

New Eurostat flagship publication

Facts and views about quality of life in the EU

A multi-dimensional measurement of well-being

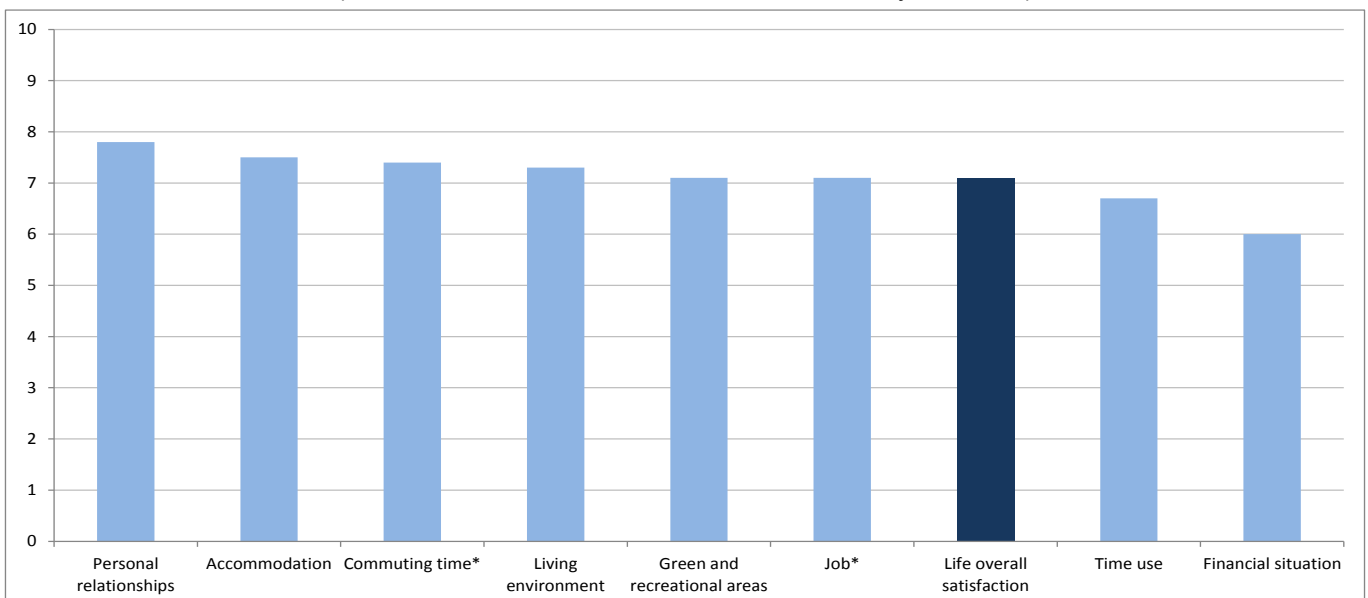
Traditionally official statistics describe economic and social developments by using indicators such as GDP. However, today it is widely accepted that GDP alone is not enough to show how well or badly people are doing. Quality of life is indeed a broader concept which includes a full range of factors which people value in life and their subjective assessments of these factors.

The new Eurostat flagship publication “**Quality of life in Europe – facts and views**”¹ presents these different aspects of personal well-being by combining for the first time objective indicators with subjective evaluations of individuals’ situations in EU Member States. As Walter Radermacher, Director-General of Eurostat, states in the foreword of the publication: “*The objective is to shed light on what could impact upon the quality of life, ranging from the educational level, the activity and health status to the family and financial situation*”.

As people’s life satisfaction cannot be reduced to one single aspect, the publication provides a multidimensional measurement of the quality of life. A ‘quality of life’ framework has been developed and is organised along 8+1 dimensions: material living conditions; productive or main activity (covering employment); health; education; leisure and social interactions; economic and physical safety; governance and basic rights; natural and living environment; and overall life satisfaction. To complement this publication, Eurostat has developed an infographic² that provides information on people’s well-being in a simple way. For each dimension of the quality of life framework, the infographic shows an indicator of people’s subjective evaluation complemented with an objective indicator.

On the occasion of the launch of this flagship publication, Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, publishes a selection of the range of indicators it contains related to well-being and satisfaction of people in Europe in 2013. They provide a broad overview of the wealth of information measuring quality of life in the EU in an objective way that is available on the Eurostat website³. This extends the data on overall life satisfaction published in a news release⁴ in March on the occasion of the 2015 World Happiness Day.

Average satisfaction with different aspects of life in the European Union, 2013
(on a scale from 0 “not satisfied at all” to 10 “fully satisfied”)



* Satisfaction with the job and commuting time: employed population. All other questions: population aged 16 and over.

People in the EU are most satisfied with their personal relationships...

With an overall average score of 7.8 on a scale⁵ from 0 to 10, people in the **EU** aged 16 and over were globally most satisfied with their personal relationships. Satisfaction with personal relationships indeed ranked first in almost all **EU** Member States. Exceptions were **Belgium** and **Finland** (where satisfaction with accommodation was higher rated than personal relationships), **Bulgaria** (satisfaction with accommodation, with job and with commuting time all came ahead of personal relationships) and **Sweden** (satisfaction with green & recreational areas). It is notable that satisfaction with personal relationships was higher than life overall satisfaction in every **EU** Member State.

... and least satisfied with their financial situation and time use

In contrast, the area of lowest satisfaction for people living in the **EU** was their financial situation (an average of 6.0 among the EU population aged 16 and over). This is the case in all Member States apart from **Sweden**, where time use ranked slightly lower than the financial situation.

