Introduction

During the past decade, governments from across Europe and in other advanced welfare states have expanded their interest in integrating measures of well-being into the design of social policy. This development has been driven by a wide range of factors, including environmental concerns, economic crises and increasing evidence on the determinants of subjective well-being. In response, several governments have sought to incorporate indicators of well-being into social surveys, policy evaluations and the design of social interventions.

This chapter explores the increasing significance of well-being to welfare states and the challenges posed by incorporating well-being as a meaningful and measurable outcome of social policies. First, it addresses the policy context behind the growing relationship between well-being and social policy, examining how recent social trends have informed the debate. Second, it summarizes the empirical evidence base on the determinants of well-being, identifying potential roles for welfare states. Third, in examining unemployment, it presents a case study of how evidence on well-being has been used to influence debates around welfare state reform. Fourth and finally, the chapter concludes by considering empirical and normative critiques of the role of well-being in social policy.

Policy context

In recent years, new debates in social policy and other disciplines have called for a rethinking of how social interventions are evaluated. In particular, European governments and those in other developed welfare states have expanded efforts to incorporate measures of subjective well-being into policy making (Stiglitz et al., 2009). One of the leading academic advocates has been the British economist Richard Layard, whose 2005 book Happiness argued that promoting well-being should be a priority for policy makers. Happiness became a best-seller and has since been followed by a range of popular books about well-being and policy (Haidt, 2006; Dolan, 2014). There are also recent examples of governments attempting to incorporate well-being into policy evaluation and design. Since 2010, the UK government has included new well-being questions into large-scale social surveys and also established the What Works Centre, a research centre that...
aims to explore how empirical evidence on well-being may be applied to policy. Similar projects have been undertaken by global organizations, such as the Better Life Initiative (OECD, 2013), Beyond GDP (European Commission, 2009) and the UN’s World Happiness Report (Helliwell et al., 2017), as well as national governments in Australia (Cummins et al., 2010), Canada (Canadian Index of Wellbeing, 2012) and France (Stiglitz et al., 2009).

There are numerous explanations of the increased interest in well-being and the welfare state. One of the most commonly cited arguments is the so-called Easterlin Paradox (Easterlin, 1974): the purportedly limited capacity of rising incomes to produce continuous gains in well-being. Drawing upon the Easterlin Paradox, Layard (2005) argues that when rich societies are compared to one another, additional income is uncorrelated with higher well-being. An empirical example of this argument is demonstrated in Figure 10.1, which shows the relationship between income and average life satisfaction for countries with GDP per capita above €40,000. As is clear, there is little evidence of a positive relationship; Norway, for example, has a GDP per capita $31,152 higher than Canada but both countries have the same average life satisfaction (8.0). According to the likes of Layard, this is evidence that economic growth alone fails to raise well-being; thus, social policies should have a stronger role in increasing happiness.

While the evidence on income and well-being is more complex than Layard suggests (Kahneman and Deaton, 2010), the argument that money does not buy happiness, at least beyond a certain level, has nevertheless been influential in the well-being debate. A further three recent developments, identified by Tomlinson and Kelly (2013), have also been significant. First, environmental movements have pointed to climate change as a rationale for finding new ways to measure social welfare beyond economic growth. Second, the ‘positive psychology’ movement has increased interest in positive emotions, states of mind and everyday, hedonic feelings of happiness. Third, the new field of ‘behavioural economics’ has further cast doubt on the

![Figure 10.1](image-url)  
**Figure 10.1** The relationship between GDP per capita and life satisfaction.  
*Source: World Bank (2017) for data on GDP per capita; World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2017) for data on life satisfaction.*
importance of income, and economic self-interest, in influencing well-being, pointing instead to the centrality of cooperation, fairness and empathy.

In addition, Davies (2012) points to the fall-out from the past decade’s economic crises, arguing that the well-being agenda is part of a tentative shift in political economy: from neoliberalism to ‘neocommunitarianism’. In Davies’ (2012: 768) interpretation, using well-being to measure policy success is part of a wider critique of the limits of neoliberalism, in which the market cannot be trusted to deliver positive welfare outcomes and must be tempered. In this context, subjective well-being has attracted those seeking to challenge neoliberalism. A focus on well-being relegates income as the prime barometer of social progress, emphasizes the purported downfalls of rising inequality, and supports, as behavioural economists argue, a concept of humans as inherently social and cooperative.

