling of time and time wishes.</td>
<td>The following questions were used in the individual questionnaire: 1. During the last 4 weeks, to what extent was your time sufficient or not sufficient for the following fields of life: children, partner, other family members, friends, housework, occupation, apprentice ship, education, further education, voluntary service, personal time (relaxing), personal interests (sports, culture), medical consultation and errands. A five-point labelled Likert scale is used for responding to the questions.</td>
<td>In the smartphone time-use study, for half of the respondents we asked three short questions about: how happy they were when they had finished their workday. These questions were designed in such a way that they fitted on one screen and could be answered very quickly. These short questions popped up at the beginning of a ten-minute time interval and could be answered only during those ten minutes. After that time interval had expired, the question disappeared from the screen and could not be answered any more. In this way, it was ensured that (more or less) real-time feelings were measured and no long recall was necessary. Moreover, the use of these ten-minute intervals for the ESM questions also ensured that the results could be linked to the activities performed during that particular time interval, with whom and at what location, as recorded in the diary. Furthermore at the end of each fieldwork day respondents were asked how rushed they had felt during that day.</td>
<td>Two questions were asked at the end of each diary day: 1. Were there any activities during the day that you experienced as particularly positive? 2. What was the most positive and at what time of the day was this activity?</td>
<td>The UK 2014-15 Time use diary survey is currently in the field (collected due to continue until March 2015). Diaries include an enjoyment column after the final who else was present column, and the questionnaire currently includes the question: &quot;how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with your life overall with a response scale from 1 (not satisfied) to 7 (completely satisfied). Work is ongoing to consider an alternative version of the question and scale lengths.</td>
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<td>In general, how would you describe your health? (Excellent, Very good, Good, Poor) }</td>
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1. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? A five-point labeled Likert scale is used for responding to the questions. I need to schedule my day exactly. I often feel under time pressure. I get enough sleep regularly. I’d like to have more time for myself. I’d like to have more time for my family. I’d like to have more time for my friends.

3. Individuals were asked for which activities they would like to have more time. Moreover, further activity-based questions were included at the end of each diary day aiming to measure subjective well-being on a single day in contrast to the more general view of the individual questionnaire. The following questions were used in the diary: 1. Of all activities you recorded during this diary day: Which was your greatest pleasure? 2. For which activities do you wish to have had more time? 3. Of all activities you recorded during this diary day: Which one did you enjoy not?

The questions on subjective well-being were included in Individual questionnaire:

1. How can you cover the monthly expenses of your household? (all respondents)
2. How do you evaluate your own health condition? (all respondents)
3. How are you restricted in your daily activities by your long-standing health problems? (all respondents)
4. How often do you feel tired or exhausted? (all respondents)
5. How much are you burdened on your diary day? (all respondents)

In the 2013-2014 Italian edition of TUL, which still ongoing, the following question was included in the diary day: “Is this a pleasant moment?” rank the feeling on a scale from -3 to +3, with -3 being “not pleasant at all” and +3 being “very pleasant”. Respondents were not asked to answer if they were going to bed or were sleeping.

Unfortunately, being the survey still in the phase of fieldwork, results regarding the response rate to that question are not yet available; however, a short test carried out in order to decide whether to include the question in the diary did not show any problem in understanding - and then answering to - the question.

The instructions on how to fill out the question encourage respondents to consider both the activities they are doing and the general context in which the activities are being carried out (places, people present, type of day, etc.). As an example, the time spent on a bus trip was also included, since it can be more or less pleasant depending on how busy the bus is, or the people you are traveling with or if you have got beautiful news during the trip.
How often do you feel you have spare time that you don't know what to do with?

(Always|Often|Sometimes|Rarely|Never)

What are the reasons you have spare time that you don't know what to do with?

8 categories to tick:
- compute
- read
- watch TV
- sleep
- standing
- sitting
- doing nothing
- going out

Are you satisfied/unsatisfied (very unsatisfied/unsatisfied/nor satisfied/nor unsatisfied/satisfied/very satisfied) with:

... your...
In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way you spent your time over the last two days? (Very satisfied | Satisfied | Both satisfied and dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied | Don't know)
Column 5 in the activity pages of the diary shows how much time you spent with other people and how much time you spent alone over the past two days. Which of these best describes your attitude to this balance? (three options)

