

Measures of Quality of Life

A Project of The Baugh Center

2014

Variables in the World Quality of Life
Measure

Variables in the World Quality of Life Measures

Component	Subcomponent	Variable	Source
1. Opportunity			
A. Poverty	i. Poverty rate	Percent of population living on less than \$2 per day in constant 2005 dollars at purchasing power parity (PPP). Goalposts are set at 0 and 87.12.	World Development Indicators (WDI)
	ii. Income of bottom 20%	Gross domestic product (GDP) in constant 2005 dollars at PPP times the income share of the bottom 20% (interpolated and carried forward if necessary), divided by 20% of the current population. Goalposts are set at –5,606 and 11,567.	WDI
B. Employment	i. Unemployment rate	Total number of persons without work but available for and seeking employment as a percent of total labor force. Goalposts are set at –3.73 and 21.59.	WDI
	ii. Labor participation rate	Total number of persons who supply labor for the production of goods and services, as a percent of total population over age 15. Goalposts are set at 0 and 84.23.	WDI
	iii. Perceived job availability	Percent of survey respondents answering “satisfied” to the question, “In the area where you live, are you satisfied or not satisfied with the availability of good jobs?” Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
C. Community basics	i. Access to basic needs	Score on the Community Basics Index, which “measures satisfaction with aspects of everyday life in a community, including education, environment, healthcare, housing, and infrastructure.” Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
	ii. Communications infrastructure	Average of subscores for mobile phone subscriptions and broadband internet subscriptions. Mobile phone subscriptions are the number of subscriptions, including post-paid and prepaid subscriptions, to public mobile telephone services using cellular technology that access the public switched telephone network per 100 people. Goalposts are set at 0 and 94.64. Broadband Internet subscriptions are the number of broadband Internet subscribers using high-speed technology per 100 people. Goalposts are set at 0 and 24.51.	WDI
	iii. Literacy rate	Percent of persons age 15 and older who can read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life. Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	WDI
D. Entrepreneurship	i. Business start-up costs	Cost to start a business as a percent of income per capita, including all official fees and fees for professional services required by law. Goalposts are set at 0 and 325.9.	World Bank Doing Business (DB)
	ii. Time to start a business	The number of calendar days required to start a business, assuming a well-informed entrepreneur with minimal necessary follow-up with government agencies. Goalposts are set at 0 and 148.36.	DB
	iii. Perceived climate for new businesses	Percent of survey respondents answering “good place” to the question, “Is this country a good place or not a good place to start a business?” Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup

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2. Health & Environment			
A. Physical health	i. Life expectancy at birth	Number of years a newborn infant would live if prevailing patterns of mortality at the time of its birth were to stay the same throughout its life. Goalposts are set at 0 and 85.87.	WDI
	ii. Life expectancy at age 60	Average number of years a person at age 60 could expect to live if prevailing patterns of mortality at the time of the person's 60th year of age were to stay the same for the remainder of his or her life. Goalposts are set at 0 and 24.35.	World Health Organization (WHO)
	iii. Infant mortality rate	Number of newborn children per 1,000 live births who would be expected to die before age 1 if subjected to current age-specific mortality patterns. Goalposts are set at 0 and 151.58.	WDI
	iv. Undernourishment	Percent of population whose food intake is continuously insufficient to meet dietary energy requirements. Goalposts are set at 0 and 49.47.	WDI
B. Mental health	i. Suicide rate	Number of suicides per 100,000 population. Goalposts are set at 0 and 28.08.	WHO
	ii. Positive experience	Score on the Positive Experience Index, which measures "experienced well-being on the day before the survey." Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
	iii. Suffering	Percent of people who rate their lives as 0–4, on a scale where 0 is the worst possible life and 10 is the best possible life, and expect to rate their lives as 0–4 five years from now. Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
C. Environmental health	i. Air quality	Adjusted score measuring solid fuel use and particulate matter in air. Goalposts are set at 0 and 124.18.	Environmental Performance Index (EPI)
	ii. Water quality	Percent of population with access to an improved source of drinking water. Goalposts are set at 0 and 119.74.	EPI
	iii. Sanitation	Percent of population with access to an improved source of sanitation. Goalposts are set at 0 and 115.67.	EPI
3. Freedom			
A. Political freedom	i. Political rights	Rating from 1–7 by a panel of experts taking into account the electoral process, political pluralism and participation, and the functioning of government.	Freedom House
	ii. Expression of political views without fear	Percent of survey respondents answering "no one is afraid" to the question, "In your opinion, how many people in this country, if any, are afraid to openly express their political views?" Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
B. Civil liberties		Rating from 1–7 by a panel of experts taking into account freedom of expression and belief, associational and organizational rights, the rule of law, personal autonomy, and individual rights.	Freedom House
C. Religious freedom		Rating from 0–2 taking into account freedom to practice religion and proselytize in a peaceful manner.	Cingraneli-Richards (CIRI)