**The determinants of well-being**

Whether welfare states can play a role in affecting well-being is dependent on the kinds of variables that influence happiness and the extent to which social policies can influence them to make a difference. Some well-being researchers have argued that a large proportion of well-being is in fact heritable (Lykken and Tellegen, 1996), which would seemingly limit the role for welfare states. Yet while people may be predisposed towards certain emotions and reactions, the conclusion from Diener et al.’s (1999) review is that events and circumstances also matter. The importance of social conditions to subjective well-being may be seen in comparing countries. While there is little difference in well-being among highly developed countries (see Figure 10.1), there is a profound difference when the same countries are compared to developing nations. Veenhoven (2017), for example, shows how life satisfaction varies, from a high of 8.4 in Denmark to a low of 2.5 in Tanzania. Clearly, the social environment influences well-being in addition to genetic predisposition.

One aspect of the social environment that influences well-being, and where welfare states may intervene, is inequality. As Diener and colleagues (1999) argue, the scale and nature of social comparisons affects well-being; individuals are highly likely to judge their satisfaction with life while simultaneously thinking about how well they do compared to others. Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) make the subsequent contention that social status comparisons are more intense and more important in countries with higher levels of income inequality compared to more egalitarian societies. There is thus an argument that reductions in inequality could improve subjective well-being by reducing the significance and intensity of social comparisons and status competition.

In addition, although the idea of the ‘hedonic treadmill’ suggests that individuals’ well-being is remarkably stable – and that people adapt to both positive and negative life events – there is evidence that some negative life events either take a sustained amount of time to recover from or even involve a permanent loss of well-being. For example, there is little evidence that individuals adapt fully to long-term disability (Lucas, 2007), unemployment (Lucas et al., 2004), poverty (Clark et al., 2016) and widowhood (Lucas et al., 2003). In these instances, it is plausible that welfare states could intervene to better support individuals through negative life events.

Social policy may also have a role to play in influencing some of the other known correlates of well-being. Evidence, for example, points to the influence of religion on well-being (Witter et al., 1985). While it is unlikely that governments will encourage religious activity, and for many undesirable, the impact of religion upon well-being is linked to social support, social networks, participation and a sense of collective belonging (Diener et al., 1999). The evidence on religion thus shows the importance of providing people with opportunities for shared experiences and the development of social support networks.
Perhaps one of the most well-known findings in well-being research is the so-called ‘u-shape’ across the life course (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2008), which illustrates how well-being is relatively high during youth and falls in middle age, before rising again in old age. While this suggests the apparent success of retirement and pensions policies, it raises the question of what welfare states can do for people in the middle of their life: often attempting to balance financial demands, full-time work and caring responsibilities. There are many more examples of how aspects of the social environment shape well-being and where welfare states may plausibly intervene (for a review see Greve, 2016). These include social mobility (Dolan and Lordan, 2013), education (Powdthavee et al., 2013), insecure employment (Scherer, 2009) and volunteering (Binder and Freytag, 2013).

Case study: unemployment

Possibly the most researched social influence on low well-being is unemployment, where there is a long and rich history of research into the social and psychological costs of joblessness. This stretches as far back as the 1930s, when Jahoda et al. (1971) researched hundreds of families in the small Austrian town of Marienthal, exploring how mass unemployment brought about feelings of despair, apathy and a withdrawal from community life during the Great Depression.

Since then, the re-emergence of mass unemployment in the 1980s, and the persistently high unemployment rates for groups such as young people and older men, has led to a new wave of research into the relationship between unemployment and well-being. Research from across the social sciences has demonstrated that losing paid work is associated with a range of well-being indicators, including suicide (Stuckler et al., 2009), depression (Jefferis et al., 2011) and the experience of shame (Eales, 1989). Unemployment also has a sustained, ‘scarring effect’ on people; the unemployed do not adapt to their situation (Lucas et al., 2004) and those who have experienced unemployment in the past are less happy even when re-employed (Clark et al., 2001).

There have been numerous theoretical accounts attempting to explain the deleterious well-being effects of unemployment. Jahoda’s (1982) latent deprivation theory is arguably the most influential, which hypothesizes that employment fulfils two sets of ‘needs’. The first are ‘manifest functions’: the explicit material benefits of paid work such as income, sick pay and paid parental leave. The second are ‘latent functions’, which Jahoda defines as the positive side-effects of paid work that are conducive to well-being: (1) time structure; (2) social activity; (3) collective endeavour; (4) regular activity; and (5) status and identity. Jahoda’s fundamental contention was that in industrialized societies, employment is the dominant institution for fulfilling these needs. Thus, unemployment is an environment that deprives individuals of these needs by excluding them from the institution that most effectively fulfils them, resulting in harmful psychosocial effects.