Thinking about gardening activities at home, which of these best describes your attitude? (four options)
| Derived outputs (e.g.: index) | All these data items are available in the Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF), and those three data items marked (*) are available in the spreadsheet table output only | Frequency tables | Reporting on the level of single-item, various multi-item aggregate measures are currently being checked | Outputs have not been derived yet | Average scores
An average score associated with activities, an average score associated with location/means of transport, an average score associated with people present during the day. In principle, we think we will produce a report similar to the one released by the French INSEE (http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/document.asp?ref_id=p1378).
| Data on subjective health evaluation was used to analyse activities of the population with serious health problems (labeled "disabled") | The feeling of respondents during the day | We get a picture of what kinds of activities people regard as positive/pleasant and negative/unpleasant, what time of the day and day of the week, among which groups etc. | None yet. | None yet (Field work on-going). |
If subjective well-being questions are in the individual questionnaire: specific item response rate

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response rates of above-mentioned subjective well-being questions: (Total = 8391)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1 (sufficient time for different fields of life):</td>
<td>99% - 100%</td>
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<td>Question 2 (statements concerning the subjective feeling of time):</td>
<td>99% - 100%</td>
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<td>Question 3 (time wishes):</td>
<td>47%</td>
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Above 90%

- Since 2002-2003 the TUS in Italy has included several questions on subjective satisfaction:
- not only about life in general but also about satisfaction on various aspects related to time, to couples life, to the division of roles in the household, etc.
- The response rate for satisfaction about life in general accounts for 92.4%, and anyway for all these kinds of questions is over 90%.

If subjective well-being data were requested throughout the diary:

- **Target age range for subjective well-being questions?**
  - Eleven years old or older
  - 10 years and older
  - 10-84
  - 16 years and older
  - 9-79 years
  - 10+

- **Diary response rates:**
  - 96% for the specific item; 62% for the diary response rate (same rate for the diary without the subjective well-being question)
  - 98%
  - About 96% of the respondents (71% of the sample)
  - Not known yet.

- **Effects on the time for completing the diary:**
  - Using a paper diary, there are no significant effects on the time.
  - Not known yet.
  - Hard to say probably minimal

Any other approaches than the two approaches above:
### Related response rate:
- **Item response rate is 86%**

### Effects on the time for completing the diary:
- Unknown. The questions were at the end of the diaries

### Characteristics of the survey:

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<tr>
<td>Geographical coverage (national, sub-national):</td>
<td>sub-national (mainland France)</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>sub-national</td>
<td>Sub-national (population living in Transnistria region, controlled by pro-russian separatists, was not surveyed; 5 to 10% of total population).</td>
<td>National</td>
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<th>Target age range:</th>
<th>15 years and over</th>
<th>10 years and over</th>
<th>11 years old or over</th>
<th>10 years and older</th>
<th>10-84</th>
<th>3 years and above</th>
<th>10+</th>
<th>16 years and older</th>
<th>9-79 years</th>
<th>15+</th>
<th>Aged 8 and older</th>
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| Sample size: | 4,500 households, 10,000 persons | 1661 individuals and 2665 diaries | 5000 households | 12000 | 20,000 households - 50,000 individuals | 10642 households, 1 respondent per household | 1088 respondents | 3975 | 30000 | 18,000 with subjective well-being information. |

| Number of diary days per respondent: | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 (one week and one weekend day) | 2 |

| Total response rate: | 39 | 59% of households - 55% of households with at least one diary | Quota sample | 69.9% | About 74% in the 2008-2009 edition | 99% | 54.4% | 48% | no results yet |


| Related reports | Report | - | Output |
The issues about collecting subjective well-being data

The Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (Stiglitz et al. 2009) suggests that information on subjective well-being – including measures of life evaluation, positive and negative emotions – should be collected as part of official statistics. Such measures are important both because they capture information that can be used to understand how different aspects of peoples’ lives affect their well-being, and because subjective experiences are an important part of well-being in their own right.

Time-use surveys are one of the primary vehicles for collecting this information. In particular, time-use surveys are uniquely suited to providing information on the affective component of subjective well-being that captures people’s moods and feelings at a particular point in time.

The collection of measures of affect (positive or negative emotions) from time-use surveys is still in its early stages. Further research and testing is required, in particular to identify the most appropriate scale for data collection and the means of reporting this as a one-dimensional index. As additional countries repeat techniques similar to the 2010 French time-use survey, further evidence on the quality of this data can be examined. More research is also required on how subjective well-being data in general, and affect questions in particular, can be used to inform policy outcomes.

These are how countries have approached subjective well-being through a time use survey.