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3. Freedom			
D. Economic freedom		Aggregated index of freedom to earn and use resources without force or fraud while respecting the similar rights of others, taking into account size of government, rule of law, soundness of money, freedom to trade internationally, and regulation. Goalposts are set at 0 and 10.	Fraser Institute
E. Perceived freedom		Percent of survey respondents answering "satisfied" to the question, "In this country, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your freedom to choose what you do with your life?" Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
4. Community & Relationships			
A. Community life	i. Volunteerism	Score on the Civic Engagement Index, which "assesses respondents' inclination to volunteer their time and assistance to others." Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
	ii. Religious engagement	Average of subscores for importance of religion and religious attendance. Data for importance of religion are the percent of survey respondents answering "yes" to the question, "Is religion an important part of your life?" Goalposts are set at 0 and 121.7. Data for religious attendance are the percent of survey respondents answering "yes" to the question, "Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the past seven days?" Goalposts are set at 0 and 91.17.	Gallup
B. Family life	i. Prevalence of marriage	Average of subscores for marriage rates and self-reported marriage. Data for marriage rates are the number of marriages per 1,000 population. Goalposts are set at 0 and 13.8. Data for self-reported marriage are the percent of survey respondents answering "married" to the question, "What is your current marital status?" Goalposts are set at 0 and 75.7.	United Nations (UN) and Gallup
	ii. Prevalence of divorce	Average of subscores for divorce rates and self-reported divorce. Data for marriage rates are the number of divorces per 1,000 population. Goalposts are set at 0 and 4.07. Data for self-reported marriage are the percent of survey respondents answering "divorce" to the question, "What is your current marital status?" Goalposts are set at 0 and 7.58.	UN and Gallup
	iii. Children in single-parent families	The number of children age 15 living with both biological parents. For some countries, data for children of ages 10 or 11 were used to fill gaps. Goalposts are set at 0 and 98.56.	Maryland Population Research Center
	iv. Time spent with friends and family	Survey answer to question, "Approximately how many hours did you spend, socially, with friends or family yesterday?" Goalposts are set at 0 and 9.21.	Gallup

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5. Living Standard			
A. Current living standard	i. GDP per capita	Natural log of GDP per person, in 2005 dollars at PPP. Goalposts are set at 6.01 and 11.08.	WDI
	ii. Perceived current living standard	Average of subscores for perceived personal living standard and perceived national living standard. Data for perceived personal living standard are the percent of survey respondents answering “satisfied” to the question, “Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living, all the things you can buy and do?” Goalposts are set at 0 and 100. Data for perceived national living standard are the percent of survey respondents answering “yes, good” to the question, “Do you believe the current economic conditions in this country are good, or not?” Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
B. Improvement in living standard	i. GDP per capita growth	Three-year compound annual growth rate of GDP per capita in 2005 dollars at PPP. Goalposts are set at –7.30 and 10.76.	WDI
	ii. Perceived improvement in living standard	Average of subscores for perceived improvement in personal living standard and perceived improvement in national living standard. Data for perceived improvement in personal living standard are the percent of survey respondents answering “getting better” to the question, “Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?” Goalposts are set at 0 and 100. Data for perceived improvement in national living standard are the percent of survey respondents answering “getting better” to the question, “Right now, do you think that economic conditions in this country, as a whole, are getting better or getting worse?” Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
6. Peace & Security			
A. Violence and ethnic warfare		Intensity-coded score for episodes of violence that involve at least 500 directly-related fatalities and are systematic and sustained. The bottom goalpost is set at 0.	Center for Systemic Peace
B. Human rights violations		Rating from 0–8 taking into account torture, extrajudicial killing, political imprisonment, and disappearance.	CIRI
C. Law and order		Index of self-reported confidence in local police and personal experience with crime. Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
D. Trust in national institutions		Index of self-reported confidence in the military, judicial system, national government, and honesty of elections. Goalposts are set at 0 and 100.	Gallup
E. Corruption in business and government		Aggregate index of perceived corruption of government activities and government relations between private businesses. Goalposts are set at –2.5 and 2.5.	Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)
F. Bureaucracy quality		Aggregate index of perceived government effectiveness. Goalposts are set at –2.5 and 2.5.	WGI