The second most influential account is Fryer’s (1986) critique of Jahoda: the ‘agency restriction’ model. This explanation contests that Jahoda conceptualizes the unemployed as passive actors who respond mechanistically to social structures beyond their control, as opposed to reacting to and perceiving unemployment for themselves. Fryer challenges this view, arguing alternatively that unemployment hurts because of the constraints it places on personal agency, planning and autonomy. While some unemployed people are able to maintain their roles as ‘active social agents’ against the odds, Fryer argues that most unemployed people find it hard to maintain and exercise a sense of agency and power.

A third account is Ezzy’s (1993) concept of ‘status passage’: a sociological critique of Jahoda, with Ezzy (1993: 44) arguing that Jahoda ignored the “interpretative process of individuals
undergoing the experience of becoming unemployed”. In contrast to Jahoda, Ezzy emphasizes the meanings that unemployed people attribute to employment and unemployment. Rather than the objective day-to-day experience of unemployment, as suggested by Jahoda, Ezzy contends that it is these meanings, and the social statuses constructed around them, that create the harmful social environment of unemployment. According to Ezzy, then, unemployment is not an inherently unpleasant experience: it is made and constructed as unpleasant by the social meanings attached to it. Ezzy advances his argument by describing the transition to unemployment as part of a ‘status passage’ in which individuals move from a valued position in the social structure – ‘worker’ – to an unvalued one – ‘the unemployed’. Ezzy states that his theory addresses the limitations of both Jahoda’s and Fryer’s theories. Status passage, he says, is about the interplay between a person’s objective social environment and the subjective interpretations they attach to it.

The importance of the meanings people attach to unemployment has recently been developed by Boland and Griffin (2015), who argue that the effects of unemployment cannot be explained by the absence of paid work. Boland and Griffin (2015: 2) argue that there are many groups – for example, “children, retirees, home-makers, the wealthy, artists, travellers and hippies” – that do not have access to the ‘latent functions’ of paid work but who do not experience this absence in the same way as unemployed people. There is thus something uniquely detrimental about unemployment beyond the mere lack of paid work. It is, as Ezzy similarly argues, “manifested in the way we talk about unemployment, individually, collectively, politically and publicly” (Boland and Griffin, 2015: 1). This explanation is in the same grain as Ezzy’s, yet Boland and Griffin emphasize the centrality of social policies in constructing the meaning and experience of unemployment. This is a ‘governmentality approach’ to understanding unemployment, in which it is framed as an experience shaped by people’s interactions and relations with the organizations, institutions and interventions of the welfare state.

The role of welfare states

Thus, in the past few decades, an extensive body of evidence has emerged around the negative well-being effects of unemployment. Influential theories of unemployment and well-being point to the importance of how unemployment is socially experienced, whether linked to the ‘latent functions’ of paid work (Jahoda, 1982), a lost sense of agency or social status (Fryer, 1986; Ezzy, 1993) or the influence of welfare state institutions (Boland and Griffin, 2015).

An obvious starting point for how welfare states could mitigate the well-being effects of unemployment is via social security benefits. The extent to which unemployment benefits replace earnings (the ‘replacement rate’) varies significantly in advanced welfare states, with a plausible hypothesis being that well-being losses will be higher in countries with lower replacement rates. This may be for two reasons. First, higher replacement rates for the unemployed mean that people can maintain a better standard of living and fewer unemployed people will be in poverty. Second, more generous benefits may protect people from the loss of social status associated with unemployment and the perception that being unemployed is a status worthy of destitution.