Time use is also an important issue in nineteen other **EU** Member States, where it ranked second lowest in terms of satisfaction. Noticeable exceptions were **Bulgaria** (where people were second least satisfied with living environment and green & recreational areas), **Cyprus**, **Greece**, **Croatia**, **Hungary**, **Portugal** and **Slovakia** (green & recreational areas), **Italy** (living environment) and **Latvia** (accommodation).

Average satisfaction with different aspects of life in the EU Member States, 2013
(on a scale from 0 "not satisfied at all" to 10 "fully satisfied")

	Life overall satisfaction	Personal relationships	Accommodation	Commuting time	Living environment	Green & recreational areas	Job	Time use	Financial situation
EU	7.1	7.8	7.5	7.4	7.3	7.1	7.1	6.7	6.0
Belgium	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.6	7.6	7.3	7.5	7.1	6.9
Bulgaria	4.8	5.7	6.0	5.9	5.2	5.2	6.0	5.7	3.7
Czech Republic	6.9	8.1	7.7	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.4	6.7	6.0
Denmark	8.0	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.3	8.1	7.8	7.6
Germany	7.3	7.8	7.5	7.5	7.7	7.6	6.9	6.5	6.3
Estonia	6.5	7.6	7.1	7.4	6.8	7.0	7.3	6.7	5.4
Ireland	7.4	8.6	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.5	7.2	6.9	5.5
Greece	6.2	7.0	6.6	6.5	6.2	5.9	6.1	6.1	4.3
Spain	6.9	7.8	7.3	7.1	7.2	6.6	6.9	6.6	5.8
France	7.0	7.8	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.2	7.2	6.9	6.4
Croatia	6.3	7.3	6.9	7.2	6.3	5.8	7.0	6.6	4.6
Italy	6.7	7.3	7.2	7.0	6.0	6.1	7.0	6.4	5.7
Cyprus	6.2	8.0	7.7	7.3	6.0	5.9	7.2	6.7	5.2
Latvia	6.5	8.1	6.6	7.2	7.2	7.5	7.3	7.1	5.0
Lithuania	6.7	8.0	7.4	7.7	7.8	7.4	7.5	6.8	5.8
Luxembourg	7.5	8.0	7.8	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.5	7.2	6.9
Hungary	6.2	7.6	6.8	7.1	6.5	6.2	7.1	6.3	5.2
Malta	7.1	8.4	7.9	6.6	7.1	6.6	7.5	6.6	6.0
Netherlands	7.8	8.2	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.1	7.7	7.5	7.4
Austria	7.8	8.5	8.3	8.0	8.4	8.3	8.0	7.3	7.0
Poland	7.3	8.0	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.3	6.8	5.7
Portugal	6.2	7.9	7.3	7.5	6.3	6.0	7.0	6.5	4.5
Romania	7.2	7.6	7.4	7.2	7.4	7.0	7.1	6.9	6.2
Slovenia	7.0	8.3	7.6	7.8	7.7	7.9	7.3	6.8	5.6
Slovakia	7.0	7.9	7.6	7.3	6.9	6.8	7.2	6.9	5.5
Finland	8.0	8.3	8.4	8.2	7.8	8.3	8.1	7.7	7.5
Sweden	8.0	8.3	8.2	7.9	7.7	8.4	7.7	7.3	7.6
United Kingdom	7.3	8.3	7.9	7.5	7.8	7.6	7.0	6.9	6.2
Serbia	4.9	8.2	6.2	6.7	5.0	5.4	6.0	6.2	4.0
Iceland	8.0	8.1	8.1	8.2	7.5	8.0	8.0	7.4	6.4
Norway	7.9	8.4	8.0	8.2	8.3	8.5	8.0	7.2	7.5
Switzerland	8.0	8.7	8.4	8.2	7.9	8.4	7.9	7.0	7.6


Most satisfied with personal relationships in Ireland, with financial situation in Nordic Member States

Among the EU Member States, those most satisfied with their personal relationships were to be found in **Ireland** (8.6), **Denmark** and **Austria** (both 8.5) and **Malta** (8.4). For the financial situation, the most satisfied were to be found in the three Nordic EU Member States: **Denmark** and **Sweden** (both 7.6) and **Finland** (7.5). It should be noted that satisfaction with financial situation had the widest gap between Member States, with a 3.9 difference between the highest and lowest average. In contrast, job satisfaction and time use had the narrowest gaps between Member States, both with a 2.1 difference between the highest and lowest averages.

1. Eurostat publication “**Quality of life – facts and views**”. PDF-version available on the Eurostat website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=KS-05-14-073>
It can also be found in Statistics Explained: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Quality of life in Europe - facts and views](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Quality_of_life_in_Europe_-_facts_and_views)
2. An interactive infographic on people’s well-being in the EU is available on the Eurostat website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/qol/index_en.html. It covers the 8+1 dimensions of the quality of life framework.
3. Many indicators on quality of life in Europe are available on the dedicated section of the Eurostat website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-conditions/overview>
4. **Eurostat** news release 51/2015 published on 19 March 2015: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/6750366/3-19032015-CP-EN.pdf>
5. Life satisfaction is measured on an 11 point scale which ranges from 0 (“not satisfied at all”) to 10 (“fully satisfied”). It covers population aged 16 and over, except for satisfaction with job and commuting time which cover the employed population.

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