Aleksynska and Schindler (2011) demonstrate how widely replacement rates vary around the world. In the UK, for example, the gross replacement rate during the first year of unemployment (the ‘replacement rate’) is 18.9 per cent, while in the Netherlands it is 70 per cent. Clearly, for most unemployed people in the UK the loss of a job incurs a greater economic loss than in the Netherlands. Yet the evidence on whether benefits mitigate the well-being costs of unemployment is unclear. For example, Eichhorn (2014) finds that unemployed people in more generous welfare states do not have higher life satisfaction than those in less generous ones.
The ability of welfare states to raise the well-being of the unemployed via benefits may thus be limited, yet this does not mean that welfare states should be disregarded. For example, unemployment policy has recently been reformed in many countries around the principle of ‘activating’ benefit recipients. Activation may be defined as part of a strategy in which the provision of benefits is accompanied by, and often made conditional upon, work-related activities that aim to move recipients closer to the labour market (OECD, 2002). Activation policies gained popularity during the 1990s, arguably as a result of the changing nature of labour markets, the emergence of ‘new social risks’ (Bonoli, 2007) and the rise of ‘third-way’ politics (Bonoli and Powell, 2002). By the 2000s, activation policies in various forms had been implemented in many developed welfare states (Lødemel and Trickey, 2000).

In recent years, numerous social policy researchers have begun to make the case that activation policies could be used to address the deleterious well-being effects of unemployment. This is especially true of active labour market programmes (ALMPs), participatory programmes that aim to promote re-employment, often incorporating intensified employment advice, work experience, skills education and vocational training. Amid the wide range of activation reforms, ALMPs in particular have been hypothesized as having the potential to improve well-being among the unemployed. ALMPs often restructure the experience of unemployment, providing a significantly different day-to-day experience compared to non-participation (‘open unemployment’).

Arguably the first, explicit proponent of this view was Strandh (2001), who argued that ALMPs could reverse some of the negative effects of job loss in two ways. The first is by mimicking the psychosocial functions of paid work, as identified by Jahoda (1982). This case is also made by Wulfgramm (2011), who argued that a German programme – the ‘One Euro Jobs’ – was arguably similar to paid work in relation to some psychosocial needs, such as time structure, regular activity and social activity. Similar arguments have been made by Andersen (2008), Breidahl and Clement (2010) and Hoare and Machin (2010).

The second way is through ALMPs bringing about a stronger sense of optimism and life control for unemployed participants; an argument more closely linked to Fryer’s (1986) theory of unemployment. Fryer (1986), for example, argues that unemployment is harmful because it restricts unemployed individuals’ capacity to act autonomously. ALMPs, by imparting a stronger sense of personal control over the life situation, may bring about positive outcomes. This could be particularly true of ALMPs that offer financial rewards for participation. For example, the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) in the UK placed unemployed young people into temporary jobs, payable at the national minimum wage. Thus, compared to ‘open unemployment’, ALMPs may offer unemployed participants more opportunities for social interaction, routine and regular activity; a relatively higher social status; and a greater sense of control over the future.

Empirical research into the well-being effects of ALMPs suggests a generally positive effect of interventions. Perhaps the most rigorous research on ALMPs’ well-being effects has focused on using randomized control trials (RCTs) to evaluate two similar interventions: the vocational rehabilitation Työhön (Finland) and JOBS (USA) programmes. Both were one-week programmes promoting job-search skills and coping strategies. The extensive evaluations of both programmes show efficacy in reducing psychological distress, promoting well-being and improving motivation (Vinokur et al., 2000; Vuori et al., 2002). Extensive evaluations of an Australian intervention (focusing on skills, personal development and cognitive-behavioural therapy) also find relatively positive effects (Machin and Creed, 2003).

At a comparative level, Stuckler et al. (2009) compared 26 EU countries to explore whether government expenditure on ALMPs modified the relationship between unemployment and suicide. They found that when ALMP expenditure was higher than US$190 per head of the
population per year, the relationship between unemployment and suicide disappeared. In another comparative study, Anderson (2009) also found that ALMP expenditure was associated with positive outcomes, specifically on indicators of social interaction. At a national level, positive ALMP effects on the well-being of the unemployed have been found in Finland (Vuori and Vesalainen, 1999; Juuvonen-Posti et al., 2002; Saloniemi et al., 2014), Germany (Behle, 2005; Wulfgramm, 2011); Serbia (Bonin and Rinne, 2014), Sweden (Hagquist and Starrin, 1996, Korpi, 1997; Strandh, 2001; Röjdalen et al., 2005) and the UK (Andersen, 2008; Sage, 2015a; Sage, 2015b).

There are however three important caveats. First, the capacity of ALMPs to positively affect well-being appears to depend on the type of programme. Both Strandh (2001) and Sage (2015b) show that ALMPs that focus more strongly on integrating participants into the labour market appear to have a stronger effect on well-being compared to alternative, assistance-based schemes. For example, Strandh (2001) compared three types of ALMPs – (a) vocational training and education, (b) workplace participation in the regular labour market and (c) general work experience and community programmes – and found only workplace participation ALMPs had a positive well-being effect. A further question for ALMP research is the how the quality and objectives of work-focused programmes interact with well-being. For example, such programmes vary by the level of conditionality and whether there is a focus on upskilling or, alternatively, more simply ‘occupying’ participants: ‘workfare’ (for a typology see Bonoli, 2010).

Second, ALMPs only appear to raise the well-being of certain kinds of participants. A small number of studies examine whether there are differential ALMP effects, with some contradictory findings. Thus, Behle (2005) and Sage (2015b) find a more positive effect of participation for men, with Sage (2015b) arguing that this reflects how unemployment itself tends to more negatively affect men compared to women (see Paul and Moser, 2009). Behle (2005) also finds a more positive ALMP effect on the highly educated, while Röjdalen et al. (2005) and Wulfgramm (2011) find the opposite. Some research on ALMPs suggests stronger results for those furthest away from the labour market (Anderson, 2009); yet Saloniemi et al. (2014) come to a contrasting conclusion: finding that ALMPs benefit white-collar workers but are neutral or even damaging for blue-collar workers. Clearly more evidence is required on identifying and explaining the differential well-being effects of ALMPs.

Third and finally, qualitative research often paints a more mixed picture of the effects of ALMPs compared to quantitative studies and suggests that, in certain contexts, ALMPs can elicit negative well-being effects for the unemployed. Dwyer (2000) conducted a large number of qualitative interviews with benefit recipients, finding that despite general support for welfare conditionality, a significant proportion of claimants felt demonized by ‘activating’ welfare reforms. Dean (2003: 445) makes a similar contention, arguing that welfare reforms contributed to a “culture of self-blame that could be potentially corrosive […] demotivating and counterproductive [that] made life more difficult for [participants] to attain their goals”. Sage (forthcoming) also found that participants experienced the UK’s main ALMP – the Work Programme – in a universally negative way. Clearly, ALMPs have the potential to worsen, as well as improve, the lived experience of unemployment.

Critiques and conclusions

Nevertheless, despite these caveats, the quantitative evidence on ALMPs points to a significant, albeit often small, positive effect of interventions on unemployed people’s well-being. This finding however highlights some of the broader controversies around incorporating evidence on well-being into social policy design. ALMPs, and broader systems of activation, are controversial: especially in relation to the imposition of conditionality and sanctions. Thus, are the
seemingly positive well-being effects of ALMPs sufficient in justifying their use? Despite Layard’s (2005: 5) contention that “the best public policy is that which produces the greatest happiness”, it is clear that expanding specific policies as a direct consequence of well-being research is contentious. As Venkatapuram (2013: 6) argues: “the insights, limitations and controversies about subjective well-being come into clear relief in the context of real-world public policy applications”. In particular, four critiques emerge as important: (1) the charge of paternalism; (2) the disregard for economic inequalities; (3) disagreements about what constitutes the ‘good life’; and (4) the socially constructed nature of well-being.

The charge of paternalism is usually directed from a liberal perspective: that it is undesirable for governments to guide individuals towards behaving in particular ways in order to promote their happiness. Johns and Ormerod (2007: 73) express this viewpoint, contending that the “logical conclusion from much happiness research – that individuals’ own judgements about what is good for them can be overridden by experts wielding clipboards and regression models – is illiberal, undemocratic and unattractively paternalistic”. Jones and colleagues (2013) make a similar case, arguing how the well-being agenda is being used to ‘recentre’ power towards government: a project of ‘managing the soul’ in which human agency and choice are traded in for governments that know ‘what is best’ for individuals.

The second critique is that the well-being policy agenda is disproportionately and inevitably felt by poorer, disadvantaged parts of society, who tend to have lower well-being compared to more advantaged social groups. There is thus a social class bias when well-being is applied to policy, with the potential for the agenda to be used to justify more punitive and/or less generous welfare interventions. In this scenario, resources are shifted away from well-funded public services and redistributive measures towards low-cost policies that ‘boost’ well-being (Tomlinson and Kelly, 2013): ALMPs rather than social security benefits. Some social scientists have thus expressed the concern that well-being research is used to justify inaction on poverty (Kroll and Delhey, 2013 and to deprioritize income and material welfare (Edwards and Imrie, 2008). There is a related concern that the well-being agenda could also lead to a two-tier social policy; some groups are left alone while others (i.e. those with low well-being) are subjected to new forms of social control (Jones et al., 2013).

Third, there is the broader question of whether subjective well-being data can capture what it means to live a meaningful and worthwhile life. This is a long debated philosophical question and while modern proponents consider well-being as paramount, other philosophers had their doubts. Nussbaum (2012) draws upon earlier traditions in her powerful critique of the well-being agenda, arguing that there is value to the most negative emotions: fear fuelling courage, anger prompting justice. This critique follows Nussbaum and Sen’s capability approach, which states that in order to flourish, people need goods that go beyond both the material world and subjective feelings of happiness, such as autonomy, life chances, healthcare, education and human rights. Thus while policies (like ALMPs) may well increase subjective well-being, this does not necessarily justify the compromising of other important principles, such as self-determination.

The fourth and final question mark over the well-being policy agenda is the extent to which the determinants of subjective well-being are socially constructed and simply represent prevailing social norms and orthodoxies. This is argued by Edwards and Imrie (2008: 338), who contend that much research on well-being shows how it correlates with “idealized forms of behaviour or ways of being”. This could be problematic: transforming the well-being agenda into a project that, intentionally or not, simply reinforces existing social norms. In relation to unemployment, Cole (2007) critiques the idea that paid work should be encouraged on the grounds that it promotes well-being, arguing that this empirical regularity is rooted in the way
Well-being and the welfare state

in which employment is so strongly valorized in many societies. Thus, it is the tradition of celebrating paid work as perhaps the prime marker of personal identity and morality – the work ethic – that accounts for the consistent finding that employment promotes higher well-being. Alternatively, it is the denigration of unemployment that makes those without paid work feel so miserable. In this interpretation, arguably well-intentioned policies further embed divisive and demoralizing social norms.

Aside from these more normative arguments, the task of incorporating well-being into policy is further complicated by methodological challenges. One such challenge is the distinction between qualitatively different forms of well-being. This includes well-being as the experience of positive or negative affect; well-being as being satisfied with one’s life; and well-being as living a worthwhile, flourishing and meaningful life (eudemonia). The UK’s Annual Population Survey, for example, distinguishes between these different forms of subjective well-being (see Table 10.1).

The challenge for welfare state research is that social conditions affect these dimensions in a variable way. This may clearly be seen in relation to unemployment. Dolan and Metcalfe (2012), for example, explore how unemployment affects two measures of well-being in different ways: (1) satisfaction with life, and (2) daily emotions. While there is a strong association between employment status and life satisfaction, the relationship with daily emotions is more ambiguous. Thus, while unemployed people appear significantly less satisfied with their lives, there is little difference between the employed and unemployed in relation to experienced, daily emotions. If social conditions affect the different dimensions of well-being in a variable way, then an inevitable question is which indicators of well-being should be prioritized in policy making and why. To account for this, many indexes attempt to capture a wide variety of measurements of well-being, both objective and subjective, in order to better quantify ‘quality of life’ (see Greve, 2016).

A second methodological challenge relates to causality and well-being: namely while much is known about the correlates of well-being, it is often unclear whether such correlates cause higher well-being or are simply attributes of already happy people. For example, poor health can be both a cause and a consequence of unemployment; losing a job can make people unwell but being unwell can also make people more at risk of unemployment. Disentangling causality is vital for well-being research and, more specifically, essential for informing social policy design.

Whether these normative and methodological critiques are sufficient to remove well-being from its relatively new place in the policy agenda is, however, doubtful. Thus, while critics are surely right that a broader range of indicators shape quality of life, few – if any – researchers would argue that well-being should be the only outcome of interest to policy makers. Rather, well-being should be seen as part of a process of incorporating a more diverse range of indicators into the design and evaluation of social policies. Well-being should be an outcome to consider in, yet not necessarily determine, the design of social policies.

### Table 10.1 Indicators of subjective well-being in the annual population survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable name</th>
<th>Survey question</th>
<th>Dimension of well-being</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?</td>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life worth</td>
<td>Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?</td>
<td>Eudemonic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?</td>
<td>Positive affect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?</td>
<td>Negative affect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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References


Part II

Typologies and methods